AN AWKWARD LETTER
A sad and suspicious death of a teenager, an exhumation.
A diplomatic letter for you to write

Bigby in the 19th century

Sentenced to transportation: ‘to a land beyond the seas’

The tale of Tom Otter
Fact or folklore?

Cecil Rhodes plays cricket at Sleaford
Welcome

This autumn's articles, though all on the 19th and early 20th centuries, cover a wide range of topics. We tend to think that the mid-19th century saw mass migration from rural areas into towns and cities. This, of course, is true but Janet Tierney shows that there was much fluidity within the rural population during the period as well.

Richard Skipworth found voter turnout to be high in Lincoln for the 1924 General Election when Arthur Taylor was the successful candidate, winning the seat for Labour against the national trend. Perhaps the high turnout is not surprising, given that the 1918 Representation of the People Act had significantly increased the franchise and the new electorate were keen to exercise their right to vote for a local man they saw as thoughtful and sincere.

By contrast, the rather dodgy mining magnate and colonial politician Cecil Rhodes is not someone we readily associate with the county, but Michael Turland has discovered that he was, from an early age, often in Sleaford, showing quite a different side to his personality.

The gruesome Tom Otter story is a familiar one, but Chris Hewis has gone back to primary sources as well as the original newspaper article, written 50 years after the event, on which all the later tales are based. He has really done a thorough investigation to extricate the facts from the folklore. A crime and punishment of a different nature has been given similar treatment by Bill Painter who has traced the events leading to Ann Harrad's conviction in 1834 at Boston borough sessions for receiving stolen goods, and her subsequent transportation to New South Wales.

There is also a chance to win The South Western Suburbs: East of the Railway, the latest Survey of Lincoln publication. Read Rob Wheeler's article, which begins on page 18, put yourself in the awkward position in which Richard Ellison found himself, write the letter you think he might have written, and send it to the Editor, Jews' Court, Lincoln LN2 1LS, info@slha.org.uk or lindumcolonial@hotmail.com by 30 November 2013. We look forward to receiving your entries!

Ros Beever, Editor

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Lincolnshire Past & Present Editor: Ros Beever
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Contributions to the next Bulletin and the winter issue of Lincolnshire Past & Present are welcome as soon as possible. Material may be sent by post to the Editor c/o Jews' Court, Lincoln LN2 1LS, either as paper copy or on compact disc, or alternatively as an email attachment to info@slha.org.uk or lindumcolonial@hotmail.com or access the online enquiry form via www.slha.org.uk to submit a query. To place an advertisement email lindumcolonial@hotmail.com.

Front cover: main picture: "The Gibbet" by Thomas Rowlandson
Peopling a Village

Bigby in the 19th Century

Main Street, Bigby, in the early 1900s, showing the corner with Smithy Lane and the village pump.

Janet Tierney on the shifting rural population during the economic upheavals of the 19th century

The 19th century was a time of immense social change. Until the Industrial Revolution, rural life was the social norm, the foundation of the nation's well-being. In the early years of the century, cities - especially London and the great northern cities, such as Manchester and Leeds - were seen as proliferating wens, sucking in a constantly changing population from the countryside. The countryside, certainly in the popular novels of the day, was presented as the bastion of a stable and moral society, where labouring families lived in the same villages for generations. This was, however, a very long way from the truth, even for very small, agricultural settlements apparently remote from the pernicious influence of the big cities. Large scale out-migration from the land was taking place in most agricultural parishes throughout England after 1851, a state of affairs persistently bemoaned by contemporary commentators.

Nineteenth century Bigby, sited as Pigot's 1842 trade directory somewhat picturesquely put it on a western declivity of the Wolds, four miles east of Brig, was an entirely agricultural parish. According to one trade directory, its workforce was wholly preoccupied with the production of wheat, barley, oats and turnips; however, given that at least four shepherds lived and worked in the parish throughout most of the 19th century, along with various dairymaids and 'cow-boys', there was clearly an equally important pastoral economy too. The parish lands consist of chalk wold, dropping down to the clays, sands and gravels of the Ancholme valley. During much of the 19th century, the parish of Bigby, which included the site of the deserted medieval village of Kettleby, extended into the township of Brig, along what is now Bigby Street, as far as the Market Place, and indeed the Manor House was actually in Brig rather than the main village settlement.

The principal landowners in the parish of Bigby throughout the period 1841 to 1891 were the Elwes family. Robert Cary Elwes, the Lord of the Manor in the 1840s and 1850s, was resident in Northamptonshire. As patron of the living of Bigby, however, he had installed his nephew, Charles Barnard, as Rector of Bigby, who lived in some magnificence at the Rectory with his family and cousin, Sophia Elwes. At its peak in 1851, the Rectory employed fifteen male and female live-in servants, one of whom was from Bigby and a further six from various North Lincolnshire villages: the remainder were recruited from as far afield as Suffolk, Hereford, Wiltshire and Bedfordshire. By 1872, the principal landowner, Valentine Cary Elwes, had moved considerably closer and was living at Brig Manor, which stood in the part of town that lay within Bigby parish. The Rectory had 27 acres of glebe land after the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, farmed (according to the 1861 directory, though he did not admit to doing so on his census form) by Pelham Barnard, Charles' son, and apparently leased out after his premature death in 1865.

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The various trade directories list the remaining landowners as the Maw and Metcalfe families and some mysterious 'others.' The Metcalcens did not live in the parish, and were listed as being major landowners with the Maws in Cleatham as well. The Maws farmed 95 acres at Whitehall Farm until some time after 1861, when the surviving unmarried daughter left the village, and the farm was managed for the family by their farm bailiff. The Maws also had links with the Elvess family, Matthew Maw of Cleatham, as well as owning land at Bigby in the early part of the 19th century, had a brick-yard at Brigg, and was the Elvess' agent. The 'others' referred to were presumably the Beacock scientists, who ran the village shop, the blacksmith, and possibly the four 'cottagers' who lived in the village.

The primary source for this study of Bigby's Victorian population is the decennial census returns, which effectively limits the starting point to 1841, when the original enumerators' schedules were retained for the first time. The census does impose certain limitations, perhaps the most infuriating of which, in a study of population movements, is the instruction in 1841 regarding place of birth, where respondents were asked simply whether they were born in the county or not. In a county the size of Lincolnshire such information is entirely meaningless when trying to identify long-distance migrants, doubly so in the extreme north of the county, where a 'non-county' born labourer from South Yorkshire or the East Riding might have travelled substantially less far than a farm servant from the Lincolnshire Fens!

There are eight identifiable farms recorded in the 1841 census, although unfortunately only three were named – Kettleby Thorpe, the largest at 785 acres, Manor Farm (Kettleby) and Park Farm, also at Kettleby. There were two other small tenant farmers at Kettleby, and three at Bigby itself. Tenancies changed or were amalgamated over the 60 years, but by 1881 there were still seven identifiable farms. The new tenant at Kettleby Thorpe, John Nelson, who was a well-known sheep breeder, appears to have subsumed one of the smaller, unnamed Kettleby farms into his own acreage.

The new and exceptionally intensive handynasty techniques of the 19th century, coupled with a ready supply of cheap labour as a result of the rapid population growth of the early part of the century encouraged farmers to employ more labour. Throughout the period, Kettleby Thorpe consistently employed by far the largest workforce, standing at 20 labourers (plus a carpenter) between 1841 and 1861, and rising to 24 in 1871 (eighteen men and six boys) and 30 by 1881 (20 men and ten boys). At the other end of the scale was Maw's Farm (Whitehall) which certainly employed labourers (since it employed a farm foreman by 1871) although not admitting how many to the census enumerator, and Bentley Farm at Westrum, just outside Brigg, whose 157.5 acres appeared to be managed by a permanent workforce of one man and a boy. The number of workers that the farmers said they employed – presumably as the core all-year round workforce – rose gradually over the 50 years from 33 in 1841, 41 in 1851, dropping slightly in 1861 to 36, before reaching a peak of 63 in 1871, from which it dropped back slightly to 53 in the following decade.

Considering those who described themselves as either 'agricultural labourers' or 'grooms,' implying that they considered this their permanent occupation whether they were currently working or not, only in 1871 is there an actual shortfall between the number of men and boys said to be required (including the farm servants) and the numbers enumerated. If this was really the case, then in every decade except 1871, the parish could supply its own farmers with an all year round labour force, only possibly needing extra labour in busy seasons such as harvest, sheep-shearing and lambing, although it is equally possible that casually-employed women and children might suffice.

Farm servants were typically young, unmarried men and youths, a highly mobile group who, because most farming operations were age and skill-specific, progressed as their skill-levels increased by migrating to larger or better-managed farms until marriage, or sought out more responsible positions such as farm foremen. In 1841, of the sixteen farm servants living on farms in Bigby and Kettleby, twelve were between ten and fifteen years of age. By 1851, this figure dropped to one, three in 1861, five in 1871 (although all of these were aged either fourteen or fifteen) and the same in 1881, although all but one of these juveniles were living in the parental home. Those older farm servants found – mature men in their fortiess and fifties – were unmarried foremen and shepherds. While all farm servants lived in the farmers' households in 1841, there was an increasing trend away from this after 1851, the young men being boarded with the foremen, and in 1881, also with other agricultural labourers and their own families. By 1861, thirteen of the 30 recorded farm servants were boarded away from the farmhouse, and in 1881, only seven of the 24 servants actually lived with their employers. This distancing of the master from the servant might have had an economic motive, in that paying a set sum to another servant to provide board and lodging was a more controllable expense, but also relieved the employer of the social responsibilities attached to providing living accommodation.

While young men in many cases will have moved from their place of birth before employment, the census data does give a general impression of the geographical area from which the farm servants were drawn. In 1851 the source was predominantly local, the servants being drawn largely from Bigby itself and the neighbouring parishes of Barnetby and Wrawby. Four came from small towns – Barton, Caistor and Winterton – which lay within fifteen miles of the...
parish, the remainder coming from other villages similarly located. This pattern remained substantially the same until 1881, when there was a noticeable increase in young men coming in from mid-Lincolnshire.

Identifying the second group, the regular workforce tied to individual farms is rather more problematic, when few of the farms are named, even as late as 1881, and the census gives no indication as to whether the labourer was in regular or sporadic employment. The Kettleby labourers were probably all employed on the live farms there, since there was no formal settlement of 'Kettleby', and as the families were enumerated as living at 'Kettleby Thorpe', 'Willholmes' (Kettleby Park) and other farms, were likely to be in tied accommodation.

Shepherds were farm servants in the sense of being hired annually (although the prudent farmer with a trusted shepherd would tend to try to maintain his services indefinitely) and were relatively mobile in consequence, even when married with a family. George Eaton, for example, had been born in the village c.1822 but left before the 1841 census. After his marriage to a Howsham woman he spent much of his working life in Barnby before returning permanently to Bigby.

Even William Kyne, who had lived in Bigby at least since 1837 when his son Watson was born, and who was still living in the parish in 1881, had made several moves from his birthplace at Appleby before finally settling there.

How static then was the labouring population? Between 1841 and 1861 the number of families whose head was described as an agricultural worker varied between 24 and 25. In 1871 the number rose to 30, and by 1881 there were 33, the increase being concentrated at Kettleby. Of those enumerated in 1841 eleven families had disappeared by the time the 1851 census was taken, although several of their children remained in the parish as farm or domestic servants.

Five labourers died, but three of their surviving families were maintained by an agricultural labourer son, at least until 1851. Of the ten families that remained in the parish during 1861 (minus most of their older children) the head of only one had actually been born in the parish. Two had come from the neighbouring parish of Barnby, one of these settling in the village after marrying a Bigby bride. This in itself was somewhat atypical, as the overwhelming majority of young women living in the parish left either at marriage or within a very few years of it.

Twenty-four labouring families were recorded in 1851, eight of whom were incomers who had left again before 1861. Most of these appear to have arrived and departed again within a few years either side of the census, their appearances (or non-appearances) tracked through the parish registers. Three families first recorded in the 1851 census remained in the parish, and another remained until the death of the head of the...
family, after which his widow and two remaining children left. By 1861 four of the original 1841 families had disappeared, presumably (since there are no records of deaths) having simply moved on, either in search of fresh employment or, in the case of the older labourers, to become dependants of younger relatives, or workhouse inmates. Nine new families moved in between 1851 and 1861, five of whom had vanished before the 1871 census. These were all 'wanderers', labourers who repeatedly moved themselves and their families from parish to parish, usually over very short distances. George Havercroft, for example, was born in Bigby c1821, left the parish before 1841, and had traveled over a period of ten years since marriage, between Kirton Lindsey, Glentham and Wrawby, before alighting briefly in his home village in 1861.

The pace of new arrivals quickened in 1871 when fifteen families — representing 50% of the parish's agricultural workforce — were enumerated, six of whom were still present in 1881. In addition to these, six of the original 1841 families survived to that date, together with five who had arrived in the parish by 1861.

An analysis of birthplace data in the census, together with the parish registers, provides some evidence of the movements of rural workers in and out of the parish. In 1851 the majority of the labourers had either been resident in 1841 after moving to the parish or had been born in Bigby. The patterns of movements for both old residents and incomers suggest that the majority originate from, or have moved within, a fifteen mile radius of Bigby. Between 1851 and 1881, however, the pattern of movement changed somewhat.

While many labourers were resident at a preceding census, a far greater proportion were moving into the parish from adjoining ones, notably Barnetby, Wrawby, Elsham, Searby and Owmby. The general pattern was for a small number of moves — between two and four identified from

children's birthplaces — to the parish, followed by a period of residence. Families recording a larger number of moves combined with short periods of residence tended to remain in Bigby for little more than a year. An analysis of the last places of residence before moving to Bigby tends to mask more subtle variations in the pattern of population movements. At the 1851 census, the journeys recorded by labourer families were predominantly of short length, the first discernible journey — that between the labourer's birthplace and that of his first recorded child — tending to be the longest, possibly reflecting several intermediate moves as a consequence of employment as a farm servant.

The majority of moves were made within a fifteen mile radius of the parish. There is evidence, however, that from the 1860s the range of migration was gradually being extended, particularly to the south and east, and that the length of first journeys was also being increased. This is particularly apparent during the 1870s when several families and farm servants moved up from the South Lincolnshire Fens directly (or so it would appear) either to Bigby or a near-neighbour. The families seem to have made their single long-distance move after having established the normal pattern of short journeys within the Fenland parishes. Job Bradford, for example, an illiterate labourer from West Fen, near Spalding, made a series of short moves around the Fenland villages of Gedney and Moulton between 1869 and 1873 before suddenly appearing in Bigby in 1878, when he married a local woman.

Migration is primarily economically motivated, information being disseminated by kin or by fellow-labourers. Some families moved into the parish in the wake of relatives who had previously moved there, and occasionally through marriage, although these latter tended to be short-term residents. Several labourers who brought their families to the parish in the 1870s and 1880s had originally been employed when youths as farm servants in 1841 and 1851. Dissemination of employment information through parishes comprising a single estate was investigated as a possibility, but there was no evidence that this was happening.

The motivation behind the long-distance moves of the 1870s is a matter of speculation. The agrarian economies of the north and mid-Lindsey parishes were very similar, with a mix of cereal crops (typically wheat, oats and barley) on the lower grounds, with possibly another crop such as turnips, beans or potatoes, and sheep with some cattle on the uplands. In the second half of the 19th century, rising living standards and changing eating habits in England as a whole produced a situation where livestock prices generally fell (even if those of wool did not) while corn prices plummeted. The arable Fen parishes were particularly badly hit by the depression in corn prices, so that it is not unreasonable to suppose that those migrants who appeared in Bigby during the 1870s were part of a more general exodus from the land in south Lincolnshire. Many believed in the possibility of agricultural employment in the north of the county, which might be thought to be weathering the agricultural depression rather better.

There was a gradual increase in the housing stock in the parish, particularly in Ketton, where the larger tenant farmers seem to have been actively encouraging migrant families to settle. This does not appear to indicate particular concern for the settlement laws. Population movement over the 50-year period seems to have been fluid, with labourers moving their families in and out, and, in several cases, back again.

Although the middle of the 19th century was a period of very rapid population growth, the actual numbers of people living in Bigby varied insignificantly. It certainly was not a static population, being
constantly refreshed by men and women moving or marrying into the village, and, as was happening all over the countryside, people were moving out, either in family groups or singly. They may, like the incomers, have sought work elsewhere on the land. However, with a prosperous market town within walking distance, the burgeoning industrial centres of Scunthorpe and Grimsby within twenty miles, the city of Hull a mere ferry ride away, and the appearance in 1847 of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway offering possibilities for escape and employment, the opportunities, particularly for the young, must have seemed infinite.

FOOTNOTES
2. Register of Baptisms, Bigby, Lincolnshire Records Office; Marriage and Burial Registers in the keeping of the Churchwardens, All Saints' Church, Bigby.

FURTHER READING
J. C. Caiger, English Agriculture 1850-1871, 1852.


OBITUARY

Kathleen Doris Johnson MBE

To SLHA members Miss Johnson was Kathleen but to her family she was Doris. This is not to say she had a dual personality - she was just as caring and supportive of all, whether family or friends or members of the numerous organisations to which she belonged.

Kathleen was born and grew up in the north of Lincoln. She attended Eastgate School before transferring to South Park Girls' High School. From there she attended business college in Cambridge but returned to Lincoln to work in the vehicle licence department with transfer to Lincoln City Council and then Lincolnshire County Council until retirement.

Several SLHA members were her colleagues in the clerks' department and have stories to tell about her desk piled high with papers but never one being lost. Such was her dedication in her service to the Councils that she was awarded an MBE. Kathleen kept her light under several bushes - few beyond her family were aware of the honour she had received.

Kathleen and her sister Eileen grew up in a family that was always interested in all things Lincoln and Lincolnshire. This grounding, stayed, leading to an encyclopaedic knowledge of the city and county - their places and people. Many were the notes found at Jews' Court witness to her researching requests from members of SLHA. She had been a member of the Local History Committee since 1987. Her major contribution there was to ensure the diary was rigidly kept, the minutes were accurate and news of discoveries and activities all over the county were fully reported. If a query was raised she would invariably ferret out the solution.

Never one to take the lead, she used her skills to support a number of local organisations and keep track on all kinds of local activities. These included Lincoln Civic Trust, Friends of Lincoln Museums and Art Gallery, National Trust, Sir Joseph Banks Society among others. If there was a talk or conference on anything Lincolnshire you could be rest assured Kathleen would be there. Her holidays were, for the most part, ones where she could learn more either through Christian fellowship or history. For the latter she would do her homework in preparation. An example of this was a Friends of Lincolnshire Archaeology and Education visit to northern France and Belgium, where she located a memorial to an ancestor who was lost in battle. This led to an interesting visit.

Life was not always learning and history. Kathleen was a keen supporter of the Cathedral music and her church. She was ever kind and sympathetic with a quiet, wicked sense of humour.

We shall miss that quiet voice keeping us on the straight and efficient path and we send our sympathy to Kathleen's sister Eileen, her nephew and niece and the numerous younger members of the family to whom she was Auntie Doris.

Pearl Wheatley
As part of its programme of investigating and recording water supply to country houses the Industrial Archaeology Team have come across examples of roadside water supply columns at Middle Rasen (see photograph) and Raithby. Dave Start recently passed to us a photograph of one that used to stand at Dunston, on the B1188 near the junction with the lane leading on to the Heath and, eventually, to Coleby. (see photograph). This latter example was removed some years ago. However, a second example, albeit the base only, can be found in Nocton, alongside the route of the former Nocton Estate Light Railway.

These stand pipes, because of the height of their heads above ground level, are often said to have been sited to enable passing traction engines to take water. They may well have been used for this but they are more likely to have served the needs of isolated farms and fields further away from a natural supply. For this farmers would use a horse-drawn water cart or sometimes a water tank on a wagon. It was the height above the ground of the top of the tank to be filled which called for the height of the supply pipe.

There are likely to be other examples around the County and the IA Team would be very pleased to hear about them. Please contact the office, by telephone on 01522 521337, or by email to info@slha.org.uk or through the website.

Stewart Squires, Scothern

Picture Archive

The roadside pump at Middle Rasen

The pump, now removed, which used to stand on Dunston Heath
A Tailor’s Victory

In the 1924 General Election Labour won in Lincoln against the national trend. Richard Skipworth describes how local businessman Robert Arthur Taylor won his seat in the House of Commons.

I took part in a minor way in 2012’s Police and Crime Commissioner Elections in which fifteen out of every 100 people in Lincolnshire voted. This very low figure led me to look back at historical records of voter turnout. I discovered that in the 1924 General Election, in Lincoln, astonishingly, almost 89 people in every 100 voted. Investigating further, I uncovered a fascinating story of a General Election in which a tailor from Lincoln, of modest background – Taylor by name (Robert Arthur Taylor) as well as profession – defeated two eminent national figures, Sir George Hamilton and Archie Macdonell, to win a victory against the national trend.

The Lincolnshire Chronicle headlined an ‘amazing election’, noting ‘enthusiastic street scenes, an overwhelming reception, boisterous greeting’ of the result. During the election day itself, it noted voters being delivered to a polling station on a traction engine decked out in Conservative colours, as well as: large parties of children...wearing bands of yellow paper (at this time yellow, rather than red, was the Labour Party’s colour),...Several of them carried cabbage stalks. Whether they did this because the stalks were yellow or whether they were to be used as weapons of defence is debatable. Similarly, the Lincolnshire Echo reported:

Conservative and Labour colours predominated in the streets, the wearers of the Liberal blue being few and far between...yellow chrysanthemums being plentiful, many of Mr Taylor’s supporters sported these flowers but were not of an age to vote...one small Socialist was trailing a mechanical crocodile lavishly decorated with yellow...

Alfie and Sir George

In the late summer and early autumn of 1924 the Labour Government had been teetering on the edge of defeat, and it was no surprise when, following a no confidence motion, it fell on 9 October 1924. A General Election would take place on 29 October, and in Lincoln it was expected that the parties would be fielding the same candidates as in the previous election.

The sitting MP for Lincoln was a Coalition Conservative, businessman and company director Alfie Davies. Originally from Wales, he inherited a pub company, which he eventually turned into a chain of 64 pubs. Becoming MP for Lincoln in 1918, he was later appointed Personal Private Secretary to David Lloyd George. When the election was announced, Mr Davies, who was touring Palestine and the Persian Gulf, was reported to be returning at once. But then on 13 October the Echo headline was ‘LINCOLN ELECTION SENSATION’. Mr Davies had cabled from Port Said in Egypt to say that circumstances had arisen that compelled him to withdraw his candidature. The Lincoln Conservative and Unionist Association moved swiftly to select a replacement for Mr Davies: Sir George Hamilton.

The reason for Mr Davies’ withdrawal remains mysterious. The Lincoln Leader and Weekly Advertiser telephoned Mrs Davies at her home at The Eagles, Highgate, London...and learned that the ex-Member’s wife was in as great a state of perplexity as their hosts of friends in the city...I have heard nothing (she said).

Rumours in Lincoln alleged that Mr Davies had reservations about Conservative policy, particularly opposition to a treaty with Soviet Russia, which might have reinstated trade between Lincoln’s heavy engineering industry and Russia. Mrs Davies, responding to suggestions that Alfie was to stand for Labour, said: ‘I don’t believe a word of it’. 
Mr Davies himself eventually spoke of a ‘dangerous complaint in the deserts of Arabia” but soon afterwards appeared in Lincoln to take a substantial part in the Conservative campaign.

Referred to as a ‘fighting Conservative’ and the ‘galloping Major’, Mr Davies’ replacement, Sir George Hamilton, was a product of the 400-year-old public school Charterhouse. The 1911 Census records him as living in some style at The Old Courthouse, Knutsford, Cheshire, with his wife, a son and a daughter and five servants, giving his occupation as electrical and general engineer. With ten years’ experience as an MP and having held several junior government posts, he must have been seen as a strong candidate.

Archie and Arthur

The Liberal candidate Archie Macdonnell, also had a privileged public school education – in his case Winchester College. Whilst Sir George had been a staff officer in the First World War, Archie, at the age of 21, had been on the front line as a lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery, going on after the war to work in war relief in Poland and Russia. Later on, Archie turned to journalism and writing. His most famous novel is England their England – a satirical look at Englishness. In one of the chapters he seems to draw upon his experiences in the Lincoln General Election. The hero receives a letter from a Conservative candidate ‘asking him to come down to East Anglia to help him in a particularly tough fight against a young Socialist, an Independent Labour Party man, who was a brilliant speaker and was already making alarming headway.’

He takes the ‘next train to Lincolnshire… to) Eldenborough, a town of about 50,000 inhabitants’ and encounters the Labour candidate: ‘Mr Dodds soon proved himself to be an orator of the fieriest brand’.

The Labour Party candidate in the 1924 election was in fact Arthur Taylor and according to The Tailor and Cutter, Arthur was: ‘quiet and reflective, with no flamboyance and no ranting… calm and logical… this thoughtful man has the gift of eloquent speech… on the platform Mr Taylor is a forceful speaker but one who appeals to reason rather than prejudice.’

Similarly The Shop Assistant noted: ‘He is bright, genial and unassuming... He plays a sound game of soccer... he is entirely devoid of “side”.

Arthur’s circumstances contrast sharply with those of Archie Macdonnell and Sir George Hamilton. His father, John, was a joiner from Metheringham and his mother, Annie, came from Hogsthorpe. Born in Manchester, he seems to have spent his childhood partly in Lincoln and partly in Manchester, attending St Botolph’s School in Lincoln for several years. By the age of fourteen he was working as an office boy in Manchester. Having returned to Lincoln, in 1911 he was living at 42 Horton Street in the Monks Road area (known at the time as ‘Little Russia’ because of the political leanings of the inhabitants) with his wife and one-year-old daughter. He records his occupation as tailor’s cutter, and was on the point of setting up his own business in Melville Street, Lincoln.

In 1913 he was elected as Lincoln’s first Labour councillor and continued to be re-elected as a councillor for most of the rest of his life. He went on to fight three general elections unsuccessfully (1918, 1922 and 1923). His tailoring business must have flourished since, by 1922, it had been moved to larger premises, still on Melville Street. Arthur Taylor himself had moved house to what is known today as Rookery Lane in Boultham, a pleasant western suburb of Lincoln. At the time of the 1924 General Election he was Mayor-elect of Lincoln.

Free Speech in danger?

Campaigning in Lincoln got off to an early start, even before the date of the 1924 General Election was announced. The main social media for elections in this period were open public meetings, and the lengthy reports of these meetings featured in the press. The Echo reported a series of open air meetings addressed by a Mr Peter Grey from the back of a lorry, aimed at those described as ‘socialistically inclined’. When the campaign proper got under way all three candidates held a large number of open meetings. Both Arthur Taylor and Sir George Hamilton attracted big crowds, but things were somewhat different for the Liberals.

Attendance at a Liberal meeting at Monks Road Council School was poor. The ‘much hailed Liberal revival has failed to materialise’, commented the Echo, and Mr Macdonnell’s ‘chances of winning the Lincoln seat are down to zero’.

According to the Echo a major issue at public meetings held by the Conservatives was heckling by Labour supporters. This is not mentioned in the Chronicle but the Leader notes ‘the interjection, the ‘Red Flag’ and ‘Tell me the Old, Old Story’.

However, the Echo reported that free speech was in danger, and when Sir George Hamilton addressed a packed meeting at Monks Road Council School interrupters were barred. Unbelievably some 2,000 citizens gathered in the street outside the school and were addressed once again by Peter Grey.

At another Conservative meeting, this time for workers at Clayton and Shuttleworth’s factory in Lincoln, the Echo reported ‘intruders: 3 representatives of Mr Taylor wearing large yellow rosettes... asking “strings of carefully prepared questions,” suggesting “Sir George Hamilton was a “blackleg” who had driven a train during the 1919 railway strike”’.

In the Echo’s view, he had helped his country in a national crisis.

Disruptive behaviour was not confined to Conservative meetings. For example, at Bracelbridge Girls’ School on 28 October, ‘loud reports of fireworks’ were heard outside, making Arthur Taylor jump.

Clear choices for Lincoln

The electorate was presented with clear cut policy differences at this election. For instance, as
Archie Macdonell pointed out, on the economy: the Conservatives supported the status quo (ie private ownership) while Labour advocated nationalisation, and Liberals were in favour of private ownership with public supervision. Labour and the Liberals were in favour of free trade whereas the Conservatives thought a limited amount of protectionism was called for. They criticised the removal of the McKenna Duties on the import of motor vehicles by the outgoing Labour Government, pointing out the bad effect it had on the motor industry – Lincoln was something of a centre for the manufacture of motor vehicles at the time.

The Conservatives thought that the most important market for the UK economy should be the British Empire – in the 1930s this was put into practice as the policy of 'imperial preference'. The outgoing Labour Government, on the other hand, had proposed a treaty with Soviet Russia to enable trade between the two countries to resume.

Arthur Taylor spoke out strongly in favour of this, at a number of meetings, arguing that such a treaty would have a significant impact on the high level of unemployment. Lincoln's agricultural engineering industry had, in the pre-war period, exported large numbers of products to what was now the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Sir George Hamilton was adamantly against the Russian treaty. He saw it as an example of the 'creeping socialism' that was threatening Britain, suggesting that Labour would like to set up a similar system to the Soviet one in Britain. Arthur Taylor pointed out that he was not an admirer of the Soviet government of England was much freer, much more democratic and much more suited to the British, but on the other hand he was not an admirer of the Tsarist regime.

Despite broad agreement between the candidates on the benefits of the National Insurance scheme instituted by the Liberal Government prior to the First World War, there were clear differences on 'welfare' policy. Sir George Hamilton warned the other two candidates that taxes and rates could only yield so much and that 'some men only wanted the dole'. He was also critical of workers who thought they could create work for others by the system of 'ca-canny' i.e. going slow. Sir George thought this a misguided view: only through hard work could prosperity be restored.

Lincoln against the trend
Nationally, the result of the General Election was a victory for the Conservatives. The Liberals, who had backed the Labour Government, saw their vote collapse. Labour also lost seats. In Lincoln, contrary to the national trend, it was Labour who benefited from the Liberal decline. Arthur Taylor emerged as the winner and became Lincoln's first Labour MP.

'Alfie would have won'
Sir George Hamilton blamed himself for the Conservative defeat, saying that if Alfie Davies had stood he would have won. But he had, in fact, increased the Conservative vote by 219. On the other hand Arthur Taylor had increased his vote by 2,345. He seems to have had a broad appeal to the electorate, gaining support both from the collapse of the Liberal vote and the increase in turnout. As a homegrown candidate with over ten years' service as a councillor, voters had had many years to assess his competence. Moreover, he was a successful businessman in his own right, having run a thriving merchant tailor's shop since 1911. So the normally hostile Echo could grudgingly conclude that:

Mr Taylor (is) well equipped for his duties and enjoys much personal popularity amongst all classes in the City which he has thrice sought to represent in Parliament. He has a fine record of municipal service as a representative of the Park Ward, his chief interest being perhaps housing and education...

Arthur Taylor himself commented:

I think I won because of the excellent organisation... and particularly because of the energy and enthusiasm of our women members... (despite the) handicaps both of cars and the absence of a local Labour press... I never trimmed one iota... in order to catch voters... in the long run people will become tired of the kind of politics and politicians who are always shifting their ground and compromising...

Arthur Taylor went on to win again in 1929, increasing his majority.

He continued to represent Lincoln in the House of Commons until 1931. During his seven years in the Commons Arthur Taylor made 3,158 contributions, speaking and asking questions on a wide range of local, national and international issues ranging from railway level crossings in Lincoln and bridge tolls in Lincolnshire, to the rights of shop workers, votes for women, and international Anglo-Russian relations.

| electorate | 31,768 |
| men | 18,384 |
| women | 13,414 |
| Taylor (Labour) | 11,596 |
| Hamilton (Conservative and Unionist) | 11,557 |
| Macdonell (Liberal) | 4,952 |
| Labour majority | 39 |
| Labour gain | 25 |

1924 election figures for Lincoln
After his defeat he went to work for the Shop Assistants Union in London and died prematurely in 1934 from the heart disease from which he had suffered for many years. His funeral was held in Lincoln where there was: remarkable evidence of the respect and esteem in which Mr Taylor was held by all classes... the church was crowded, many having to stand, while thousands of people waited in the pouring rain and lined the road to Boultham churchyard to show their appreciation of the work Mr Taylor had done for the city... Women were not alone in their tears, for many men were unable to restrain their grief...

A grubby street sign off Carholme Road in Lincoln is apparently the only public recognition today of this pioneering Lincoln citizen.

NOTES
1. Lincolnshire Chronicle, 1 November 1924, p.6 and 7.
2. Lincolnshire Echo, 29 October 1924, p.3.
3. Brakspear, Meet the Family, retrieved 12 December 2012 http://www.brakspear.co.uk/meet_the_family/
5. Echo, 13 October 1924, p.3.
6. The Lincoln Leader and County Advertiser, 18 October 1924, p.3.
13. Chronicle, 14 April 1934, p.11.
17. Echo, 18 October 1924, p.2.
20. Echo, 18 October 1924, p.2.
22. Echo, 15 October 1924, p.2.
23. Echo, 16 October 1924, p.4.
27. The Times, 7 December 1923, p.6.
29. Leader, 1 November 1924, p.5.

SOME HERALDIC OBSERVATIONS

The following short articles are based on items first published in the Seaford Historian in the 1990s.

The Old Pelican
David Branford, February 1995

In the ancient manor of Dumbleby, at the northern edge of the estate, stood a thatched public house called The Pelican where, in the early 19th century, it is understood the tenant brewed his own beer. The Pelican, in common with many local inns, is said to have been visited by Dick Turpin.

When the property was sold in the 1900s it was purchased by the threshing contractor and wheelwright Walter Marsh who lived there with his wife and family. They ran the village post office on the premises. After this business was sold, a pottery and a bungalow were built in the yard. The old house fell down in around 1960, but the name of Pelican survives as that of the modern bungalow on the site. The neighbouring field is also still known as the Pelican, and a local legend claims that once a year a white horse appears out of the pond.

The emblem of the pelican is seen on the coat of arms of the Pell family, lords of the manor of Dumbleby and patrons of Dumbleby church. They moved from Scott Willoughby to Dumbleby in the late 1500s and lived there until the male line came to an end in 1730. One of them, Sir Anthony Pell, became the Kings Master Falconer in 1624. The registers show that members of the family were baptised, married and buried in the old church, now demolished.

It was recorded in the 1800s that there was a pewter bowl engraved with a pelican in the font but, sadly, it is now lost.

Wyverns 2 Dragons 0
Michael Turland, July 1999

There was a fuss in Seaford some years ago about the use by Kirk and Parry of dragons as a signature on their buildings. The impression created is that this is common on their buildings. A 1990s artwork railing at Monument Gardens reflects the ‘dragon’.

In fact there are only two ‘dragons’ – on the corner of Boston Road and Southgate (horizontal) and on the High School single storey building in Jermin Street (vertical). But they are not dragons at all in strict heraldic terms, but wyverns.

The wyvern has only two legs and is a symbol of overthrowing the tyranny of a demonic enemy. But, in this case, Simon Pavley suggests the link is with the coat of arms of Leicester, where Kirk came from (Parry was born in Lincoln, and probably had died by the time the wyverns appeared).
The tale of a man who murdered his pregnant wife on their wedding night on 3 November 1805 still endures, but how much has the truth been embellished? Chris Hewis investigates.

The story has been faithfully reproduced over the years (I have found a copy in The Lincolnshire Magazine from 1936, the forerunner of this current publication). You can find the same version widely on the internet, and ghost-hunters regularly visit the Sun Inn at Saxilby, where the inquest was held. But how much of the story is folk tale?

I often wondered, when asked about this tale, why all the current stories seemed to be based on a newspaper article from 1859, written over fifty years after the event. While researching further on the story for a recent radio broadcast I found the original, handwritten article by the author, Thomas Miller, in the Lincolnshire Archives, accompanied by two letters from him to the publisher. The above illustration is from a drawing also accompanying Miller’s article.

The facts
Thomas Otter, christened at Treswell on 3 March 1782, was the son of Thomas and Ann (née Temporal). He married Martha Rawlinson at Bakring, Nottinghamshire, sometime during 1804; their daughter Mary was christened on 23 December 1804 in Hockerton, six miles north of Southwell.

During 1805 Otter was working in Lincoln, but under an alias by using his mother’s maiden name of Temporal. Contemporary newspaper articles describe Tom as:

- a stout, handsome man, about five feet nine inches high... a labouring banker upon one of the canals in the neighbourhood of Lincoln.

John S. Piercy, in his History of
Retford, written in 1828, describes Otter as:

malicious and revengeful and cruel to horses and other animals. A remarkable instance of which is related of him. He cut the eyes of a living ass, he made an incision with his knife in the rump, on each side of the tail, and stuck them in!

Newspaper reports continue:

He became criminally intimate with a young woman, and she proving pregnant, he was compelled by the parish officers to marry her. No one involved was aware that he was already married.

The Bastardy Act of 1733 stipulated that the supposed father was responsible for the maintenance of his illegitimate child. If he failed to support the child, the mother could have him arrested on a justice's warrant and put in prison until he agreed to do so. Parishes were obliged to maintain the mother and child until the father could do so. Those parishes were to be reimbursed by the alleged father, though this rarely happened. In an attempt to stem the rising costs of poor relief, the local authorities attempted to reduce their liability for illegitimate children by forcing the fathers to marry the mothers. This was known colloquially as a 'knob-stick wedding', the forerunner of a 'shotgun wedding'.

South Hykeham Parish Register records the marriage of Thomas Temple (sic) of the Parish of St Mary Wigford in the City of Lincoln to Mary Kirkham of the Parish of North Hykeham on Sunday 3 November 1805. They were married by the curate, Thomas Brown, in the presence of William and John Shuttleworth, Overseers of the Poor for the Parish of North Hykeham. Mary was about eight months pregnant.

It is far from clear what happened following the wedding, but for some reason Tom and Mary found their way to Drinsey Nook, an area on the Nottinghamshire/Lincolnshire border along the road that is now the A57, near Saxilby. They were seen by several people crossing Saxilby Bridge. The Staffordshire Advertiser reported the following week that:

the body of a woman was found the following morning; her head beaten to a pulp, and a large hedge stake, with two bundles of cloaths (sic) lying near her.

Tom Otter was arrested by 'Patchy' White, a Lincoln Constable, later in the day at the Packhorse Inn, in Lincoln High Street. He was escorted the following day to Saxilby for the inquest on Mary.

Although the contemporary reports do not give the location of the inquest, it is likely to have been held at the Sun Inn, the usual location for all parish inquests. Held in front of the Coroner, Mr Drury, and a jury of 20 locals, and with the body present (no photographers; in those days) a verdict was returned of Wilful Murder against Thomas Temporal alias Otter and he was convicted to Lincoln Castle.

Immediately following the inquest, Mary was buried in the churchyard of St Botolph's, Saxilby, by Thomas Rees, Vicar of Saxilby. The murder trial was held before Sir Robert Graham at Lincoln Lent Assizes on Wednesday 12 March
1806. There are few details of the trial, as most assize records for the Midlands circuit before 1818, including Lincolnshire, have not survived. The newspaper reports of the time give only a brief summary. Otter was charged under the name of Thomas Temporal. The trial lasted five hours. Twenty witnesses appeared, and although the evidence was circumstantial, Otter was found guilty, sentenced to be executed on Friday 14 March, and his body dissected. For some reason, following the verdict, the sentence was changed from dissection to gibbeting.

The Murder Act 1751 includes the provision:

For better preventing the horrid crime of murder... that some further terror or peculiar mark of infamy be added to the punishment. In no case whatsoever shall the body of any murderer be suffered to be buried.

Either public dissection or the hanging in chains of the cadaver would be mandated. The Act also stipulates that a person found guilty of murder should be executed two days after being sentenced. The Act was repealed in 1871.

The Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury reported on 21 March 1806:

Thomas Temporell, otherwise Thomas Otter, was executed at Lincoln on Friday last, for the murder of Mary Kirkham. He acknowledged his guilt to the clergyman who attended, and to the keeper of the prison. His sentence was that his body should be dissected, but this day, at ten in the forenoon. It was taken from the Castle, and hung in chains on Saxilby Moor, near to the place where he committed the horrid murder... great numbers of people went this day to see the body hang to the gibbet post. He was measured for the chains a few hours before his execution. All his fortitude appeared then to forsake him, for the first time, and when taken to the gallows, he did not so much as hold up his head.

Five years later, it was reported:

In the month of Thos. Otter, hanged in chains for the murder of his wife... there is a nest containing several young birds half-fledged.

The Magazine of Natural History carried a similar report in 1832:

It appears that, whilst the carnivorous tomtit was feeding on the flesh of the malefactor, he had an eye to a comfortable habitation in the vicinity of so much good cheer. He actually took possession of the dead man's mouth, and he and his mate brought forth a brood of young canibals.

As a result of these strange circumstances a poem was coined:

There were ten tongues all in one head,
The tenth went out to fetch some bread
To feed the living in the dead.

During a period of high winds early in the year 1850, the gibbet post finally blew down.

Thus the last of the Lincolnshire gibbet-posts has perished, most likely greatly to the joy of the neighbouring lord of the manor.

It was later reported that Benjamin Suttaby, saddler and Saxilby Parish Constable, had possession of the remains of the post and irons. The last remaining piece of the irons, the head-collar, can now be seen at Doddington Hall.

The folklore

The folklore, which still exists today, arises from a story based on the facts of the case, written by Thomas Miller and published in the Lincoln Times on 26 November 1859.

Miller was born in Gainsborough in 1807. Employed as a basket maker in Nottingham, he was encouraged by Thomas Bailey, a Nottingham author, to print some of his poems. These inspired the patronage of Lady Blessington, who persuaded him to move to London, where he became...
a bookseller, and continued to gain patronage for the publication of short stories and poems. Known as the 'Basket-Maker Poet', a considerable number of poems and novels were published in leading journals from 1838 until his death in 1874.15

E. R. Cousens, the owner and publisher of the Lincoln Times was sent two stories by Miller from his Sketches of English Country Life for possible publication. Two letters from Miller to Cousens, together with his handwritten tale 'Drinsey Nook and Tom Otter' are held in the Lincolnshire Archives.16

It is clear from Miller's covering letter that the story was never meant to be more than a piece of historical fiction. He writes:

Could you send me any little history of the neighbourhood of Lincoln that would enable me to pin a story to the tail of a fact now and then. To 'tie like the truth' is the great secret in writing tales of fiction.

All the existing tales are based on Miller's story. The following is a resume of just one of those stories found on the internet:

Tom lived in the county in the early 1800s. His story begins when he met a young girl called Mary Kirkham. The two became very close and then Mary eventually gave birth to Tom Otter's child. The laws of the day stated that Tom must either marry her or go to jail. Despite the fact that he was already married, on 3 November 1805, Tom took her to be his wife.

That night while they walked home together Tom killed Mary with a hedge stake. It was not long before the murder was discovered and Tom Otter was arrested and charged. He was sentenced to death at a trial which took place at the Sun Inn, Saxilby. Mary Kirkham's body was found in the lane and was also taken to the Sun Inn. As the body was brought in, blood splattered on the steps of the Inn. This blood was said to have stained the steps for many years after the murder took place, no matter what attempts were made to clean them.

On 14 March 1806 Tom Otter was hanged and then the body was fastened in irons and hung upon a high post. Even this event was surrounded by tragedy - the body fell from the post twice due to the weight of the irons and upon falling the second time crushed one of the men and killed him.

The stake with which Tom Otter killed Mary was kept for many years. Every year on the night that the murder took place the stake would be removed from wherever it was being kept. Many attempts were made to secure it using iron hoops or staples, but nothing was found that could hold it. The following morning, it would be found in the spot where the murder took place and would be 'wet with gore'.

No one knew what or who was moving the stake and it was eventually burned by the Bishop of Lincoln in the yard outside the Cathedral.17

Miller concludes his tale with 'The Confession of John Dunkerly'. He writes:

What follows was only known to one man until lately, and that was a clergyman, and he heard it from the lips of John Dunkerly himself as he lay on his death-bed at Doddington. It is Dunkerly who is alleged to have moved the murder weapon on each anniversary of the murder.

Doddington parish records have no entry for anyone called Dunkerly - or Dunberly (Miller's writing is not clear). It is interesting to note that a family called Dunkerly lived in Gainsborough when Miller was growing up there, and he may have remembered this surname and used it for his story.

An article appeared in the Lincolnshire Chronicle a week following publication of the tale:

A series of articles entitled 'Sketches of Country Life', by Thomas Miller, have recently been commenced in the columns of the Lincoln Times, and no. 2 relates to Drinsey Nook, near Saxilby, and the murderer Tom Otter. The article is of such an extraordinary character, so full of manifest absurdities, and so perverse to the true fact, that it has caused more than a fair share of attention. The Saxilby people, who are well acquainted with the story, are indulgent, and condemn in strong terms what they say is a mass of falsehood and superstition. Lincoln people, on the other hand, laugh at the nonsense, fully understanding how the author of the 'sketch' has drawn largely on his imagination for the purposes of exciting the wonderment and pandering to the superstitious ideas of that large class of rural population who yet believe in ghosts, hobgoblins and witches. Ghost hunters still visit the Sun Inn, in pursuit of a tale from a Victorian author. Miller's tale reads:

For years after they say the cries as of a newborn child were always heard in the room where the murdered woman was placed, and that was every 3rd of November. It is fascinating that a piece of historical fiction from the pen of a contemporary of Charles Dickens still interests today. 18

NOTES
1. Treswell Parish Records
2. Fackring Parish Records
3. Hockerton Parish Records
4. Ipswich Journal, 22 March 1806
5. The Times, 17 March 1806
6. Lincolnshire Archives
7. 16 November 1805
8. Lincoln Gazette, 6 December 1862
9. Barry & Norwich Post, 13 Nov. 1805
10. Saxilby Parish Records
11. Chatterham Chronicle, 6 June 1811
12. Bristol Mercury, 7 April 1832
13. Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury, 15 February 1830
14. Lincolnshire Chronicle, 2 December 1859
15. Dictionary of National Biography 1885-1900 Vol.37
16. Hill/41/4
17. For more versions of Miller's tale, see www.bbc.co.uk/lincolnshire/unexplained/tom_otter.shtml also www.mysteriousbritain.co.uk/england/lincoln/hauntings/sun-inn-saxilby.html and www.orpheusweb.co.uk/ynnad/tomo.htm
18. Lincolnshire Chronicle, 2 December 1859.
TREASURES OF THE COLLECTION

Antony Lee describes the museum's recent acquisition...

A miniature boar figurine from Great Sturton

Iron Age boars have become something of a recurring theme at The Collection in recent years. In 2009 we were delighted to acquire a bronze boar figurine from Rothwell Top (featured in issue 85 of Lincolnshire Past & Present), and earlier this year we welcomed the famous Witham Shield back to the county for the first time in over 150 years in a British Museum Spotlight loan (see issue 91 of Lincolnshire Past & Present).

In July of this year, another bronze boar figurine was acquired by the museum, increasing the number of finds of these charming and fascinating objects known from the county to three. This example, discovered at Great Sturton, is one of the smallest examples ever discovered, at just 37mm long. This miniature boar is freestanding and, just like the Rothwell Top example, shows no sign of ever being attached to another object, such as a helmet. Both were perhaps originally intended as votive deposits, though the Roman author Tacitus mentions the practice of a Germanic tribe, the Aestii, who carried boar figurines around for protection, even in battle, as symbols of a mother goddess (Germania, 45). Perhaps a similar custom existed in Iron Age Britain?

The Great Sturton boar lacks the incised details of tusks and hair seen on the Rothwell Top boar, but shares a number of similarities. Both have a rounded realism that sets them apart from many other boar figurines found nationally, which are often spindly and spiky in appearance, and both display enlarged dorsal bristles and alert, forward-facing ears. All three Lincolnshire boars have been discovered on the western edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, in relatively close proximity, though too few have been found to firmly suggest that this represents a specific focus for their use.

The Collection would like to thank the Friends of Lincoln Museums and Art Gallery for their generous grant towards this acquisition and Norwich Castle Museum for bringing the boar to our attention.

Antony Lee is Collections Access Officer for Archaeology at The Collection, Danes Terrace, Lincoln.

Friday Lunchtime Lectures at The Collection start at 1230 and last about 30 minutes. They are free of charge and booking is not necessary. On 18 October Craig Spence will speak on Recent Roman Discoveries at Bishop Grosseteste University; and on 15 November Ian Cox will speak on Recent Excavations at the Roman Small Town at Navenby.
An Awkward Letter

Rob Wheeler invites you to take part in a letter writing competition. The winner will receive a copy of the Survey of Lincoln's latest publication, kindly donated by the Survey of Lincoln executive. Read this true story, researched by Dr Wheeler, and find out how to enter.

This is a story involving three upper class families in the first half of the 19th century.

Dramatis personae
The first family was Lincoln based. Richard Ellison (1753/4-1827) MP was the third generation of Richard Ellisons who had been lessees of the Fossdyke Navigation. As trade had increased, so had their toll receipts. Richard had four sons and at least one daughter; all were by his second wife but at a time when he was still married to his first wife.

In consequence, the greater part of his estate, including his house at Sudbrooke Holme, passed at his death to his brother. Not that his (illegitimate) children were left destitute: the eldest, generally known as Richard Ellison of Boultham (1807-81) was left the entire parish of Boultham, with Boultham Hall - still a fairly modest house in 1830 when he married. Richard of Boultham comes over as a kind and sensitive man, whose letters are both lucid and elegant.

By 1851, when the events to be described occurred, only one of his siblings was still alive, Henry Ellison of Beaumaris. Henry's linguistic gifts were even greater: he would publish a book of his poems in 1875.

The second family was Devon based. John Wise (1751-1807) - the name is often spelled Wyse - was sufficiently grand to appear in Burke's Commoners. He was based in Totnes, where he was Recorder, and he appears to have leased the Rectory there rather than occupying the family seat of Wonwell Court. His eldest son is referred to as John Aysford Wise in his sister's draft will but seems to have used Aysford exclusively; he inherited the bulk of his father's estate, served as MP for Totnes, and died in 1847, leaving a large family, which need not concern us further.

Perhaps from disappointment that his own Christian name was not being perpetuated, John Wise named his third son John Robert Wise. This individual became His Majesty's Consul-General in Sweden. At this time such consular posts were honorary, which leads us to assume that he became a wealthy merchant, resident in Stockholm. But, by the mid 1830s, aged little more than 40, he seems to have retired from business and settled in Exmouth. More pertinent to our story, he married Jane, the daughter of Richard Ellison alluded to earlier. They had two daughters, Jane Elizabeth Emily and Laura Louise, born about 1832 and 1835 respectively. The father died in 1849, the mother earlier, so the girls became orphans.

John Wise also had a daughter Emily, born 1796. After her father's death she lived as a spinster in a modest house the family owned in Totnes, supported by the interest on £13,900 in 3% Consols. This would yield an income of £517 so she was very comfortably provided for.

The third family is that of the Rev Robert Hele Selby who, from a Fellowship at Exeter College, Oxford, entered on a successful career in the Church, becoming Rector of Colnsworth, just north of Bedford, in 1791. He took on the curacy of Blunham, a six-mile ride away, in 1793, but was doubtless glad to acquire in 1803 the living of Bohnhurst, which conveniently adjoined Colnsworth. He married a daughter of George Horne (1730-92) who was briefly Bishop of Norwich, and he produced a large family.

However, the event that really transformed his life relates to his middle name of Hele, presumably implying a link to the ancient Devon family of that name. The key evidence is that he took the surname Hele, becoming Robert Hele Selby Hele. Such an act is normally to meet the condition of a major bequest, though I have not traced the exact circumstances. That would explain why he resigned his clerical preferments; however, he seems to have remained in Bedfordshire, until in 1821 he accepted the living of Brede, just north of Hastings.
the 1830s one of his sons became his curate there and the father moved to Hastings, where he died in 1839 after his chaise overturned.

It is his fourth son, the Rev George Selby Hele, with whom we are most concerned. Born in 1801, he was later sent to Harrow. In 1819 he matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, but two years later moved to Peterhouse, Cambridge.

Ordained deacon in 1823, priest in 1825, he served a short curacy, then became Vicar of Grays Thurrock, whose patron was (very conveniently) his father. In 1828 he married Sarah Stanford. However, in 1829 he left Essex and took the curacy of Patcham, just north of Brighton. His wife's relative William Stanford owned the manor of Preston, between Patcham and Brighton, and this doubtless had something to do with the move. In 1835 he ceased to be curate at Patcham but continued to live in Brighton. By 1849 his wife was dead and there were no surviving children.

A marriage
On 17 May 1849 the Rev George Selby Hele, widower, of Brighton, married Emily Wise, spinster, of Totnes. The lawyers had prepared the ground carefully. The legal position was that a wife's property passed to her husband on marriage. Emily had no intention of becoming dependent in that way, so all her property was transferred the day before the marriage to trustees, two of whom appear to have been nominated by the husband (one of them was of the Stanford family) and two by the wife.

These trustees were to pay Emily £250 per annum 'pin money' - which would buy a phenomenal number of pins - the rest of her income going to her husband. The trustees also received from the husband sufficient in stocks to pay Emily £550 per annum during such time as she was a widow. Provision was made for the support of any children.

Also the trustees were empowered and required at the direction of George and Emily to spend up to £2,000 on the purchase of a suitable residence for them. A property variously called Kittos, or Kithoe House, or Keitios, was bought in 1851, a sizeable house standing in its own grounds on the edge of the village with a paddock behind. It is possible that the couple had been leaning it since their marriage, as White's Directory for 1850 lists Rev George Hele (sic) of Kithoe House.

A suspicious death
From Christmas 1849, Emily's orphaned niece Jane Wise came to live with them, even though Henry Ellison of Beaumaris had formally become her guardian. She would have been about seventeen. At the time of the 1851 census George's married sister was in the house, another niece, and four servants: lady's maid, cook, housemaid and footman.

On 14 May Jane wrote a letter (in a lively, girlish style, full of village gossip), attended an archery meeting, and then retired to her room. About six, she was found dead by a servant sent to summon her for tea. Lying on her face and hands. A surgeon was summoned and declared that Jane had died from an 'apoplectic fit'.

Laura, the younger sister, went to stay at Bishopsteignton for the funeral and some of the servants confided in her their concerns: that Jane had been confined to her room during the winter without a fire; that her letters, even to her sister, were overheard by Mrs Hele; and that she was acutely unhappy.

Laura then went to stay at Boultham Hall - the plan being that the Heles would join her there and reported to their uncle Richard Ellison what she had been told. She also mentioned a small bottle marked POISON that had been in Jane's writing desk.

Richard Ellison's letter
Evidently, Richard Ellison believed what Laura reported. In effect the Heles had treated Jane so oppressively that she had committed suicide. It would be intolerable to have them as guests: he needed to withdraw the invitation. This would be an extremely difficult letter to write. He could not actually accuse the Heles of anything on the basis of mere hearsay. On the other hand, to invent a sudden indisposition might be diplomatic but was dishonest and cowardly. At this point, you, dear reader, are invited to put yourself in Ellison's position, compose a suitable letter to write to Mr Hele, and dispatch it to the Editor. The best entry will be rewarded with a copy of the Survey of Lincoln's latest volume, The South Western Suburbs: East of the railway, which is being launched on 16 November 2013, with a chapter on Boultham Hall and the Ellisons.

The sequel
Following an exchange of letters, Richard and Henry Ellison visited Bishopsteignton on 19 July with the coroner. The inquest proper started on 23 July, with a jury empanelled; the body was examined on 29 July; and the inquest resumed on 14 August with a barrister in attendance to take care of Mr Hele's interests.

A few more facts emerged: Jane collected insects, using laurel leaves to kill them for her collection, and had brought a grub back from the archery ground; a trip to London was in prospect; the local chemist had extracted some of her teeth - which was thought quite normal. Mrs Hele's supervision of Jane's correspondence came about 'as circumstances had occurred in former days which made things unpleasant; that sounds like an unsuitable emotional entanglement. If so, it had not progressed beyond the emotional stage: that much was apparent from the post-mortem. The bottle had contained prussic acid (also known as essential oil of almonds), and Jane had consumed prussic acid immediately prior to her death. Also, there was no doubt from the evidence that she was subject to massive swings in her mood.

The jury took forty-five minutes to reach their verdict: 'Jane Wyse came to her death by taking essential oil of almonds, but whether she took it with an intention of putting an end to her life or not we cannot say.' So she was spared the stigma of being declared a suicide (a felony).

NOTE
1. Devon Record Office 5596/N/E/3.
Cecil Rhodes plays cricket at Sleaford

What did the famous (or infamous) colonial business tycoon Cecil Rhodes have to do with Lincolnshire? After seeing regular references to him and his family in the course of other local history research Michael Turland decided to find out.

In the course of research in late 19th-century Sleaford newspapers I came across intermittent references to visits to the town by Cecil Rhodes and his brother Frank (Francis). And other accounts of their activities, in India and Africa, referring to them as ‘our townspeople’ and reported in the local news sections of the papers (rather than among the national and international items). Also relevant is that a large house on Northgate, Sleaford, is known as ‘Rhodes House’.

Intrigued, I decided to pull together such fragmentary evidence as I could find; in the course of which I identified an unusual source as to their whereabouts, not previously used by anyone, I think? Namely, reports to local cricket matches.3 We are concerned with the period from about 1870 to about 1890.

The Sleaford visits were to ‘Aunt Sophy’, correctly known as Miss Sophia Peacock (1817–92) of the Manor House, Northgate. Her sister Louisa (1816–73) was the second wife of the Rev Francis Rhodes (1806–78) of Bishop Stortford. Louisa was the mother of Cecil and Frank (1851–95) and their seven brothers and two sisters.

Sophia’s sister Anne (1814–39) married Maurice Peter Moore (1809–66) attorney and inter alia Clerk to the Justices of Kesteven. Anthony Willson (originally Peacock) (1811–66) of Ratceby Hall, banker, and husband of Mary Fané of the Fulbeck family, was their brother. His son Mildmay, later Major-General Sir Mildmay Willson KCB, therefore, was the cousin of the Rhodes brothers.

Frank Rhodes was Sophia’s godson. From the early 1840s Moore lived at the Manor House, which then included Rhodes House, and other Northgate properties also formed part of the estate. After his wife’s death Maurice Moore wanted to marry Sophia, but she refused because of the legal impediment.

The frequent meetings between the two continued until his death in 1856 and included keeping an eye on his recalcitrant daughter, Russell. In 1866 Sophia inherited most of Moore’s wealth, probably worth a million pounds in modern terms, and took up permanent residence at Northgate.

Biographies of Cecil Rhodes mention that summers in his youth were frequently spent with Aunt Sophy – she arranged riding lessons for him – but I have not come across detailed evidence. So far as Sleaford is concerned, this would have been in the late 1860s and early 1870s, once Sophia was resident there.

But in the 1861 census Sophy was in St Helier, Jersey, watching over the ill-considered marriage of Russell Corrance (née Moore). With her was Cecil – the first specific link between the two I know of.

Our next reference is in the memories of Sleafordian David Smith, of about 1870:

I cannot speak of Miss Peacock without mention of her two nephews, Cecil and Frank Rhodes...

Many a time I have seen the brothers strolling up the west side of Northgate towards their aunt’s residence, Cecil (I don’t know why) invariably on the left of his brother. There was nothing then to show that he was destined to become one of our great Empire-builders, and to give his name to a vast country.

Both Cecil and Frank were cricketers – in particular, the latter starred for Eton against Harrow at Lord’s (an important occasion...
in the mid 19th century) – date as yet unidentified, probably c1868. I wondered whether they played at Seaford when they were there and appeared in match reports. Or to put it another way, whether their cricket gave evidence of their whereabouts in the summer.

In fact there turned out to be 29 cricket matches featuring the Rhodes family, over the period 1869-1876, but in particular in 1871 (Frank), 1873 (mainly Cecil) and 1876 (Cecil). In 1871 Frank was 26, Cecil 18. The twenty-nine are, of course, the reported matches; there may well have been others.

Only one match is found in both 1869 and 1870, each featuring both Frank and Cecil, at Fulbeck in September 1869 and at Seaford in April 1870. The latter game also featured two Verburghs, sons of the Vicar of Seaford. By August 1870 Cecil was on a 70-day voyage by sailing ship to join his eldest brother, Herbert, in Cape Colony: his objective to raise funds to finance a degree at Oxford so as to become a barrister. Aunt Sophy gave him £2,000 (the equivalent of £130,000 now). He stayed in Africa until 1873.

Meanwhile, Frank appears in no fewer than thirteen matches between May and October, with three as captain. His ability is shown in June when he scores 50 runs out of a total of 111 against Boston on the 8th, 104 of 196 on the 15th, and 37 out of 81 on the 21st – the poor quality of pitches has to be considered, good players made double figures! In August he scored 92 out of 177 and took four wickets against Haverholme on the 3rd and 4th. On the 17th and 18th he played for Gentlemen of Lincolnshire against Free Foresters at Lincoln, scoring 58 of 184 and 59 of 191. A local game against ‘Public Schools’ included his younger brother Ernest (1852-1907). Frank departs for the Kimberley mines area in 1872. The youngest Rhodes brother, Elmhirst, is staying with Aunt Sophy in August, when a schoolboy match is arranged at the Manor House (why this warrants a press report is a mystery!). There is also an account of 1872 of his playing with the sons of Dr Jacobson and the daughters of Mr Weldon, who lived on Westgate, backing on to the Manor House grounds across the drive to Westholme from Northgate of 1872.

By the summer of 1873 Cecil has accumulated £10,000 (worth £650,000 today) – I do not propose to go into how, suffice it to say he was involved with diamonds and gold. In June he is in Seaford, playing cricket with Frank. Cecil alone plays more games in July and August, once scoring in double figures.

Cecil began his studies at Oriel College, Oxford, in October 1873. It may be in connection with this that he had contact with Carre’s Grammar School, Seaford, where local belief has it that he studied. Greek and Latin were important entrance requirements for Oxford, and Cecil’s were poor (he did not, unlike his brothers, attend public school). He may have been tutored during the summer of 1873 by the Rev Chilks at Carre’s.

Unfortunately, in November 1873 Mrs Rhodes died. Cecil in particular had a close relationship with his mother, and losing her may have contributed to the illness (he had ongoing poor health, dying aged only 43) that sent him back to South Africa at this time. He did not return to his studies until March 1876 (although he may have returned in the summer of 1874). Worth £40,000 (the equivalent of two and a half million pounds today) when he returned, Cecil stayed at Oxford until 1878, visiting South Africa in the long vacations. In the summer of 1876 he played several games of cricket at Seaford, all in August and September.

There are no subsequent mentions in following summers. By 1878 the draw of diamond mining was too great, and we find him staying at Kimberley, not completing his degree until 1881. This was a period of great upheaval in southern Africa, the Zulu war, with the disgrace of Isandlwana and the heroism of Rorke’s Drift, and the ongoing conflict between Cape Colony and the Transvaal of the Boers. Cecil was heavily involved. In June 1877, aged 23, he said:

I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race... Africa is still lying ready for us it is our duty to take it. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory...

One may comment that Rhodes’ morals were no better than his competitors’ but he was (generally) better at empire building than they were and a better businessman, if unscrupulous. In 1881 he became an MP for Cape Colony. Occasional mentions in the Seaford press continue, albeit a fragmentary picture of the activities of Cecil Rhodes and his brother Frank. There is, however, a gap to 1884 in local news, which may reflect the ownership of the Gazette and lack of copies of the Journal.

In January 1884 Captain Frank Rhodes of Seaford, of the 1st Royal Dragoons, was en route to Egypt. He was aide-de-camp to General Gordon (and a pall bearer at his funeral in January 1885 following his death at Khartoum). On their return from the Sudan Frank and his cousin Colonel Willson of the Scots Guards were given a public dinner on 6 August and presented with addresses of appreciation. This event in Seaford Corn Exchange warranted a full three columns in the Gazette. Frank became Major Rhodes in September, and by December ‘our fellow townsman’ was a Lieutenant-Colonel. The following year Cecil became Chairman of de Beers, and Prime Minister of Cape Colony with Afrikaner support. The headline in the Seaford Journal of 26 July 1890 was:

Miss Peacock’s nephew becomes a colonial P.M.

The Gazette devoted its editorial of that date to a review of Rhodes’ career saying:

Mr Rhodes in company with...
his brother, Colonel F. Rhodes of Egyptian fame, are both well known and respected in Sleaford...

By this stage Rhodes' British South Africa Company was allowed a private police force or, more accurately, a private army. The Sleaford papers have ongoing reports of the activities of 'our old townsman' as Prime Minister.

Meanwhile Frank of Sleaford had become a Colonel in 1888, and in December that year is described as being a special service officer (or spy) in Suakin in the Sudan. In 1890 he moved to India as Secretary to the new Governor General of Bombay, Lord Harris (of cricketing fame). A 14-inch high frosted silver cup with hunting scenes arrived at the Sleaford Rifle Volunteers in September, and in May 1891 the St Denys' church organ fund received £5. A second cup arrived in August 1892, and in December that year — with a DSO — Frank accompanied the British Commissioner to Uganda. Meanwhile brother Cecil declined a DCL [Doctorate of Civil Law] from Oxford in November, having previously turned down a KCMG [Knight Commander of St Michael and St George] from the British Government.

Cecil was in England in 1891 and on 28 February his relatives at Rauceby as well as Aunt Sophy received a visit. He appears again on 11 December 1892 — fortunately as it turned out, because his aunt died suddenly on 19 December, aged 75, by which time Cecil was on his way to South Africa. Thus neither he nor his brother Frank were able to attend the funeral or send a wreath, Frank being in India.

Godson Frank inherited from Aunt Sophy and the property remained in the hands of his executors until sold off and subdivided in 1924. He used the Manor House as his English base until he moved to London in 1897. I have come across a lecture by him in Sleaford in January 1899, of his army memories — lecturing was not, he says, an activity he was used to!

In Africa, both brothers were involved in the notorious Jameson Raid into the Transvaal in 1896. As a result Frank received a death sentence for treason, commuted to exile, and Cecil and his partner had to pay out £200,000 (say £26m) each in compensation. There was a British Government Inquiry known as a 'Lying-in-State at Westminster'.

Cecil died in 1902, after involvement in the Boer War including the Siege of Ladysmith. Frank died in 1905. And the Manor House estate? From 1897 to 1923 it was the home of Mrs Elizabeth Cross, cousin of Prime Minister Lord Derby. She is another fascinating link between Sleaford and the wider world — but that is another story.

NOTES

1. The period from 1895 has yet to be studied in Sleaford papers and may, in due course, reveal further Rhodes-Sleaford links.

2. Sleaford Gazette and Sleaford Journal from 1885 (found early 1886 — earlier issues are missing). Some issues are not available so there may have been more 'Rhodes' reports than I have found.

3. From time to time teams from Sleaford firms played cricket e.g. Kirk and Parry, Charles Sharpe. The players are presumably employees, particularly useful where a XIX is involved.

4. At a later date I hope to be able to progress matters into the 20th century, up to the deaths of the brothers in 1902 and 1905.

5. It was illegal, in statute and canon law, to marry one's deceased wife's sister during the 19th century (but not in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662). The way round the law was to marry abroad; this Sophia refused to do.

6. David Smith (1858 – 1937) was the son of the miller at the junction of Westgate and Castle Causeway. The mill was demolished in 1880. In the mid 1930s Smith wrote a series of articles, which appeared in Morton's Lincolnshire Annals of his childhood memories in Sleaford. He left the town in the late 1870s. His pieces (34 of them) were rediscovered in 2008. The Rhodes reference is from Memories of Old Sleaford, published 1934, purporting to refer to 70 years earlier. The memories are unlikely to predate Sophia Peacock's residence at the Manor House of 1866.

7. Ernest played for the Schools; he was at Sandhurst at the time. The Schools seem to be ex-pupils, living in the Sleaford area, and included two Finch-Hattons of Haverholme Priory (Elton), Robert Yerburgh (Harrow), G.H.W. Hervey (Eton), and Herbert Kirk (Harrow).

8. The original is a note of 1906 from Weldon's grand-daughter, in the possession of Sleaford Museum Trust. It refers to a Dr Shaw (correctly Jacobson), Cecil Rhodes (Elmirsth is the right age for the context, Cecil far too old), and the aunt as named Snow (Peacock). Other details, most notably the location of Weldon's shop at No 32 Westgate, allow the story to be reconstructed.

9. I take the view that such legends usually prove to have a factual basis. Cecil may, of course, have attended Carles during term time, between 1886 and 1876, but no evidence of it has been found in Carles records.

10. A 'Rhodes' plays for Sleaford in August 1874. There are no families of Rhodes in the Sleaford Registration District in 1871 or 1881 (Frank is a guest at his uncle's at Rauceby in 1871); so this is likely to be one of our Rhodes, most likely Frank? Elmirsth is perhaps too young at 16. Cecil is certainly in South Africa at the end of May.

11. Having been founded by Fawcett, the Sleaford Gazette is in the hands of Wilkinson 1875-83, and Sampson, until sold to Morton in 1888. The Sleaford Journal was founded in 1879 but archive copies begin in 1888.

12. The original estate comprised what are now known as the Stable Yard, the Manor House, Rhodes House, No 35 Northgate, turn Northgate and the site of Roberts Tyres ('The Wilderness') and other buildings behind Northgate, 13 acres of park fronting Dove lane, and land south of the Marquis of Granby.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Pam Atfield, Simon Pawley and Douglas Hoare of Sleaford History Group to whom this item was originally given as a talk in December 2012.

It is now 33 years since Tennyson: the unquiet heart, the biography written by Professor Robert B. Martin appeared (Oxford University Press and Faber, 1980). That volume was over thirty years after the seminal biography provided by the poet's grandson, Sir Charles Tennyson (Macmillan, 1949).

As Professor Batchelor reports in his prefatory remarks much material has come to light since Martin's fine volume; he draws especial attention to the definitive three-volume edition of the poems by Sir Christopher Ricks (Longman, 1987) and the edition of the Tennyson letters, prepared by Lang and Shannon and also in three volumes (Oxford University Press, 1982-90).

Much other critical work has also appeared not only on the poet but also his many friends and acquaintances and other prominent Victorians. Since the formation of the Tennyson Society (1959) and the subsequent opening of the Tennyson Research Centre (TRC) in Lincoln's Central Library there has been a much greater focus for all types of research into the poet's life and works. Since Martin's work the TRC has of course acquired a vast range of documents for its permanent collections, though he did, in fact, have access to much of that material before its final purchase.

Now another prominent scholar of things literary and Victorian has turned his attention to the story of the poet's life from its often unhappy beginnings at Somersby Rectory to the adulation he received as one of the greatest of Victoria's subjects. Indeed, at the end of his volume the author professes that one, if not the main objective, of his chief motifs for undertaking his work has been the need, as he sees it, to separate the great Victorian as opposed to the romantic poet he really was. Although Tennyson maintained a steady flow of work almost until his death in 1892 it certainly comes through in this narrative how much the poet adopted an increasingly grandiose concept of what his appointment in 1850 as Poet Laureate meant. Helped by his wife, Emily (who had her own idea of their grandeur), and least support by the increasing adulation he received from the general public, Tennyson's own egocentricity fed a need to be placed on a pedestal. After 1850 his circle of friends extended to many members of the aristocracy and contact with them was assiduously cultivated.

Professor Batchelor has read very widely all the latest literature not only as it relates directly to the poet but also to many of the key figures in Victorian England. That he does not seem to have discovered anything new in the way of data relating to the life is hardly surprising; there seems little likelihood that anything very startling can turn up by now. Tennyson hated the way biographers worked over their subjects lives to the detriment, as he saw it, of proper appreciation of the works. Because of this his widow and son Hallam, in preparing the two-volume account that Hallam published (1897), destroyed vast quantities of personal documents.

Similarly, there is limited scope for fresh insights into the poetry. That is not to say that there is not a great deal of comment and quotation from the works; there is much discussion and, in considering In Memoriam particularly (but also other works, such as Idylls of the King) his detailed reading of the whole helps him provide a thought-provoking analysis. If the author seems more in sympathy with the works up to and including In Memoriam he undoubtedly reflects a view widely held now. It is this body of work that supports his separation of the grand old man of Victorian letters from the lyric poet who was the natural successor to Keats, Byron and Coleridge. His discussion of the poems that have been related to Tennyson's supposed love for Rosa Baring (pp 85-90) seems to me to stretch beyond what the poems can bear. At the end of the book he seems to show some preference for the very elegiac poems that were produced at the end of the poet's life, including Merlin and the gleam, which he regards not only as remarkable but in it Tennyson seems to sum up his writing life.

This is a considerable addition to the Tennyson literature. I did not find it easy to read always. There is sometimes some break up of the flow to insert other matter; one example is the reference to Dr Matthew Allen who is introduced on p.107 but we wait to discover what the fateful consequences were (p.129); there is only one reference to Mrs Anne Gilchrist and that is to suggest that Mrs Gilchrist resisted Emily Tennyson's persona and disapproved of the way she molluscoded the poet; this comment seems tacked on in a rather inconsequential manner and takes no account of the way the Tennyson were supported in the building and move to Aldworth. A few minor Lincolnshire references have gone astray. I liked the misprint of Somersby as Sombersby (p.9) - in T's youth it must have seemed like that at times; Folkingham (p. 16) is a slight error and the footnote (p. 268) seems to confuse Gunby Hall with the Lion Gate at Scrivelsby.
The book is well illustrated and a substantial achievement. What emerges is a clear picture of the qualities of the poet and his works but also, equally clearly, that (like many another great man) he had feet of clay. His absence of letter writing and of dealing with household matters imposed an enormous burden on his wife and, when she became more ill, his son Hallam was hauled out of Cambridge to become his father's amanuensis. His single minded focus on his work made him less than easy to deal with and many of his circle were alienated at some time or another by his curmudgeonly behaviour; the Coventry Patmore episode was just one that showed Tennyson in a poor light. And, ironically, we know all this in spite of the efforts to conceal personal materials that his wife and son destroyed after his death.

**BOYCE, Rosalind.** *Foreword: Harold Tennyson RN, the poet's grandson.* Tennyson Society, 2013. 29pp. ISBN 901558 63 1. (Occasional Paper, 13). £3.50 pbk (or £4 by post from the Society, Central Library, Free School Lane, Lincoln LN2 1E7). In this occasional paper, prepared for the Tennyson Society, Mrs Boyce uses the extensive archive of the Tennyson Research Centre in Lincoln's Central Library to relate the story of the brief life of one of the poet Tennyson's grandchildren.

Harold Tennyson was the third son of the poet's eldest son, Hallam. After a year at a prep school it was decided in 1908 that the boy should join the Royal Navy and, aged 12, he began courses lasting nearly five years, two years at Osborne Naval Training College, then two more at Dartmouth and eight months on a training ship. What follows is taken largely from the diaries Harold kept, and tell of his horrendous baptism at sea on the warship HMS Cumberland in the Bay of Biscay, followed by more congenial calls in Tenerife, the West Indies and the east coast of Canada. Much of the time seems to have been spent on visits for tea parties, dancing and other social activities, sadly broken by the need to study engineering, gunnery, rifle drill etc. There are vivid descriptions of the places visited; most of the West Indian islands and a happy time in Canada when Niagara Falls were included in the itinerary. One of his fellow cadets was Prince Albert (later King George VI) and they became good friends; the only problem was that their good will visits to foreign parts meant crowds wanting to see the royal prince, especially in Canada.

There are full descriptions of seeing such sights as the Pitch Lake in Trinidad, the devastation on Martinique after the 1902 eruption of Mont Pelée and going down a coal mine on Cape Breton Island. On return to England he joined HMS Queen Mary and he recounts meeting the Russian royal family while on a Baltic cruise. When the war started he became navigation officer on a destroyer, HMS Viking on Dover patrol duties. Sadly, the ship struck a mine off Boulogne and Harold was killed, still only 19 years old.

All in all, here is a portrait of a lively and well-liked young man in his physical prime. Ros Boyce has produced a very readable distillation of all the documents still in Lincoln and it deserves a wide circulation.


Brown's Hospital is one of the great medieval glories of Stamford in Lincolnshire. Despite extensive rebuilding in 1870, its front range of dormitory, upper chamber, and two-storey chapel, complete with their rich stained glass and fixtures, still remain much as designed and constructed in the late 15th century. The hospital was built to make a statement and it continues to do so with great force and elegance today. The moving spirit behind its foundation was William Browne, merchant of the Staple of Calais and a man of influence and power in Stamford and beyond. In a meticulous re-examination of the documentary and structural evidence, Nick Hill and Alan Rogers revisit the foundation to reveal a tale of political intrigue and family feuds at odds with the received version of the history of the hospital.

Hitherto the foundation's own account of its origins have been widely accepted. According to a narrative entered in its account book in the early years of the sixteenth century, it was built and endowed by William and his wife Margaret in an entirely private act of philanthropy. Hill and Rogers argue, however, that this story was partial since it was written at a time when the warden's control of the hospital was challenged. The guild of All Saints in Stamford claimed it as their own foundation and guildhall. The structural analysis of the existing structure adds considerable force to this claim: the characteristics of the upper chamber are precisely those that might be expected of a guildhall. The authors conclude that William Browne founded the hospital in his capacity as the alderman of the guild, only subsequently, as principal benefactor, to change his mind and appropriate it as his own foundation. There are indications that confusion of roles had already given rise to tensions during William's lifetime, but conflict only came into the open thereafter with the rivalry between William's grandson and heir William Films and his nephew Christopher Browne.

Christopher and the guild seem to have won, but history was on the side of the warden: the guild disappears from the records shortly after the dispute. *Guild, Hospital and Alderman* is at once a gripping detective story and a subtle analysis of individuals and power in the late Middle Ages. The authors remind us that documents are no more trustworthy because they are old; they must be deconstructed every bit as much as stories in newspapers today. Official histories may be written by the victors, but the historian's role is to make sure they do not get away with it. Brown's Hospital hasn't.

**Dr David Roffe, Nuffield College, Oxford.**

**JONES, Robin.** *Lighthouses of the East Coast: East Anglia and Lincolnshire.*

"When is a Lighthouse not a Lighthouse?" was the subject line of numerous emails exchanged between members of the Industrial Archaeology Team following publication of the book Lighthouses of the East Coast: East Anglia and Lincolnshire. Well, I turned to the book for answers but I didn't really find any. What I did find, however, was a beautifully-illustrated book about all sorts of seafarers' navigational aids along our coast, most of which would not (to my mind) be classed as lighthouses but which, nevertheless, are interesting in their own right.

The east coast of England was a perilous place in the days when coastal sailing traffic was the only economic form of bulk transport and coal was the lifeblood of the country. Before the railways, thousands of ships carried coal from the North East to London and elsewhere. Many vessels foundered off the coast and are charted today, locally their demise is partially attributable to the lack of identifiable landmarks along the coast of Lincolnshire and Norfolk coupled with treacherous shallows and strong tidal flows. The presence of navigational aids was essential.

This book describes the histories of many of the lighthouses, leading marks and illuminated aids along the coast, starting at Trent Falls where the Trent joins the rivers Humber and Ouse and continuing down to the north shore of the Thames estuary.

Their stories are related in detail and they include Boston Stamp, which may have had a light (but unlike for navigational purposes) and Dunston Pillar, which certainly did (it was intended for navigation on land), but the book does not mention the light atop College Hall, RAF Cranwell, which folklore tells us was registered at Trinity House (it wasn't). There is a chapter about the three lighthouses at Killingholme. Prior to the first one being built in 1831, the brethren of the Guild of the Holy Trinity of Hull had insisted that trees obstructing the view of the church from the Humber be cut down and later that the church tower itself should be whitewashed to make it more visible as a day-mark. The three lights were built in stages, the last one in 1851. Today, two of these structures lie within the grounds of a gas storage facility and the third is residential. All three are Listed buildings and are probably unknown to most people.

There's nothing wrong with the use of folklore; indeed, publishing is how stories are perpetuated, but the dust jacket of this volume proclaims "...this is a definitive guide to the lighthouses and primary light vessels." I cannot believe this is all original research yet there are no sources quoted and no references given despite the subject being well documented elsewhere, for instance by Douglas Hagne and Rosemary Christie in their 'Lighthouses', which is often quoted as the definitive guide. There is a map showing the location of most, but not all, of the sites (Killingholme is notably absent) and there is no index. It's a shame as this book is pleasant to read and has beautiful illustrations on every page, but its contents must be taken with more than just a pinch of salt.

Chris Lester, Newark-on-Trent


This is a follow up to the author's first volume, which covered the RAF graves in Scampton churchyard. Volume II covers those in Waddington St Michael's churchyard from 1917 to 1958, the last burial there. However, prior to covering the interments there is a brief history of RAF Waddington and a précis of how the RAF treated burials since WWI. During the first half of WW2 those killed went to their home towns, if their families so wished, or were buried in RAF plots in local cemeteries, but from 1943 those not returned home went to newly established regional war cemeteries in our area at Cambridge or Harrogate. It follows that many in UK plots are Commonwealth airmen unable, of course, to be returned home.

The authors have again produced a readable and interesting volume, discovering facts about the lives of the 52 people buried and the circumstances of their deaths. Whilst many were in flying accidents others died from natural causes or in peacetime accidents, such as Corporal Christison who set off for Scotland to visit his family for Christmas 1938 and collided head-on with a lorry near Bracebridge Heath.

A Luftwaffe bombing raid on RAF Waddington on 9 May 1941 saw the church in Waddington village demolished together with 19 houses, one person killed and others seriously wounded. It is a measure of the authors' research that they make the point that the unfortunate casualty, a 20-year-old girl called Eva Hall, who was a maid at the Rectory, had the night off to go to a dance and was staying with her grandparents in the village when rubble fell on to her bed mortally injuring her; however, had she stayed at the Rectory she would still have died as rubble fell on her bed there too. Two months later, in the early morning of 22 July, a Hampden, returning from a raid sowing mines near the Frisian Islands, crashed on Greystone Stairs in Lincoln killing the four crew and a French teacher at the nearby Lincoln Girls' High School, a Miss Fowler, who lived in the staff quarters there.

Your reviewer was particularly interested in the story of the Vulcan crash at London Airport in October 1956, from which three airmen are buried in the churchyard. I was one of the last people to see these men alive as I was on duty in Air Traffic Control in Aden when they flight-planned to fly from there to the UK. There was a deal of controversy about this very public crash at the time and since then; the authors present well-judged and concise comments on this.

This is an interesting and informative book for anyone with an enthusiasm for RAF or local history and is well illustrated with relevant photographs.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham
‘To a land beyond the seas’

Between 1786 and 1851, 135 women were convicted in the courts of Lincolnshire and sentenced to a term of transportation to a land beyond the seas. Ann Harrad was one of these. Bill Painter investigates her crime.

At the time of her arrest Ann Harrad was living with Andrew Douglas in Pen Street, Boston, where he appears to have been making a good living as a surgeon. They had moved there from Skeford. The practice was near the centre of town, and frequently used by those attending the market. Fees of £2 or £3 a time were payable. Ann managed the financial affairs of the household and was known locally as Mrs Douglas. The practice was sufficiently profitable to enable them to keep a horse, on which he visited his country clients, and a servant, Sarah Cay.

Ann collected the income and paid the bills and wages. If the doctor wanted money he asked for it. Sarah was present once when Mrs Douglas was settling a debt and saw a quantity of sovereigns in a drawer in her bedroom. The servant had no doubt that Ann was in the habit of saving, and was ‘not an expensive woman’. There will be later some suggestion that the couple were not prompt payers of debt and had been pursued by local tax and rate collectors through the courts for outstanding funds.

In the summer of 1833 a Matthew Plumb came to lodge with the family. Plumb was employed as a clerk by Frederick Cooke who carried on a business in Boston buying and selling properties and arranging mortgages. The nature of Plumb's work meant that he sometimes returned home with large sums of money, received by him on behalf of his employer. Ann Harrad (Mrs Douglas) took care of the funds till they could be passed to his master, Mr Cooke. Plumb had friends in Yorkshire, and the household was aware he intended to visit them towards the end of April 1834.

On 22 April Plumb was sent by his employer to Lincoln. He was to deliver a set of title deeds for an estate Cooke had purchased on behalf of a Mr Drury. Plumb was not to collect the money for the purchase – it was the time of the Lincoln Fair – but was provided with a letter directing Drury to pay the £806 due into the Lincoln bank. When Plumb boarded the Horncastle coach that morning Ann Harrad was also a passenger. On arrival in Lincoln Ann continued on her journey while Plumb met the client.

Plumb produced the deeds to Drury and, after explaining their content, asked for the purchase money of £806. No mention was made of Cooke's letter. Drury deferred as the funds were lodged in the bank and asked him to come back the following day. Plumb said this was not possible as his employer had instructed him to go on to Hull and use the money to take up a mortgage. Both men went to the Lincoln bank, where the cashier knew Plumb. Drury withdrew the necessary funds, which included a £500 note drawn on the Manchester branch of the Bank of England, and gave the money to Plumb.

Meanwhile Ann Harrad continued on across the Humberside and arrived at the George Inn, Hull. Using the name of Plumb she asked for a private room, explaining that she was expecting to be joined by a gentleman from Lincoln. She asked the waiter, George Screeton, if the steam packet had arrived, and on hearing that it had she remarked, 'I have given him up now.'

Plumb arrived at the hotel later that day with three boatmen. He had been drinking heavily. On asking for his wife he was shown up to Ann's room by a chambermaid. Both Matthew Plumb and Ann later came downstairs for supper and 'Mrs Plumb' told the waiter that her husband was going to America to buy land. They returned to the bedroom as husband and wife. The following morning they walked into town and ordered a portmanteau bearing a brass name plate inscribed 'M. Plumb', and two smaller boxes, from Pooles, a local trunk maker.
These cases were delivered to the George that afternoon. Plumb called at the premises of Rose and Burton seeking to change the £500 note. One of their assistants, Clarke Haddon, accompanied him to a local bank where they were unsuccessful, but Pease and Liddels were able to change the note for sovereigns. Plumb wrapped the gold in a handkerchief and returned with Haddon to the George where Ann was introduced as Plumb's wife. Taking Haddon's advice, they wrapped the sovereigns in paper, in sets of 20 or 30, and placed most of them in one of the boxes delivered that morning. Ann took the boxes upstairs to the bedroom where she and Matthew slept as man and wife.

That evening Mr Cooke received a letter from Plumb asking that he be allowed to stay in Lincoln on account of his ill health. But the following day Plumb boarded the Mary, moored on the waterfront at Hull, his luggage being carried on board by 'Boots' at the inn, Charles Ash. Ann was at the waterside to see the Mary sail and later called at Rose and Burton where Haddon noticed she was carrying a small bundle tied up in a handkerchief.

Ann left for Boston at one o'clock. Ash carried her luggage down to the New Holland packet ship, but she declined his offer of help with a small package in her hand. That evening Ann came into Boston by the Horncastle coach and was met by her servant, Sarah. Sarah confirmed that her mistress was carrying a small box and a bundle. The box weighed very little, and when she opened the bundle at home found it contained dirty clothes.

When Plumb failed to return to his work place one of the other clerks made inquiries at his lodgings. Mr Douglas told him that his wife had gone to Horncastle. He called again on the Sunday evening when 'Mrs Douglas' expressed surprise at Plumb's failure to return on the packet from Hull, and was quite unhappy at his absence.

On 12 May the Boston town beadle or chief constable John Streton called at Douglas's home. The beadle was in possession of a search warrant, and as a result of what he told them, Ann retrieved a glass jar containing parcels of sovereigns from a drawer in a room upstairs. She said it was their savings and Andrew Douglas agreed.

When the sovereigns were counted there were eleven parcels of 20 and one of sixteen - 236 coins in all. A further search revealed a small trunk that was packed and Douglas said they were soon to leave. Some cards had been prepared, saying 'Mr Douglas. Wharf, Nottingham. To be left till called for.' Their servant was not aware they were going away. Streton apprehended both and they were taken to the police office.

Andrew Douglas and Ann Harrad were later charged with receiving the sovereigns knowing them to be stolen, and were brought before the Recorder at the Boston borough sessions on 4 July. They both pleaded not guilty. When they addressed the Jury, Douglas said the money was all his own and Harrad agreed. Plumb owed her £5 rent and she had lent him £6 when he went away. He asked her to take his luggage on to Hull. When he repaid the £11 she did not ask him where the money had come from.

After the jury heard the evidence, their counsel, Mr Staniland, made several objections to the indictment. Firstly they were both indicted for receiving the property and clearly this was not so. Secondly the money was Mr Drury's, not Mr Cook's, and thirdly they were indicted for receiving sovereigns, yet the money paid out by the bank had been in bank notes.

After considerable deliberation the jury found both defendants guilty. Thomas Broughton, the town mayor, and Recorder, said there were important objections that needed to be resolved before sentence was passed and he would write to the Secretary of State for guidance. The prisoners were remanded to the next sessions; a request for bail was refused. A reply confirming the conviction was not available until the January session, when Andrew Douglas was sentenced to six months imprisonment in the house of correction at Boston, while Ann Harrad was to be transported for fourteen years. She was duly removed to the prison at Lincoln Castle.

But what of Matthew Plumb? I hear you ask. I cannot find him, I am not sure. In October 1834, following the conviction of Ann Harrad and Andrew Douglas, Frederick Cooke placed a notice in the Stamford Mercury offering a reward of £50 for the recovery of the sum outstanding. He refers to Matthew Plumb, deceased.

Ann sailed from Woolwich in April 1835 on the barque Mary, a sailing ship of 360 tons (I doubt the irony escaped her). Built at Ipswich in 1811, the Mary was quite old for a wooden vessel and had already taken female convicts to Hobart in June 1831. When Ann sailed, William Ayscough was the master and John Inchies the surgeon superintendent. There were 180 female convicts aboard and a number of their children. Ann Harrad was the only woman from Lincolnshire.

They experienced remarkably fine weather, sailing direct to Sydney in 143 days, and arrived on 6 September. The surgeon ensured the prison ship and occupants were kept clean. The only death was that of a woman who came on board in a debilitated state with a child at her breast who she would not agree to wean. Signs of scurvy were tackled with increased lime juice in the sherbet (a mix of wine and sugar). In his journal Inchies records there was no trouble keeping the women and sailors apart! Sometime after her arrival in the colony Ann may have married a John Touse. I know nothing more of her life in New South Wales.

*Sovereigns were gold coins about one inch across with a nominal value of £1.

SOURCES
Boston Herald, 8 July and 21 October 1834 and 10 January 1835.
Stamford Mercury, October 1834.
ADM 101/51/7 National Archives, Kew, Surgeon's Journal, ship Mary.