LINCOLNSHIRE PAST & PRESENT
SOCIETY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY
82 Winter 2010/11

George Boole
Racing at Lincoln
Colonel Sibthorp as not seen before
The mansion at Glentworth
Mary Jane Lovell
Ropsley St Peter and Oxcombe All Saints
Notes & Queries
Book reviews
Quiz
CONTENTS

PAGE

2 Winter Editorial
3 Happy Birthday George Boole (1815-1864) - A short tour of his Lincoln Dave Kenyon
6 Racing at Lincoln Ronald Price
10 Winter memories David WINTER
11 No Show Without Punch - A "new" cartoon of Colonel Sibthorp Stephen Roberts
12 Notes & Queries 82
14 The Two Halls of Glentworth - 1) The Wrays' mansion Glentworth House of 1566 James Foster
18 Winter Diversion
19 Bookshelf
22 Mary Jane Lovell John Ketteringham
24 Lincolnshire's Hidden Treasures - A look around some churches of merit with John Almond - Ropsley St Peter and Oxcombe All Saints

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Contributions to the next Bulletin and the Spring issue of Lincolnshire Past & Present are welcome as soon as possible. Material may be sent to the Joint Editors c/o Jews' Court, Lincoln LN2 1LS. Articles may also be sent on compact disk (Microsoft Word document) or as an email attachment to lindumcolonia@hotmail.com.

Front Cover: The Greyfriars building on Free School Lane, Lincoln, that once housed the Mechanics Institute, where George Boole lectured before securing a teaching post at Cork University.
Another new year is beginning and we hope it will be a happy and fulfilling one for all our readers. We would like to thank our many enthusiastic contributors and we are heartened by the positive feedback we have received about the magazine and the interest shown.

In this edition we have two biographical pieces about natives of Lincolnshire, both highly successful and influential people, neither as well known as one might expect. Many such people born in Lincolnshire seem eventually to move away, and both of those featured not only left the county but travelled much further afield, one to Cork and the other to Jerusalem.

Lincoln born George Boole (1815-64) was a genius whose work in mathematics underpins much of our modern maths and technology. He had no formal education himself but he became a university professor. Following Boole’s anniversary in November, Dave Kenyon, from the University of Lincoln, is one of those who would like to raise his profile in the city and county and beyond.

Meanwhile, John Ketteringham tells the story of a modestly brilliant pioneer from Stickney. Although sighted, Mary Jane Lovell (1848-1932) devoted her life to teaching and working for blind people, including transcribing the Bible into Arabic Braille. As a result of her work the Lovell Society was formed, now incorporated into the organisation we know today as BibleLands.

There is ‘no show without Punch’ and the familiar figure of Colonel Charles Sibthorp MP, puts in an appearance as well! The butt of jokes in Punch magazine, the Colonel was much caricatured and one such sketch, hitherto unpublished, can be seen on page 11. Thanks to Stephen Roberts and Michael Trott for that.

Sport and country houses are represented too, with Ronald Price’s account of horse racing at Lincoln in the 20th century and James Foster’s research on the Glentworth Halls. John Almond takes a pleasant look at two interesting churches - St Peter’s, Ropsley, and All Saints’, Oxcombe. It is good to see Notes and Queries being followed up and we have some new book reviews and an (arguably) easy quiz for a spare few moments.

Ros Beevers, Joint Editor
Happy Birthday
George Boole
(1816-1864)
A Short Tour of his Lincoln

Dave Kenyon

George Boole was a great intellectual and a great man of Lincoln. He was acclaimed as a child prodigy in languages, became a professional teacher at the age of sixteen, and won the equivalent of a Nobel prize in mathematics at twenty-nine. This was all achieved by an autodidact without advanced formal education.

While running his own school in Pottergate, he published The Mathematical Analysis of Logic, which laid the foundation for his "Boolean Logic" that underpins our modern technology.

This led to his later work An Investigation of the Laws of Thought, which gave birth to much of modern "pure" maths. It is also at the heart of the work that, almost 100 years later, Claude Shannon and his colleagues used to make programming an electric binary computer possible in the sense we know it today.

Boole had no idea that would be the fate of his endeavours; his was a pure "blue sky" concern—to model thought mathematically.

It is notable that Augustus De Morgan (1806-71) was a correspondent and mentor to Boole, while also tutoring Ada Lovelace (1815-52) and being one of the few friends of Charles Babbage (1791-1871). Babbage invented the mechanical computer, and Lovelace the computer program. Sadly neither of them met...
George Boole. If they had, perhaps the digital age would have been upon us a century earlier, and Lincoln seen as the centre of it all!

Boole was born on 2 November 1815 in Silver Street, Lincoln. He was baptised the next day in nearby St Swithin’s Church. This was not the current magnificent church, built after George died in 1864. But its position can still be seen in the small green space between Bank Street and Free School Lane.

This was an important place for Boolean Logic because the minister at St Swithin’s, the Rev G. S. Dixon, was one of those who encouraged George’s mathematical endeavours by lending him a book on differential calculus. Another local person who encouraged George mathematically was Sir E. F. Bromhead whose country house Thurlby Hall we pass close by when travelling on the A46 to Newark. Bromhead was a patron of many notable ‘natural philosophers’ in the area.

In 1816 George’s parents moved to 49 Silver Street, and this small part of the centre of Lincoln remained important to George throughout his life in the city. He went to infant school in Mint Lane and later he lectured to working people in the Mechanics Institute, which was housed in the Grammar School on Free School Lane, between what is now the library and the new St Swithin’s. George Boole’s first school as proprietor was in the lane too.

Unfortunately almost every site that Boole would have known in ‘down hill’ Lincoln has been completely redeveloped at least once since his time. The old Grammar School is one of the few places he would still recognise. You can find out more about this area’s history at the Lincoln Heritage website. There is a simple link at: http://tinyurl.com/boolespatch

George was largely self-taught in everything (and some would say that might explain his brilliance). However, his uncle was a schoolmaster with his own school on the High Street. Also he received some formal education at a school in Michaelgate, to the north of his boyhood streets. He started to assist the schoolmaster there when he was only thirteen.

To the east of this, a couple of streets over, was the Jew’s House, a reminder of the medieval Jewish community in Lincoln and its persecution. As a boy, George was mentored by a Jewish man and this is thought...
to have influenced his Christian beliefs and the basic assumptions of his Boolean Logic.

Another supporter of the young prodigy was William Brooke, his first publisher. His shop was opposite St Mary Le Wigford Church.

At fifteen, Boole gained some notoriety when a local newspaper, The Herald, published a poem that he had translated from classical Greek. Some readers refused to believe that such a youngster, especially one without formal instruction in the classics, could have produced it unaided. After a protracted period of public investigation Boole was exonerated.

George began to publish mathematical papers in the early 1840s, and soon was recognised by the most accomplished mathematicians as one of their best. The Royal Society gave him their coveted Royal Medal and eventually he was awarded top academic honours, despite never gaining entry qualifications for university.

One wonders if the University of Lincoln had existed then, would it have opened its doors to Lincoln’s home-grown mathematical genius? If it had, George would almost certainly have never left the city and his subsequent life in Ireland, his marriage and his five daughters might have been denied him.

At sixteen Boole started work as a paid schoolmaster. This was partly in order to support his family because his father’s business as a cobbler had collapsed. After a couple of abortive attempts at teaching in Doncaster and Liverpool, he returned to Lincoln and taught happily at Waddington College.

After a year he launched his own school in the city and settled down to this way of life for four years before being enticed back to Waddington to take over from the proprietor for two years.

His last period of schoolmastering was from 1840 to 1849 in his own school at 3 Pottergate. This is almost opposite his parents’ grave in Minster Yard, south-east of the cathedral. John Boole died late in 1848 and George’s mother, Mary, who died in 1854, is buried with him.

Boole began to try to use his scientific acclaim to help secure a university post in England. With his background he was not well placed in the establishment politics of the time, and this counted against him. But eventually, with the backing of De Morgan, Bromhead and others, he was appointed as the first Professor of Mathematics in the new university at Cork.

George’s friends and well wishers gathered to give him a send-off dinner before he left for Ireland in late 1849. They held the commemorative evening in The White Hart hotel on Bailgate. In 1864, fifteen years after leaving Lincoln, George Boole died of pneumonia. This was the result of insisting on teaching while soaked to the skin by a thunderstorm—but that is another story.

The main Boole memorial in England is a window and plaque in Lincoln Cathedral. This was paid for by public subscription soon after his death was made known in the city. It is the fourth window in the north wall, and is inspired by

George Boole’s commitment to teaching in the city.

The University of Lincoln intends to celebrate Boole’s legacy during ‘BOOLE.fest’ every November, 2010 having been the inaugural year. By 2015 we hope to have worked up to a commemoration that will raise his profile within the city, the county, the country and the world.

The author would like to acknowledge his debt to Des MacHale’s book George Boole (1985, Dublin, Boole Press) for most of the information contained in the above. Also to Roger Parsons for hosting Eileen Harrison’s excellent potted biography of Boole on his website: http://www.rogerparsons.info/george/boole.html
In LP&P 60 Robert Wheeler and Dennis Mills examined the pre 20th century history of horse racing in Lincoln. This article examines horse racing in Lincoln from the 1930s. It emphasises the decline in attending ‘live’ sport, also showing why the horse racing authorities decided Lincoln race course was expendable in favour of the development of Market Rasen.

Flat racing in Lincoln, almost without a murmur, died in 1964. The 2009 plan for its restoration split opinion in the city, with the loss of open space and traffic gridlock on a race day elements of the debate. In July 2010 the City Council announced that ‘the return of horse racing to the site was inappropriate’.

In 2010 the world of sport operates in a vastly changed environment, with public safety and niche television major factors.

On the A57 road into Lincoln, a sign reflecting a jockeys and numbers board for a racecourse and, more significantly, the Grandstand, which is Grade II listed, provide a nostalgic reminder of the sport’s heyday in Lincoln. The Grandstand was built in 1868, expanding covered accommodation to a third grandstand. The first was built by the City Council in 1826 at a cost of £6,800. The second, funded by public subscription, was added four years later. Both were demolished in the early 1980s.

‘Let’s have a REVOLUTION IN SPORT!’ headlined an article in the Daily Mail on 5 December 1942. It was an impassioned plea to the Football Association, the Marylebone Cricket Club and the Jockey Club to ‘keep pace with the trend of public opinion...and the need to end...an as you were attitude’.

It included:

‘...The most urgent reforms in racing cannot, I think, be carried out unless the number of racecourses is severely cut...the disadvantages of holding race meetings on 41 courses, apart from Newmarket, with only six to eight days’ racing at each during the year were many and obvious.

If the number of racecourses granted licences were reduced so that each was given on average 20 to 25 more a year, the immediate benefits would include....’

It continued by comparing the facilities at the ‘best controlled greyhound racetracks’ to those
provided by complacent racecourse executives. It was more than two decades before his idea, a reduction to 12-15 super racecourses, was taken up in moderate fashion by the authorities.

Lincoln was one of twelve to lose its licence. In August 1963 the Horseracing Betting Levy Board (HBLB), established two years earlier to improve the financing of the sport, announced its subsidy to Lincoln would be withdrawn after 1966. The Races Committee of the City Council appealed to the HBLB to reconsider its decision, but to no avail. In July 1964 the City Council, faced with the Jockey Club not scheduling a meeting after 1963, immediately ended racing. Thus the Spring Meeting of 1964 became its last. Ironically, it was the first running of the Lincolnshire Handicap to use a photo finish camera, eighteen years after it was trialled at Newmarket. This equipment minimised the frustrating delays which could occur as the stewards determined the winner of a close race.

These were difficult times for horse racing. Attendances had declined by more than one million since 1959. There was also the continuing challenge of the better greyhound tracks building restaurant facilities to make race going a night out.

The BBC and Associated TV were deadlocked with the Racecourse Association in respect of television fees. ATV was seeking an increase from £170,000 for 175 days of racing. These were staged simultaneously with 230 days of racing elsewhere.

For Lincoln, the settlement increased coverage to three races from the third day of the 1962 Spring Meeting. Many preferred to watch and bet in the new bookmaker shops. The Tote, a 1929 attempt to eliminate illegal street betting, had not succeeded and in 1961 the Government legislated to allow these shops. Since then, it has spawned an industry of large companies using modern technology. In many other countries gambling is state controlled.

In February 1930 the Lincolnshire Chronicle reported Lincoln City Council for not building a ‘cheap’ enclosure, for which it had planning permission. It argued that the common people, who watched the meetings free of charge on the upper reaches of Carholme, would willingly pay a half-crown. In 1932 the Popular Enclosure was opened, with a one-shilling admission increasing the City Council share of the gate from the private Races Committee. Throughout the years the Council had several members who opposed horse racing because of its association with gambling and sought to ensure that any subsidy was none or minimal. In 1949, for this reason, the City Mayor declined an invitation to the Centenary Dinner.

As the 1939 Flat Season began, it was known the Races Committee’s lease was not to be renewed, with the City Council taking over the administration of the meetings. The Jockey Club imposed conditions to the transfer of the licence including the building of new stands, “straightening” the Straight Course, and no subsidy from the rates.

As the Racing Correspondent of The Times recorded (20 March 1939): ‘It is much to be hoped that the weather for the meeting will be fine and warm for I know of no more exposed and bleak course than Lincoln.”

When Overead had won the Handicap in 1936 the correspondent observed how appropriate such clothing would have been! The City Council announced it would spend £20,000 on improvements and make an immediate start. Nevertheless attendances remained excellent, unaffected by the introduction in 1937 of radio commentary on the Northern Programme, and going national in 1940.

The Racecourse Betting Control Board, the HBLB’s forerunner, and funded by a percentage from the Tote, was formed in 1934, and may have encouraged plans in 1937 to relocate to Canwick. The Act also restricted greyhound tracks to two meetings per week and gave local authorities power to licence tracks. Many of them were opposed to gambling, and refused.
Between 1942 and 1945 a 'Substitute Lincolnshire Handicap' was staged at Pontefract. On its return The Times (25 March 1946) questioned whether the Flat Season should commence at Lincoln, expressing a preference for a mixed Aintree meeting. Loan sanction from the Department of Housing and Local Government was not forthcoming and the major renovation was never to be, nor was a lesser scheme for £12,500.

These plans included a new grandstand, a realignment of the Saxilby Road (that passed through the Enclosure) and more stabling, which could accommodate about 100 horses. The Parade Ring was inadequate for the fields the Handicap attracted. After the first day of the 1947 meeting was lost to the weather and the Handicap run on the Round Course, significant monies were expended to prevent flooding at the start of the Straight Course. In 1960 the Jockey Club asked the City Council to commit £45,000 to necessary improvements. In 1946 the Jockey Club gave Lincoln another two days of racing—a summer meeting—making seven days in total. The Lincolnshire Handicap apart, the Council reinforced local connections tilting races after city landmarks such as the Stonebow and the Castle. The upper reaches of Carholme were heavily thronged on race days but by 1939 the Lincolnshire Echo noted, as the motor car became more popular, fewer visitors arrived on the Sunday and stayed in local hotels. The shops did not benefit, as those arriving by rail were bussed directly to and from the course.

In 1947 The North Ring cost 3s 6d, the Tattersall's Enclosure 30 shillings and the County Club 40 shillings plus an annual subscription of 10 guineas. Lincoln City FC were charging 1s 3d at Sincil Bank. Receipts were subject to entertainment tax.

Racing and pedestrianism apart, organised recreation on the commons was prohibited before 1885, when pressure from local residents allowed cricket and football pitches to be laid out. Golf courses were added to both commons in the 1890s.

Whose end of season three-year-old form assisted its handicap. The dog leg, just below the seven-furlong marker of the Straight Course, meant about one-quarter of the field had little chance of winning if drawn to a low number.

**LINCOLNSHIRE HANDICAP 1946-1964**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Weight (st-lbs)</th>
<th>Starting Price</th>
<th>Distance (Lengths)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Langton Abbott</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8-2</td>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Jockey Treble</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>100-1</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Commissar</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>33-1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Fair Judgement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>6-1f</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8-13</td>
<td>7-1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Barnes Park</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8-0</td>
<td>33-1</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Phariza</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-5</td>
<td>33-1</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Sailing Light</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>100-8</td>
<td>1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Nahar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8-0</td>
<td>100-7</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Military Court</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8-2</td>
<td>8-1</td>
<td>3/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Three Star II</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6-13</td>
<td>40-1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Babur</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7-11</td>
<td>25-1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Babur</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9-0</td>
<td>25-1</td>
<td>1 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Marshal Pil</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-13</td>
<td>15-2f</td>
<td>3/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Mustavon</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>8-1</td>
<td>3/4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>7-7</td>
<td>25-1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7-9</td>
<td>50-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Monawin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>25-1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Mighty Gurkha</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>33-1</td>
<td>Neck</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My childhood memory of the televised Lincolnshire Handicap (shades of grey and 405 lines) was of a cavalry charge. Before 1939 most fields averaged about 30 horses; after the Second World War about 40 was the norm, with a record 58 runners in 1948. The following year the race was restricted to horses four years and upwards that had finished in the first three of a race of at least £500 value.

The Handicap rarely attracted Classic winners, their owners opting for stud or to begin their four-year-old careers elsewhere. Thus the Handicap was often won by a horse considered a late developer, if good weather produced firm going this disadvantage was reduced but not negated. The winner in 1961 was drawn 10 and that of 1956 drawn 11.

With such large fields, favourites were easily baulked and only two favourites won from 1946.

In 1958 Babur became the fourth horse since 1896 to carry 9 stones or more to victory and the first horse since Oh in 1907 to win the race in consecutive years, Fair Judgement in 1950 and Sailing Light in 1954 finishing second.

Nevertheless Lincoln retained the kudos of being the first
meeting of the Flat Season, and with the Aintree Grand National, a Tote highlight, the Spring Double.

In 1947, Jockey Treble and Caughoo, both returned on-course at 100-1, won their respective races, the third such priced Handicap winner. Two winning Tote tickets, both received £8,899 10s (2010-£243,000).

Identifying the winner was difficult as the draw for starting positions was made on the day. This was partially counteracted from 1961 by the introduction of the overnight declaration.

The Lincoln City Council soon appreciated the difficulties of the Races Committee, announcing a loss of £3,029 in the year to June 1950. Prize Money of £14,056 and Entertainment Tax of £12,219 were paid from receipts of £36,500. They had to maintain a separate account. In 1953 the value added to the sweepstakes (entry fees) for the 18 races of the Spring Meeting totalled £5,400 including £1,500 for the Handicap. In 1955 the first day of the summer meeting began at 6pm to attract those who worked during the day.

For the last Autumn Meeting in September 1963 the value added on each of its two days was £3,070 of which the HBLB contributed £1,170 and £1,070. The amount written off in 1964 from the Horse Racing Account was not recorded in the minutes or reported in the local newspapers.

Throughout the immediate post war era attendances were described as good, including the four Handicaps staged on Saturdays. In 1948 the Government prohibited mid-week sport to aid post war industrial recovery. Despite restrictions being lifted, the Handicap continued on Saturdays to 1951. As the chart shows, attendances declined significantly, in contrast to before the First World War, when reports described the course as 'packed'.

Showing that sentiment rather than hard headed commercialism held sway, bookmakers Ladbrokes stepped in to sponsor the 1964 Spring Meeting, with £3,000 added to the prize for the Handicap. Thus the winner's £4,550 became its biggest prize. It had topped £4,000 for the first time in 1962 having increased from about £2,500 in the late 1940s. Mighty Gurka, in a field of 45, at 33-1, won by a neck from Fair Astronomer, 99 years after the race was first run over one mile.

In 1969, with HBLB support, Market Rasen began development of what ultimately became the Brocklesby Suite, a component of the ancillary events that financing sport in the 21st century requires.

The sport is controlled by the British Horse Racing Authority, which allocated Market Rasen 22 days in 2010, a significant increase from the three one-day meetings of 1924, which fitted into the summer break in the hunting season.

Originally racing under National Hunt Rules, Market Rasen had potential. Spare land was an advantage since reloacing from the Old Caister Road to Legshy Road in 1924. Its advertisements proudly proclaimed that the horses were never out of sight. Its executive worked energetically and in 1963 it reported that since 1946 it had achieved a 100% increase in attendances, resulting in an 80% increase in daily takings, and a more than 60% increase in stake-money with entries up by almost 25%. Sponsorship was obtained from Butlin's and Watey's of 500 and 1,000 sovereigns respectively. Since then, as Lincolnshire's only race course, it has gone from strength to strength.

Yet in 1924 the Town Council was concerned that Legshy Road was not wide enough to accommodate the increased traffic the relocation would cause. The United Hunts Committee defeated a proposal that access should be from the Willingham Road (Market Rasen Mail, 5 January 1924) as it would require crossing the course. They also rejected a County Council request, because of an outbreak of foot and mouth, to postpone or delay the inaugural meeting (Market Rasen Mail, 13 April 1924).

Newmarket, Epsom and Doncaster were mentioned as having plans to continue the Handicap, and Doncaster went on to secure what became the Lincoln Handicap, envisaging, but not succeeding with, a plan for a mixed meet-

The attendance in 1964 reflected the uncertainty of its future. The paid attendance of the Spring Meeting (three days) was 8,585. Handicap Day attendance in 1948 was 29,331 and the following year it was 26,659.
ing incorporating the Grand National. A horse titled Old Tom became its first winner.

NOTES

1 Lincoln in the 1950s and 60s, Laurence Elvin
2 The 2011 fixture list comprises 1,480 working days.
3 2010 values of £1 are 1947 £27.36; 1953 £19.52; 1963 £14.64 (Source: National Statistics Office).
4 The organisation was devolved to a small management company. The City Council received 10% of the first £7,000 of the gate and 15% thereafter, being responsible for funding the improvements.
5 A two-mile Lincolnshire Handicap was first run in August 1849.
6 A lease is first noted in the Centenary Brochure from 1877. The last lease began in August 1920 and expired in December 1939. I have not identified whether the private Races Committee sought a renewal.
7 Introduced in 1916, between 30% and 40% of gate receipts were payable to the Treasury. It was discontinued in 1957.
8 The Old Holmes Running Track, near the Cow Paddocks, was operating in the early 1880s. Pedestrianism was professional athletics.

The rear of the Grandstand today
9 The Changing Pattern of Leisure in Lincoln 1860-1900 (Ian Narramostad).
10 I have not identified when the race was first run over the Straight Course.
11 Lincolnshire Life (October 1999) includes an article celebrating the course's 75th anniversary.
12 The old bell, the Tom of Lincoln, was cast in 1610, and hung in the cathedral's north-west tower; it was recast as part of Great Tom in 1834.

Memories of winter at school in Lincolnshire in the 1940s

David Vinier

All the class started out by standing around the big 'Slow but Sure' stove saying the Lord's Prayer. It was wartime and many things were much less controlled than now is the case. So it was not at all unusual for the 'big lads', the ten and eleven year olds to have half a dozen live bullets in their pockets. Miss Bond was very small, so in order to help, two of the senior boys would come in to lift the heavy coal scuttle and fill the stove. Unobserved, they often threw in a couple of live rounds. Some ten minutes later a loud woof followed by a cloud of black sooty smoke belched from the top of the heater. Miss Bond never realised what had really happened and she always said 'Children, I know that we are lucky to get any coal at all while the war is on, but I must say it's not half as good as proper Welsh coal used to be!'
This sketch of Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp (1783-1855) has just surfaced on eBay and has never before been published. Sibthorp was a nationally known political figure who represented Lincoln from 1826 until 1835.

Sibthorp's cautious attitude to change and his eccentric appearance made him the butt of many jokes in the popular Victorian periodical *Punch*.

In the House of Commons, Sibthorp spoke out against giving political rights to working class men and Roman Catholics, and against railways, the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the Great Exhibition.

In Lincoln, he regularly topped the poll, and was perceived as a man of independence, honesty and diligence. Sibthorp lived at Canwick Hall and is buried in the family vault of the nearby church.

A new book on Charles Sibthorp by Stephen Roberts (University of Birmingham) and Mark Acton (SLHIA) has just been published by the Edwin Mellen Press (£39.95; tel: 01570 423356).

This drawing is reproduced by kind permission of Michael Trott.

*Stephen Roberts*
School of History & Cultures
University of Birmingham
Before and after: Mawer and Collingham’s department store in the 1950s (top) and House of Fraser in more recent years (bottom).
DEPARTMENT STORE FACELIFT

The item on Mawer and Collingham (LP&P81) caught my attention as I have discussed the idea of removing the curtain walling and restoring the Victorian front on a number of occasions. Particularly, I have talked to the late John Burrows about it, as he was managing director of Mawer and Collingham when the alterations were done. John's view was that the process could not be reversed because most of the old windows had been blocked up and new openings had been made to suit the metal framework. This would affect the interior of the shop as well as the outside! As I have been a builder all my working life, I take the view that anything is possible if you have the resources to pay for it, but I think this would be rather complicated!

Richard Lucas, James Street, Lincoln

PEOPLE OF GEORGIAN BOSTON

Regarding Neil R. Wright's article 'Two Black People in Georgian Boston' (Autumn 2010 edition), I wonder whether George Starr was, in fact, more local. The descriptive term 'a black man' was historically used to denote someone with very dark hair, and Mr Starr's complexion was 'swarthy'. Could the surname indicate Jewish heritage? There are several baptisms recorded in Lincolnshire for a 'George Star', which could relate to this man — for example at Helpringham in 1753, which fits the approximate age quoted. (www.familysearch.org). While researching the parish register of Lenton, near Folkingham, I did, however, note the following entry that may be of interest: '2nd January 1783 Charles Maurice Lincoln baptised. NB a negro servant belonging to the Earl of Lincoln that time resident at Hanby.'

Alison Lord, Market Deeping

DIRECTORIES: DO NOT BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ

With reference to the article 'County Directories' by Chris Hewis (LP&P80), White’s Directory 1842 contains incorrect information concerning Sutton Bridge.

It describes the 1830 bridge as a 'massive structure' and it was claimed that it was 650 feet with fifteen spans. It is possible that the source for the information came from 'Long Sutton Gleanings'.

A Bill was presented to Parliament in 1825 for the bridge described above. It was to be built over the river outfall, which at the time was inefficient for drainage and navigation. The Bill was not implemented. A year later an Act was passed to dig a new outfall for the river, and a bridge to be built over the new cut. The watercolour by Algernon Peckover of Wisbech portrays the bridge with five spans only.

There is additional material at the county records office at Cambridge.

The 1830 bridge was replaced in 1850. It is described as being 399 feet. Some local historians explain the anomaly by claiming the river was reduced in width. The new outfall had taken two years to make, and was funded by taxing the farmers who had previously suffered the flooding of the land due to the former silled outfall. Wisbech Corporation had also contributed to the new outfall, which makes their explanation preposterous!

The 1842 directory states that 15,000 acres of land were made safe from the sea when Cross Keys embankment was completed. This embankment carried the road from Lincolnshire to Norfolk; the actual acreage was 1,500.

Another claim in the directory: 'On the marsh is the farm called King John's house where King John halted after he lost his baggage train.'

In 1216 the area between Long Sutton and Walpole Cross Keys was marshland covered daily by the tides. It was not until 1640 when three miles of former marshland was embanked from the sea that it was possible to develop the area.

From my experience, information in directories should be used with caution.

Beryl Jackson
Glentworth House, a large mansion, was built for Sir Christopher Wray in 1566, soon after he bought the entire Glentworth Estate. At that time, Glentworth was a small village of just over one hundred inhabitants, with over 450 acres of arable and pasture farmland, together with cottages, almshouses, parish church and farm buildings. The deeds also included land and properties near Lincoln.

At the beginning of the building of his mansion, Christopher had not been dubbed Knight nor was he Queen Elizabeth's Chief Justice.

The Glentworth Estate had, until 1566, been in the hands of a Robert Brocklesby, and upon his death in that year it was put up for sale. According to some sources, as soon as Christopher had obtained the estate he moved from nearby Fillingham to live in Glentworth.¹

There are no records to show where he lived while the mansion was being built, nor is the exact date of the commencement of its construction given, but most sources state 'late 1566', the year of his arrival in Glentworth. The mansion took eight years to complete according to Pevsner and Harris, and was named 'Glentworth House'.

No architects' drawings of the mansion can be found, but from the evidence available, a drawing by Nantes of the south and west wings, commissioned by Sir Joseph Banks. Glentworth House appears to have been built using Ashlar blocks to form the corners of the wings, with bricks for infilling. Most of the window and mullions were stone, but it is unlikely that these were obtained from the local outcrop, it being mostly rubble.

The mansion was almost square in shape, and a rough estimate of its ground floor dimensions would be 125 feet in length for each of its four wings, giving a ground floor area, including the enclosed space, of about 15,500 square feet.

The Wrays' mansion has often been referred to, erroneously, as 'Glentworth Hall', and after the 'Scarborough' Hall was built, 'The Old Hall'. Glentworth House does not appear to have con-
formed to the architecture of the day, in that it was not built in the 'E' shape of most other Elizabethan mansions.

1664
The third Baronet, Sir John Wray, was the last male of the dynasty to live in Glentworth House, but during the last four years of his life he had spent much time abroad due to chronic ill health.² When signs of serious deterioration of the mansion were first noticed is not known, but it may well have been during those years.

In April 1664 he returned to Glentworth House for what was to prove his final visit to the ancestral home. It is likely that he returned to attend the baptism in Glentworth Church of his only daughter, Elizabeth. Sir John
died in October of that year, and after his death the estate was placed in the hands of trustees.

1684 ca.
The Hon Elizabeth Wray, only daughter of Sir John Wray third baronet, married the Hon Nicholas Sauderson, who was closely related to the Earls of Scarborough. Some sources suggest that not long after the marriage the couple moved to live in Yorkshire.\(^1\) (The name Sauderson was later to be appended to Lunley, the family name of the Earls of Scarborough, when the fourth Earl of Scarborough inherited the Glenworth Estate.)

1696
The Window Tax was imposed, and this may have been directly responsible for many of the windows in the mansion being bricked up. In some cases, however, it may have been to bolster or support cracked stone lintels. Local lore has it that in the Civil War, Cromwell's canons had caused some damage to the mansion, but this remains unconfirmed.

1709
The Hon Elizabeth Wray, now 45 years of age, was formerly made an 'entail', that is granted the deeds of the Glenworth estate, including Glenworth House. It is unlikely that she would have continued to reside in the mansion after her father's death, for two reasons. Not long after Sir John's death, his widow, Lady Sarah Wray, née Evelyn, remarried and moved away from Glenworth, and secondly, soon after Elizabeth's marriage, she and her husband moved to live in Yorkshire.\(^2\) The absence of any of the Wray family from the ancestral home thereafter may account for its subsequent deterioration into eventual ruin.

1714
Elizabeth and her mother, Sarah, who remarried twice, died within a few weeks of each other. As Elizabeth had been baptised at Glenworth, her remains were brought back to the village and interred there. When all the legal formalities had been completed, the Glenworth Estate passed into the hands of the Earls of Scarborough.

The baronetage had, on the death of Sir John, Third Baronet, passed to his brother Sir Christopher, Fourth Baronet, who at the time seems to have been in residence at Magdalen Hall, Oxford.

Some parts of the Wray estate may have been in the possession of Wray Sauderson, Elizabeth's only son, who had predeceased both his mother and his grandfather, as it is written: 'Wray sold the Manors of Glen-

commissioned James Paine to execute radical modifications to Glenworth House. His plans included outbuildings some distance from the mansion and connected by corridors to the house itself. The stable block, also remote, was to have additional bays, and be connected to the mansion.

What went wrong is not clear, but none of the above changes was ever executed. Instead, what remained of the east wing of Glenworth House, including its two towers, was razed to the ground, and replaced by a new wing, which became known as 'Glenworth Hall'. In contrast to the Wray's Glenworth House,

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Hall 1793: south and west wings of the mansion are shown.
Nattes ex Leach.
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tworth and Saxby...\(^3\) Another report states: 'Elizabeth left the whole of the Glenworth estate to her relative the Rev George Wray of Kelfield.' That village is only a few miles from York where Elizabeth died. Whichever account is correct, the Glenworth estate appears to have been in the hands of the Earls of Scarborough within a short time of the Hon Elizabeth's death. However, after they had taken possession of Glenworth, the Scarborough ancestral home at Sandbeck in Yorkshire remained their family seat.

1753
The Fourth Earl of Scarborough this new hall was built of red brick, with very little stonework.

1793
In Nattes' artist's impression, commissioned by Sir Joseph Banks, the south and west wings of the Wray's Glenworth House are shown. Almost every window in the west wing can be seen to be bricked up with what appear to be 'common' bricks. Records state that there was a small brickyard not far away, but that the bricks were of poor quality. It is also evident from the drawing that considerable deterioration of the fabric had occurred while the house was unoccupied.

In the same year, Sir Joseph commissioned Buck to make a
drawing of the north wing, which shows that several alterations had been made to the wing and the north facing windows of the west wing turret.

1849

A Tithe Awards map of this date, superimposed on a map of Glentworth of 1813, shows a rectangular building, the west wall of which borders the east boundary of plot 136. This building is clearly the Wray's Glentworth House, but with front (east wing) added by Paine in 1753. Note that only the north-west and south-west towers are shown, the north-east and south-east towers having been demolished when the red brick hall was built to cover the gap.

This frechland sketch probably gave rise to the myth that the plan was of a single building instead of two of quite different architecture with almost 200 years between their construction dates.

Half way along the curving drive from the front of the hall to Coach Road Hill can be seen the plan of the hall's stables, at the south end of which was attached a cottage in which lived Joseph Key the ostler and his family.

1877/8

The architect C. H. Fowler was commissioned by the Institute of Architects to write a report on the parish church of St Michael and All Saints, Glentworth. Fowler must have wandered around the village for he mentions in his report that 'Glentworth House is in a state of ruinous splendour'.

At that time, the red brick hall built for the Earls of Scarborough, forming the east wing of Glentworth House, was derelict, but not in ruins, although to the casual visitor it would have been difficult to differentiate between the two states.

1920

A photograph taken about this time shows the ruins of the old hall covered in ivy, suggesting that it had been in this state for some time. The south-east corner of the new hall can clearly be seen to be some six feet higher than the roof pan line of the Wray's hall. The myth that the old and new halls were at one time integrated has been perpetuated for many years, but this poses the question of how the occupants passed from one part of the hall to the other, as the floor levels of the two-storey Wray's hall would not have coincided with those of the three-storey red brick frontage.

There are two other pieces of evidence to suggest that the two halls were never an entity. A visitor to the 'Scarborough' hall in 1937, who thoroughly explored both the new and old halls, has quite clear memories of having to go out through a door on the ground floor at the back of the red brick hall to gain access to the courtyard of the ruined mansion, and the long corridor serving the rooms on the second floor had no doors and only one window on the west facing wall.

Secondly, an archaeological surveyor who made a detailed examination of both halls in 2005/6 states that 'parts of the Georgian hall were only butted against the Elizabethan north wing and central stairwell block'.

1930 ca.

By this time the south wall of the Wray mansion behind and abutting the Scarborough Hall...
had been reduced to about ten feet at its eastern end, progressively stepping down to less than a foot at the base of what remained of the south-west tower.

There was a short length of the north wall and an annex to be seen, including an archway. This annex, all that remains of the Wrays' mansion, had undergone many alterations over time, the last probably executed by a tenant of Glentworth Hall in the late 19th century. In total, only about 15 per cent of the Wrays’ mansion remained above ground. At that time there were no visible signs of the Wrays’ mansion ever having been tied into the Scarborough hall brickwork, but simply abutted with a straight-seamed joint.

The area formerly the courtyard of the Wray mansion now contained several tons of rubble, with what remained standing, no more than head height.

An aerial photograph of the village shows only Glentworth Hall where the two halls once stood. The area behind the hall appears to have been cleared of all rubble and grassed over.

The residual stones and bricks were most likely recovered to provide the foundations for a long drive to the front of Glentworth Hall constructed about this time. For all intents and purposes this date could be regarded as the end of the existence of the Wrays' Glentworth House.

Summary

The deterioration of Glentworth House would seem to have been gradual, and roughly proportioned to time elapsed. There are only one or two pieces of graphic evidence, as the earliest that photographs could have been taken was about 1850, and the only images showing the condition of Glentworth House are artists' impressions. The architect's drawings for the building of the Wray mansion have never come to light, and although the report by C. H. Fowler contains some clear drawings and sketches of St Michael's Church, there was none of either of the mansions, both of which would have been in existence at the time of his report.

The bulk of the Glentworth estate including Glentworth House had passed into the hands of the Earls of Scarborough. This had not been a direct transaction, and accounts of how it did so are confusing. Nor are there any records to be found stating whether any of the Scarbroughs occupied the Wray's mansion for any length of time.

Much of Glentworth House would have been uninhabitable after the Wray family left, but it has been suggested that both the Second and Third Earl of Scarborough undertook alterations to what remained of Glentworth House that were not in keeping with the original design in order to be able to occupy parts of the mansion.

One example can be seen in the artist's impression of the north wing. Brick arches had been built over former architectural features and a lean-to porch added to cover.
Ruins of Wray Hall or Glentworth House and 1753 frontage.

what may have been an original arched entrance to the courtyard. Compare this picture of the north wing with the photograph*. These two different views suggest that the existing 'north wing annexe', which includes the archway, thought to be the entrance for carriages into the courtyard of the Wray's Glentworth House, had been substantially altered over time. The architecture of this addition is a hybrid of various alterations made between the 16th and 19th centuries.

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7 A History of Glentworth, Foster, J. 2005, p40, DTP
8 barkys@talktalk.net
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10 C. H. Fowler's Report to the Society of Architects, 1878
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12 Tony Sumpter Archaeological Consultancy, Retford
13 White's Directory of Lincolnshire, 1872
14 Author's recollections
15 'In the spring edition James Foster will talk about the Earl of Scarborough's Glentworth Hall of 1753.'

Winter Diversion

1 The Maud Foster windmill at Boston was built in: a) 1819 b) 1829 c) 1839?
2 Which two of these appear on the south face of the Stonebow at Lincoln? St Hugh - The Blessed Virgin Mary - The Archangel Michael - The Archangel Gabriel - St John - a swan.
3 St Hugh of Lincoln died in: a) 1186 b) 1200 c) 1220?
4 The Usher Gallery was built in: a) 1791 b) 1809 c) 1900 d) 1927?
5 Markby Church is famous for its: a) Gallilee porch b) Tower c) Easter sepulchre d) Roof e) Wall art?
6 Dunston Pillar was built by: a) Sir Francis Dashwood b) Sir Joseph Banks c) Sir Charles Chaplin?
7 Croyland (Crowland) Abbey belonged to which order? a) Premonstratensian b) Benedictine c) Cistercian d) Carthusian
8 John Wesley was born at: a) Somersby Rectory b) Epworth Rectory c) Ayscoughlee Hall?
9 In Spilsby there is a statue of: a) Captain Matthew Flinders b) Captain John Smith c) Sir John Franklin d) Sir Joseph Banks?
10 The Old Place is at: a) Grantham b) Gainsborough c) Sleaford d) Stamford?

SOLUTION

The author, having previously written a short history of 61 Squadron, which was mainly based at Skellingthorpe during WW 2 (Mr Ballantyne’s book Another dawn, another day, reviewed in our last issue is also relevant) has now produced a short history of the station itself, the nearest of all of the county’s airfields to the city of Lincoln. The story is largely told through the exploits of the two Lancaster squadrons based there, 50 and 61, who flew on 767 and 704 raids respectively during WW 2, losing 332 aircraft in total and some 2,300 airmen. The author does give a flavour of life on the station but mainly concentrates on the operational side. The book would have benefited from better proof-reading as there are a few spelling and punctuation errors. On the credit side there are many photos and a site map (rather small). There is a more detailed book waiting to be written on RA F Skellingthorpe but in the meantime this one gives a taster.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham


The three counties of Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire have, for geographical and political reasons, been the home of many military airfields since World War One, and Spalding author Alastair Goodrum has become the acknowledged aviation historian of this area of the Fens, with several books to his credit. In this, his latest offering, he looks at crashes of military aircraft in these counties and in parts of Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Rutland.

There have been many, whether due to bad weather, enemy action, mechanical failure or pilot error. However, this is not a comprehensive list of all crashes in the region, the author picking out a selection and then investigating the circumstances and the human stories behind them, and not all have tragic endings. The first story, for example, takes place in 1913 when Lt Dawes RFC dropped in to see his parents and have tea at Long Sutton—not strictly a crash but a nice story! There follow accounts of many more aeroplane and airship incidents during WW1 and between the wars, at places like Freiston and Cranwell, taking us up to the outbreak of WW2. The chapters covering WW2 are split between RA F and USAF accidents as the southern half of the area covered by the book was home to many American bomber and fighter airfields. Chapter Four covers post-war accidents, including the worst for loss of life, which took place in 1976 near Thorney in Cambridgeshire. A USAF Starlifter jet transport on approach to Mildenhall in Suffolk encountered extreme turbulence in a thunderstorm and broke up killing 18 crew and passengers.

The following chapter covers WW1 to the present, but concentrates on another common cause of accidents, mid-air collisions, of which he estimates there were 74 in the area covered. As always with Alastair’s books, there are many photographs from his own extensive...
collection and others, and it is amazing how he often comes up with a photo of the actual aircraft involved in the crashes he covers, not to mention some of the crashes themselves.

There is an index of names and an extensive bibliography — an index of crash-sites would have been useful but would have made the book very large! The wealth of personal detail uncovered by the author makes this a very interesting read — and at times a very sad one.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham

This handsomely produced book fills further gaps in the county’s coverage of its villages — the flow since the peak off the Millennium has slowed somewhat. Clearly, the local society has laboured to dig out a wide variety of facts relating to Minting and Gautby, though the method of giving references is a little haphazard.

The volume begins well with a time-line spread over the front fly-leaves and pages on geology, pre-history and the arrival of the Romans — it was a notable coup to get Dr Glyn Coppack to write on the Priory at Minting. His piece is marred by the plans being shown at too small a scale (and this is a general failing throughout, especially sad when so many good items have been discovered in Lincolnshire Archives Office) and the artist who drew the picture of the Priory should have been named.

There follow 33 short sections on a wide range of topics — the churches and much on their incumbents, farming and rural life, schooling and village activities. Several sections are the result of special research and of special interest — the Dilessi murders (an ambush by Greek brigands and the murder of one of the Vyner family and his wife, the Vyners being landowners locally); an investigation proving that Minting was a ‘thankful’ village, i.e. all its men returned safely from WW1 and what happened to its men in WW2; and, an extended essay on Rev. Francis Bashforth — Rector for 51 years but also Professor at Woolwich as an expert in gunnery and ballistics.

The title says it all really — these are largely short pieces (often, as the authors admit, preliminaries to further research and a second volume is promised) and what the appetite for more. A great deal of effort has been put into presentation though the use of red type for quotations does not always produce happy results.

The section on Minting earthwork survey is odd; I looked hard for some of the letters referred to on page 16 on the facing map only to read at the foot of that map that a further copy of the map is pasted on the inside back cover, which has the missing letters but the two maps do not harmonise. The way with references is quite inconsistent.

(duplication at the foot of p. 67, for instance); we must accept more sources being from the internet, but Wikipedia is not a reliable enough source to be so freely used, and it would help if the Gutenberg Project as a site for consulting a book freely available in local libraries were explained. Illustrations are often dropped in haphazardly (eg pp. 104 and 120) or unacknowledged or without captions (pp. 29 [upper] and 46-47). This is a very worthwhile effort but it could have been so much better with firmer overall control.

LEAVING LINCOLNSHIRE — IN CHAINS

DAVID J. PORTER


What seems to have started off as a ‘normal’ family history exercise has yielded a fascinating story of one Lincolnshire family’s trials and tribulations. The title refers to one John Porter who was born in Lound, near Bourne, and baptised at Witham on the Hill in 1799. He, like many others, was an agricultural labourer — how many, researching their family histories have recorded ‘Ag Lab’
in their findings? For begging he was sentenced to a week in Folkingham House of Correction, a place he got to know much more, when, in 1836 he was found guilty of sheep stealing. He was accused by the local curate, Rev. William Tennant, the owner of the animal. The author provides a full record of the accusation, the appearances in front of the local landowning magistrates and the so-called evidence against the defendant. Clearly, the intention was to make an example of the accused and he was duly sentenced to transportation, leaving a wife and four young children bereft of their only source of wages.

A full and graphic account of the voyage to New South Wales is provided by the survival of the log of the surgeon travelling with the 250 convicts. Little is known of his fate in Australia except that he was given his ticket of leave in the 1840s and then seems to have disappeared from the records.

The rest of this book is taken up with an account of those left behind and their descendants, many of whom emigrated to Canada to make use of the better facilities for advancement than were ever offered to unskilled man and women in this country. Full details are supplied of the problems they faced even getting a passage from Liverpool, how they reached their destinations in a still new country and their successful integration into a new social fabric.

What marks this book out is not only how one particular family history can yield interesting stories but also how the author delves into the industrial, agricultural and social history of the nineteenth century. The post-war period after Waterloo with its depression in farming prices and the effect on the life of an ‘ag lab’ are fully described; Porter’s wage was 6 shillings a week. There is much here of the south Lincolnshire situation in this period. All involved in family history research will find this book of great value as well those seeking an insight into life for the county’s poor nearly 200 years ago. Over 80 pictures, maps and diagrams add to the quality of the presentation.

**SAUNDERS, David. Some mini biographies from Caistor, Grasby and Cabourne.** The author, 2010. 30pp. No ISBN. £2.50 pbk (or £3 by post from the author, 2 Oundle Close, Washington, Lincoln LN4 1DF).

The author’s use of Caistor’s records has yielded biographies of what he calls ‘worthy citizens’ - all nineteenth century figures. A third of the booklet deals with the life of the Rev F.W. Giffard who came to Cabourne in 1839 and whose diaries are in the Lincoln Archives Office. The other characters are two solicitors - F.B. Cousins and C.B.B. Brown; F.A. Dorrington, qmt; J.G. Dixon, junior, whom he describes as a gentleman farmer pauper; H.E. Smith, amongst other things local historian; and, Willie and Mary Clark of Grasby. The last couple are presented as poor labouring class folk; their story forms a contrast with the other generally more well off subjects. Their activities in the area are well and readily described; other details of life in Caistor 150 years ago help provide a picture of a community, once thriving, but undergoing a bit of a decline.

- **Mr John Ellis** has passed to me a 27-page study entitled _The Hay Wain, the Log Waggon and the rural idyll._ There are two main thrusts to this essay; one, the similarities and contrasts between Constable’s well-known _The Hay Wain_ of 1822 and a lesser known picture by Peter de Wint (perhaps because it is in a private collection) entitled _A timber waggon crossing a ford_ painted 17 years later. Secondly, the agricultural background behind each work leads to a discussion of the changes in agriculture taking place nearly 200 years ago. Central to the argument are enclosures, developments in farming machinery in the nineteenth century and drainage schemes; the latter are concentrated on the fens north of Boston. The impact of all these factors coming in fairly rapid succession on the rural scene and most particularly on those who earned their living from the land is the main focus here. It is a wide-ranging paper that members will read with interest when it reaches its intended destination - the Society’s library.

- **Robert Pacey,** who cooperated with the late Terence Leach in producing a series of volumes on Lincolnshire families and the county’s lost houses has published a number of booklets, some quite substantial, of items of county local history. Titles still available include: Mrs Rudkin’s _Notes... on Tofton All Saints and Tofton St Peter_ £5; Mrs Rudkin’s _diary. Part 1: 1912-30 - £5; Dr Pacey’s _Lincolnshire church organs_ - £5 and _A history of the organs in Louth parish church_ by J.C. Pillans - £4; in all cases add £1 for postage to Old Chapel Lane Books, Burgh le Marsh, Skegness PE24 5LQ.
Mary Jane Lovell was born in Stickney in 1848. There appear to have been Lovells living in this remote Lincolnshire village for many years. Mary was a distant relative of William Lovell who in 1678 made provision for a school to be built in Stickney and after whom the present school is named.

At the age of 15 Mary began to teach at the village school, but she always felt a call to take up missionary work. She eventually went to Africa but had to return to England when ill health overtook her. While recuperating in Stickney she felt the call to work with blind people and went to London to become a teacher at the Kilburn School for the Blind.

Mary learned the then recently introduced Braille alphabet, which was rapidly growing in popularity. Eventually she became deputy head teacher, but having realised that blind people needed holidays and rest, Mary moved to St Leonards on Sea (East Sussex) where she opened the first holiday home for the blind. This venture was a great success and blind travellers from many countries enjoyed a break by the English seaside.

One of these travellers was Ghador Zayton, a Lebanese convert to Christianity, who discussed with Mary the facilities for the blind in his country. Mary learned that there was very little provision for the education of blind girls, and she decided she must try to help these unfortunately.

She left England again in 1893 and lived with Ghador and his Canadian wife while she learned Arabic and taught at the John Wilson Memorial School in Haakleen. It was at this time that she devised the first Arabic Braille code.

In 1895, when she was 46, Mary moved to Palestine and established Homes for Blind Girls in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. It is interesting to note that the first class for blind girls in Jerusalem met in the very room where Holman Hunt produced some of his well-known pictures.

At this time Palestine was under the control of the Turks and, at the outbreak of the First World War, because Turkey had joined against the Allies, most missionaries left the Holy Land. Mary insisted on remaining to look after her blind girls and, after four difficult years, was amongst those who welcomed the victorious British Army in December 1917.

It was during the war that Mary began the tremendous task of transcribing the Bible into Arabic Braille, a work in 31 volumes, which she completed just before she died.

The home and school for twenty blind Palestinian and Armenian orphan girls, established by Mary on Windmill Hill in Jerusalem in a house named Barachah, became a second home to some of the British soldiers stationed close by. They took a great interest in Mary's work and 503 soldiers were adopted as sons of the home. Their names were inscribed in Braille lists.

One of these soldiers recorded his first visit to Barachah as follows: 'I can never forget the deep peace of Miss Lovell's long parlour room with its old fashioned English sofas and chairs and the embroidered text on the wall 'Be still and know that I am God'. At one end of
the room gathered round an harmonium four girls were singing Galilee, blue Galilee while two others, who sat at a table with no equipment but a stylus, were patiently transcribing onto sheets of very thick brown paper another page of the Arabic Braille Bible.

Mary Jane Lovell died in 1932 and her gravestone in the cemetery on Mount Zion is inscribed:
She hath done what she could.
In happy memory of Mary Jane Lovell 'Mother of the Blind' Who passed away June 15 1932. Aged 84. 'Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty. They shall behold the land that is very far off'.

Mary's work was continued by Miss Adele Dafesh and Miss Ketchegian (Mamma). Both had entered the Jerusalem school at an early age. Adele had been a blind Arab girl from Jaffa and Mamma had been a partially sighted three-year-old Armenian girl who was the only member of her family to escape the 1909 massacres. Both had remained with Mary Lovell to help with the school and were determined that Mary's work should continue.

During the Second World War Bob Clithier, a British soldier stationed in Jerusalem became interested in the Lovell Home for the Blind. On his return to Britain he founded the Lovell Society to help raise funds and to publicise the work started by Mary.

As a result the Bible Lands Mission Aid Society (BLMAS) began to support the Lovell Homes in Palestine. In the late 1940s the Lovell Society was incorporated into BLMAS. In 1952 Dr Helen Keller visited the home originally established by Mary Lovell, and was so impressed that she agreed to her name being used. Helen Keller House in Jerusalem was opened by BibleLands, as the BLMAS is now known, in 1960.

Although Mary Lovell's name is now little known it is good to know that her pioneering work still continues and is almost wholly funded by BibleLands.

On 29 October 1978 a plaque in memory of Mary Lovell made of Palestine tiles was brought from Jerusalem by Adele Dafesh and Siranoush Ketchegian, and framed in wrought iron by friends in Scotland. It was received by the Rector, the Rev P. Turner, on behalf of the Church at Stickney. Miss Ketchegian said: 'The beautiful service of dedication, the warmth of friendship shown and the many displays of affection and kindness by friends at Stickney, some of whom are linked by family ties to dear Miss Lovell, made the long journey from Jerusalem to Stickney so very much worth while.'

If you would like to know more about BibleLands I recommend Jean Hatton's book *The Light Bearers* (2003).

Acknowledgements
I am grateful to Jean Hatton for allowing me to use the photograph of Mary reproduced above and also for permission to quote from her book. I am grateful to Canon Roy Cochrane for drawing my attention to Mary and her work. Because Mary Lovell was so self-effacing it has not been an easy task compiling this account. I am grateful to a number of people for pointing me in the right direction, for reading the draft and making suggestions for its improvement. I must make special mention of Ruth Tinley, Derek Gill and Nick Gosling.
Lincolnshire's hidden treasures

A look at some churches of merit
with John Almond

St Peter's Church, Ropsley, from the south, and (inset) carving on the south wall outside.

2 and 3: ROPSLEY ST PETER and OXCOMBE ALL SAINTS

St Peter’s, Ropsley, is an even older structure than St Andrew’s, Immingham, dating from Saxon times. Ropsley is about five miles south of Grantham, and its broach spire overlooks the village.

The nave, with its typical Saxon long and short stonework, is the oldest part, followed by the Norman chancel. The west-end tower is Early English, topped with its decorated broach spire. The church is entered through the Perpendicular south porch.

The interior has a lovely Norman north arcade and Early English south arcade. The pews have poppy heads and are of particular interest to me, although some in the north aisle are not in pristine condition. Legend has it that they were chewed by Cromwell’s horses. Being a member of the Cromwell Association, of course I find this amusing!

The south porch was built by Richard Fox in 1483, as the inscription above the door informs us. He was born at the Peacock Inn, which still stands on Ropsley High Street. He may not be one of our more popular Lincolnshire yellow bellies today, but he was certainly a powerful man in his time.

He was educated first at Boston, then Oxford and Cambridge, and finally Paris. A supporter of King Henry VII, he held the position of Lord Privy Seal for twenty-two years. He was godfather to Henry VIII, but lost favour with him.
when Wolsey became more powerful. He founded Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 1517. He was also responsible for the building of both Grantham and Taunton grammar schools and was Bishop of Exeter, Bath and Wells, Durham and Winchester at various times.

With Bishop Richard Fleming of Lincoln, founding Lincoln College Oxford in 1427 and William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, founding Magdalen College in 1448, Lincolnshire’s ecclesiastics were well represented in the university city during the 15th and 16th centuries.

Oxcombe is in the Wolds of Lindsey, midway between Horncastle and Louth, just off the ancient Bluestone Heath road near Belchford.

This little gem of a church is situated at the end of a cul-de-sac, behind the manor house and farm, in a pretty Wolds valley. Dedicated to All Saints, it is a small brick structure by W.A. Nicholson, who was also responsible for the manor house. The church is Victorian, built about 1842, small but full of character, and built on the site of a previous church known to have been standing in 1316.

The building is entered through the west end porch door, which also forms the base of the charming octagonal tower, containing a bell dated 1637, topped off with an iron coronet of pinnacles.

The tiny two bay nave is complete with family box pews, some beach pews with cast iron poppy heads, a joint reading desk and pulpit, and a font. Beyond is the polygonal apse shaped chancel, with a rich coloured stained glass window behind the small altar. Also in the chancel are memorials to the Grant family. John Grant, who died in 1799, is reputed to be the first man to make over £100,000 entirely from farming.4

Another interesting memorial is the 1914–19 Roll of Honour, opposite the font in the nave. It lists the names of the men and a woman from the area who served and died during that conflict.

This church has a welcoming feel, no pretensions of grandeur, just plain and honest. Unfortunately it has been redundant since 1980 and is now owned by the family of the nearby manor house.

NOTES
1 Ropsley church guide
2 Hazelwood, B. M. Ropsley, p3
3 Fleming was vicar of St Botolph’s, Boston, 1408–19—Wright, N. R. The Book of Boston, Buckingham 1986, p37
4 Oxcombe church guide

John Almond’s next “church of merit” is St Lawrence’s, Stamford.