A beleaguered fortress awaiting bombardment
A hundred years on – the dark writing of Bernard Gilbert
Lincolnshire Past and Present Spring 2014

Welcome

This issue is dedicated to our dear, and very much missed, colleague and friend Hilary Healey, the anniversary of whose death falls on 13 May this year. The above photograph shows Hilary (centre in white trousers) in 1996 as many will remember her – the leader of a group on an educational visit to a Lincolnshire landmark, on this occasion Grimsthorpe Castle, but her talks, walks and tours included a variety of buildings, landscapes and archaeological sites. I hope you will enjoy our selection of Hilary’s articles, poems, stories and pictures, which can be found on the 16 centre pages together with accounts of her work from her friends and colleagues at the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.

Ros Beevers, Editor

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LINCOLN ON THE EVE OF WAR

The observations of Bernard Gilbert in the Lincolnshire Echo during 1914

Andrew J. H. Jackson on the worth and relevance of the writing of Bernard Gilbert with quotations from his original documents is the first in our series on the First World War, which is to appear over the next five years in Lincolnshire Past & Present.

THIRTY YEARS AGO Maurice Hodson had the good foresight to arrange for the reprinting of Living Lincoln by Bernard Gilbert. The work was originally published by the Lincolnshire Echo as a collection of articles written by Gilbert to the newspaper. Gilbert, born in Billinghay in 1882, had just started to establish himself as an author of poetry, plays, novels, and political pamphlets. In January 1914 he moved to Lincoln, and began to write the 19 articles that would appear over a six month period from the February of that year, and eventually be collected together in Living Lincoln. The pieces are lengthy, ranging from 969 to 1,608 words. The Echo's editorial towards the front of the work states that it was the level of the popular response to Gilbert's articles that persuaded the newspaper to compile and publish the collection.

There is relative ease of access to a copy of the reprinted edition in local libraries today. This means that we have readily at hand what is a fascinating source to accompany us during our approach to the centenary of the eve of the First World War. A number of characteristics of Gilbert's Echo articles stand out: the range of topics that he covered; his sensitive and empathetic consideration of the lives of city dwellers; his critical and at times polemical opinion; and his colourful and literary descriptions of everyday scenes in pre-war Lincoln. Furthermore, the reader today will be left with the impression that Gilbert's writing has not lost any of its force, insight or subtlety; and his contemporary observations and prophetic speculations retain a remarkable level of currency and topicality.

Much might be picked out from the 19 articles of Gilbert. In 'The Football Crowd', for example, he expresses a sense of the 'religious' devotion towards the sport: 'We are at once proud and defiant. Stincil Bank is a word of magic and a centre of attraction to more people than all the churches and chapels put together'. Gilbert is no less enthusiastic about a spectacle that is no longer an entrenched feature of life in Lincoln: horseracing on the Common. In 'The Handicap' he comments: 'What a democratic sport! How the hope of getting a sovereign for sixpence animates the multitude!' By contrast, 'Within the Minster', he is found more uncomfortable and questioning:
the independence bred in my bones stirs as I listen here. Harsh and unlovely are the Puritans, cold and hard as the basal rocks, but they are the backbone of our race; they mark us apart from other peoples, they 'save' the nation... There seems no room for personal worship here, no real congregational singing, no share for the layman, except to listen.

In 'Civic Pride', he turns to the role of libraries, and the significance of Lincoln's new public city library. Some of his comments might be considered to retain relevance:

"Books are the last things to be found in our houses. I speak with sadness because the first thing I look at in a strange house are the books. I say 'at', for it should be 'for', -- and when found -- alas!"

Gilbert, in another article, also highlights the experiential satisfaction of a trip to Lincoln, one that endures:

"What, after all, is the real difference between town and country life.... It is the city streets that mark the difference, the life that pulses down these conduits, the human tide coursing through these arteries."

Gilbert makes much of the significance of factory work for the life of Lincoln in a piece on 'Labour', observing that: 'they are the fountain of nearly all work in Lincoln... If the foundries collapsed there would be an end to this Lincoln. That is pretty clear.' Moreover, in 'The Future', he called for the improvement of the city of Lincoln for its workers and its industry:

"A mass of slums and crooked streets want dynamiting and a new centre creating, a new channel for Lincoln's growing trade, a new conduit for a prosperous future."

The longest of all of the articles is 'War in Lincoln'. In this piece Gilbert constructs a literary and imaginary picture of the near future:

"It will be a reversion to the Middle Ages, when every city was liable to attack, siege, or massacre, had laid its walls, moats, and sleepless watch. It will bring home to the most sheltered the grim reality of war, and one imagines our English citizens free from conscription and ignorant of invasion, glancing apprehensively upward as a cloud passes the sun, or as some bird casts a shadow across their path. In time of war Lincoln will be in constant danger, experiencing the anxiety of a beleaguered fortress awaiting bombardment, for although by day the defence may make good its position, the night will be a time of terror and suspense, and a night attack on Lincoln by a fleet of raiding aero-cruisers laden with inflammable torpedoes is beyond all imagination. However powerful the defending aero fleet, however capable the defensive measures, the night will be the enemies' opportunity, and it is here that the most alarming and incalculable aspects of aerial warfare are found. Precautions may be taken, guard-boats, scouts, or electrical indicators may give warning of an enemy's approach, and searchlights may scour the heavens in all directions, but these measures are available only in fair weather. The beating rain, the blinding snowstorm, the blizzard, and the treacherous fog will spell terror to the defenders, and what they can do but pray is impossible to conceive... This is what war means for Lincoln."

In a later article, 'Night in the City', Gilbert concludes:

"As I walk up Spring Hill I often think I can hear the great animal -"
the corporate Lincoln—breathing in its sleep. May it continue to slumber peacefully, undisturbed by earthquakes or burglars, or Germans…?

Bernard Gilbert would leave Lincoln for London for the war years, and serve in the Ministry of Munitions. He did not stop writing and publishing, however. His works of poetry, for example, that had begun to appear in print just before the First World War, would be joined by three further collections of verse by 1918, with a particular emphasis on life on the Home Front.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to those who have encouraged me to bring the work of Bernard Gilbert to new and wider attention. This includes Maurice Hodson in particular, but also those sharing my interest and enthusiasm in recent years following presentations in which I have referred to Gilbert's work, for example, to The Survey of Lincoln project, the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, and the Ingham History Group. I am also grateful for the help of Kevin Best, Collections Access Officer, Lincoln Central Library, for assistance in identifying visual sources relating to Gilbert. In addition, I would also like to thank the Library of Bishop Grosseteste University, whose copy of Living Lincoln: I originally fell upon, used somewhat enthusiastically and heavily, and which has now been necessarily and prudently rebound; and undergraduate History students at BGU, who have been called upon to share in my estimation of the worth of Gilbert's writings. Further information on Gilbert would be gratefully received by the author: Dr Andrew Jackson, Senior Lecturer in History, Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, LN1 3DY.

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Notes

2. Pp. 29
3. Pp. 33–4
4. P. 41
5. P. 48
6. P. 76
7. P96. See also Jackson 2010, p.58; and Jackson 2012
8. Pp. 46–7
9. P. 67

References


NOTES & QUERIES 95:1

This postcard has been attributed to Horncastle but there seems to be considerable doubt. Can anyone shed any light? Was this image taken during an election campaign?

Mark Acton, Lincoln
NOTES & QUERIES 95:2

Free franked envelope

Lincoln November Second 1819
Read this letter
Sounded
Lincoln
Wills

THIS FREE FRANKED ENVELOPE front was signed by J. Gordon in November 1819. It has been suggested that this was John Gordon, son of George Gordon who was Dean of Lincoln for many years. The privilege of free franking mail belonged to Members of Parliament, Peers, Bishops and certain office holders. Can anyone tell me why John Gordon should have had this right?

Mark Acton, Lincoln

NOTES & QUERIES 95:3

Unexpected find

I NOTICED this old industrial structure (left) near a footpath off Cross O’ Cliff Hill, and assumed it was part of a former brick works. Although the building is in walking distance of my home I had not been aware of it before. According to an 1887 map of Bracebridge the site occupied a large area, but appears to be unused by 1920 (right) with Bracebridge Brickworks further to the south near the railway. Was this a newer works belonging to the same company, and when did the old works stop production?

Ros Bevers, Lincoln

1920 OS Town Map of Lincoln with Old Brick Yard at the southern end of South Common. (Bracebridge Brickworks off this map, to south and west).
Our tribute to Hilary

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Hilary of the Fens

Teacher, archaeologist, poet, artist, writer, humorist, heritage professional and champion of Lincolnshire and the Fens – we stand forever in your debt.

Born near Grantham, Hilary Healey and family subsequently moved around Lincolnshire with her father’s work and consequently Hilary acquired a youthful introduction to, and love of, the various and varied landscapes of the county. From hilly heathland to the rollercoaster roads of the Wolds Hilary knew the zones.

But of all the different landscapes, she understood and appreciated most of all the Fenland. It was there she settled, there her academic drive and artistic creativity flourished, there her enquiring mind delved the fascinating ‘land of the sea’. And there she developed the ‘fen eye’, the ability to see that the Fenland was not flat (nor boring), that it demonstrated a clear vertical as well as horizontal dimension.

It is a land where micro-undulations and muted oscillations tell the story of land creation, of losses and gains, of natural formation and human utilisation, a landscape wherein topographic and geographic clues have to be eased apart forensically.

And Hilary revelled in it. The man who stated that the ‘The Fenland has no landscape – only land’ was proved wrong.

Hilary chose to live in Bicker, curiously named and once some sort of mini seaport at the inner edge of an inlet of the sea. She liked the notion of living well away from the present-day coast yet near to former sea banks; close to what appears like a once major estuary but through which trickles the most minor of watercourses.

Ensniced in the Fenland Hilary furthered her interest in medieval saltmaking, aware that her cottage sat amid the barely discernable remnant of late Saxon mounds of this industry. As with many of the things she studied Hilary soon became an authority.

During widening of the nearby A52 she was able to walk from her house and record medieval saltmaking features in the newly excavated dyke sides at Bicker Bends. ***

While still teaching art Hilary had excavated a medieval saltmound in Quarrington (Healey 1999). She analysed medieval pottery, another crossover interest between art and archaeology, studying all aspects of ceramics and, as always, inspiring others along the way.

And so with zeal and enthusiasm Hilary explored and recorded the Fenland, this curious sea-land, crossing it and viewing it from every angle, recording cottage and sluice, drain and defensive bank, gate and goal. Few areas remained unexplored, few fields were able to shy away from her lens. She annotated maps with names of fields, banks, finds and successions of landowners. Labouriously she copied hard-to-read original documents, acre books, land transactions. She amassed detail, file on file, ordered by parish, period or topic. With the emphasis on ‘full-time’ Hilary became a full-time archaeologist and with, and alongside that other Fenland Archaeology pioneer, Brian Simmons, helped lead the Heckington-based Car Dyke Research Group, anticipating the future and putting the ‘community’ into archaeology several decades before the concept of amateur >
involved became once more the fashionable 'future of archaeology'.

And throughout this time Hilary was quietly building up her portfolio of original drawings and paintings of her favourite landscape, her personal take on the fields and farms, cottages and countryside, capturing mood, melancholy and the starkness of their Fenland settings.

With her own personal fieldwalking forays Hilary became the first to confirm the previously academically pooh-poohed notion of an Early and Middle Saxon presence around Spalding (Healey 1979), single-handedly revising the then accepted history of the region. Later the Fenland Survey expanded westwards and south into Norfolk, the Saxon Fenland heartland first discovered by Hilary. Later still, new techniques such as Lidar confirmed the accuracy of her earlier field-based recording of salterns in Bicker Haven.

And on went Hilary, indefatigable. If anything, retirement intensified her efforts. She devised and led walks; she lectured, led evening classes, took stands at the agricultural shows, all the time disseminating. New data came to light, new angles to view from, new facts to be filed.

Her knowledge was encyclopaedic and she could have written much more. But Hilary's gift was that she was constantly passing on her hard-won knowledge, to individuals, to colleagues, to groups, to evening classes, to anyone who asked her for it and many who didn't. She gave freely of her time and her vast knowledge.

She inspired numerous groups and she aided greatly the careers of many individual archaeologists (and this writer is privileged to have been one of them). Fenland Landscape studies owes her - big time. In the field she had vision (the fen-eye) and knew what was land and what was landscape. She helped identify, protect, conserve, interpret and tell the world about Lincolnshire's heritage and archaeology.

Tom Lane, Heritage Lincolnshire

Cottages and open doors

If we can all remember to notice the detail and to consider what this tells us about the character of Lincolnshire, Hilary's influence will continue to be felt.

When I joined the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire in 2002, I was asked to co-ordinate Lincolnshire's annual Heritage Open Days programme in partnership with the Steering Group. Hilary Healey, Jean Howard, and Sylvia Walker were among the founding members of the group and, although I hadn't realised it, I was about to receive an education in Lincolnshire's heritage.

Hilary was passionate about telling the story of Lincolnshire's past and she actively encouraged local historians across the county to open their doors and to share their research. My first challenge, being a Derbyshire lass, was to learn how to pronounce all of the Lincolnshire place names. Hilary not only helped me with this, but was also able to explain that the place name gave clues about the landscape it was situated in and the history of the local area. If I mentioned a historic building, she could tell me about the architect, the family who lived in it and the local historian who had carried out research on it. If we discussed a theme for the Heritage Open Days programme, she could identify at least 30 relevant people or places I could invite to take part.

If I took a phone call from someone who was ringing to ask for an event form, I could put them on hold while Hilary gave me information on their interests and potential...
contribution. Heritage Lincolnshire could also always rely on Hilary to contribute to the programme and she led many guided walks around places of interest, drawing on various aspects of her local history research and professional expertise. Along with her colleagues on the steering group, Hilary was instrumental in the growth of Heritage Open Days and in ‘opening the doors’ of Lincolnshire’s heritage to thousands of residents and visitors to the county.

Hilary and I also shared an interest in the vernacular architecture of Lincolnshire and she often discussed her research and recent discoveries. The county is rich in buildings that reflect its geology, landscape and history, and Hilary was fascinated both with materials and with methods of construction. This included the traditional mud and stud cottages, fen cottages in the south of the county, and early brick and tile buildings. She also noticed the detail employed by local craftsmen that made individual buildings unique.

Ptolemy Dean (of ‘Restoration’ fame), explained in an interview with The Telegraph “You can’t really understand something until you get that time just sitting and drawing... trying to learn from what we have around us...” and this was exactly what Hilary was best at. She drew, photographed and recorded what people often dismissed as ‘ordinary’ buildings or ‘insignificant’ detail.

She worked hard to ensure that these buildings were conserved and for their significance to be fully understood, and offered information to local planning authorities as they were considering plans to alter or demolish them. However, many of the buildings that she visited and recorded have since been lost, making her research an important body of work.

Liz Bates, Heritage Lincolnshire

AN EXHIBITION OF HILARY’S PHOTOGRAPHS AND DRAWINGS of fenland cottages was held at Ayscoughfee House, Spalding, in the 1990s (above left) as part of her campaign to raise awareness of Lincolnshire's fenland heritage and the fact that, sadly, important buildings were being lost. One such was Porch House, Sibsey (above right), which Hilary photographed before it was destroyed by the owner in 1964. It was said to be the first brick house of the Fens and, in 1958, was understood to be the oldest inhabited brick house in the country, but when the last tenant moved out it was used as a piggery before being left empty and derelict, and eventually deteriorated so badly that police permission was sought to burn it down, on a day when the wind was in the right direction to take the smoke and flames away from the nearby road. Another piece of fenland heritage lost for ever, but not before Hilary recorded it with her camera.
The Merry Month of May

© Hilary Healey.
First written for the Swineshead Parish Magazine in 1987.

There is nothing in any country quite like the English spring, no country where the green is quite so green, a Czechoslovakian acquaintance of mine always said. It is an optimistic month, a new season even if not a new year, with everything to look forward to. So our ancestors must have thought when they crowned May Queens and, in Lincolnshire, held their annual hiring fairs and beat the parish bounds to make sure the season started with everyone's landmarks in the right place.

I read in Maureen Sutton's A Lincolnshire Calendar that in both Bicker and Swineshead bounds were beaten recently at Rognantine, which sometimes falls in May. In these large fenland parishes, and on foot too, it must have taken all day!

The old spring hiring fair also known as the 'status', is generally associated with Lady Day (25 March), but it seems to have been a May event in Lincolnshire, as on different dates in different places. It was probably around 1 May, as in Pinchbeck in the 16th and 17th centuries, but later came elsewhere to be the 13th or 14th. Although May Day was 1 May, the second week in May was referred to as May Week. This is probably the result of the calendar changes of 1752, which started with 3 September becoming 14 September.

The famous Boston May Fair was more than a hiring fair, dealing with sheep, cattle and horses into the 20th century. Though it starts early in the month, the hiring part took place on the 14th, on 'the Green'. Boston May Fair began in the Middle Ages, when it was a trading event of international fame, with merchants coming from all over Europe and Scandinavia to sell furs, spices, wines etc. For a few years in the 13th century Boston had more trade than any other port except London. Times and the May Fair have changed somewhat but it has survived, and the port flourishes, though with different products. But do people still plant their runner beans when they 'meet a man coming from Boston Fair'?

There are many customs and sayings connected with May. One or two friends of mine remember as children going 'a-Maying', taking a decorated doll in a basket and collecting money. Specific to the month are weather sayings, some of which are still known, or recorded in books. 'March winds, April showers, bring forth May flowers' must be the best known.

There are different versions of the calendar poem that begins: 'January brings the snow, Makes our feet and fingers glow'. Later lines, which my mother could never quite remember, can be: 'May brings flocks of pretty lambs, Skipping by their fleshy dams', but this wording sounds suspiciously Victorian. More simple is: 'A cold wet May, plenty of corn and hay'.

Not all May sayings are cheerful. 'As many mists in March, as many frosts in May; Marry in May, you'll rue the day', and the famous warning about casting 'clouts' too soon, is not to be taken lightly. In the 1950s Michael Planders and Donald Swan invented their own doom-ridden version of the calendar rhyme; this includes Farmers fear unkindly May, Frost by night and hail by day, not inappropriate this year!

One aspect of the month considered highly unlucky was the bringing of May (hawthorn) blossom into the house. The reason is not clear and therefore often ascribed to a connection with witches. Perhaps it is simply the fact that it has an overpowering smell, and perhaps was apt to bring on hay fever.

A floral custom that Maureen Sutton has noted was to make a ball of cowslip flowers to throw over the house (just possible with a small fenland cottage) or stick in the cowshed to keep witches or bad luck at bay. There are still cowslips in the fens, but they tend to be on the banks of larger rivers and dykes.

Rook pie was eaten in mid-May. Young rooks were netted or more recently, shot, to keep numbers in check. Only the breast was cooked, but I am told it was quite tasty. Since rooks like to eat leatherjacket grubs, something of a pest, perhaps we should now encourage them more. I once heard that it was unlucky to remove a rookery, but have never seen it noted down by anyone else.

The lines below are the first verse of a hymn written for 1 May, the feast of St Philip and St James, not well known, as it is only likely to be sung when 1 May falls on a Sunday.

The winter's sleep was long and deep
But earth is awakened and gay
For the life never dies that from God doth rise,
And the green comes after the grey.

I like the last line, as it seems to sum up May as the real beginning of spring. Despite everything being so early this year it is still all fresh and green thanks to the extra rain.
...Bourne, which they dislike not...

A brief account of a local pottery industry

© Hilary Healey for TLA

The once small but rapidly expanding market town of Bourne lies on the south-western Lincolnshire fen edge, overlooking some of the last remaining peat fen in the county.

Water rises at the junction of limestone and gravel and the springs fill a large pond known as St Peter's Pool. A supply of fresh water would always have been important in the choice of Bourne as a settlement site. During the Roman occupation of Britain two roads joined here before heading south towards the Nene valley. The Car Dyke, the great Roman catchwater drain, runs north-south along the eastern edge of the town and gave its later name to the hamlet of Dyke.

The rich deposits of clay that abound below the gravels have been regularly used by man for a variety of purposes including the manufacture of pottery, both in the Roman period and later. Nineteenth century brick works operated south-west of the town.

Potters require clay, water and fuel. In the Bourne fen traces of former peat diggings dating from both Roman times and the Middle Ages have been recorded. Once again peat is being dug out, but nowadays it is for garden use rather than for heating.

Roman

Roman buildings and artefacts have long been found in and around Bourne and no doubt more await discovery beneath later buildings. In 1959 remains of a Roman pottery kiln were found at the south end of town in the Grammar School grounds. Although only one kiln was seen it is likely that there would have been others in use, even if only by a small family business.

The finished products, though wheel-made, are coarse by modern standards. Unglazed, they vary from red to very dark grey, and appear speckled with pieces of crushed shell. It has been possible to reconstruct some of the complete shapes as shown. Jars and dishes could be used for almost every conceivable purpose, but, the odd shaped piece at the front of the group is probably a candlestick. This material is not of top quality as far as Roman pottery goes, and seems
only to have been sold to people locally, up to about ten miles from the source. One bowl base has been perforated for use as a colander.

**Medieval**

Much later, about the 13th century AD, local clays were once more in demand. This time the kilns were situated at the eastern edge of the town, near the river known as the Bourne Fau. By 1330 the industry was evidently so well established that Eastgate had been renamed Potter Street. Production on a large scale is evident from the huge amounts of waste pottery that regularly turns up in the Eastgate, Cherry Holt Road area.

Some of the old clay diggings off the east end of Cherry Holt Road remained visible as ponds into the present [20th] century. When they were frozen over they were a popular venue for skaters! The 14th century potters made large and small jars (for storage and cooking), jugs and milk panneons, most of which were in a sandy textured grey to brown fabric. A dark olive green glaze was used to decorate jugs and to waterproof the inside of some jars and all panneons. Glazed ridge tiles were also made, and some are still to be seen on buildings in Stamford. Some of these have been found in recent excavations in Cherry Holt Road.

**Post-Medieval**

Pottery making continued in this area through four centuries. In the 16th century major local landowners were actively encouraging ‘foreign artificers’ to come into the area.

In a letter to William Cecil in 1570 Richard Bertie described how two Dutchers were sent to him, the one a baker of earthenware vessels, the other a dresser of leather. I first sent them to Bourne, which they mislike not. They were also taken to Stamford where they were equally pleased, for the one ‘found very good earth and indicated an interest in settling there.’

We do not know whether this man, or a fellow countryman, also liked the ‘earth’ in Bourne or whether descendants of the old potting families were still on the go, but somewhere about this time there were marked changes in the appearance of the wares.

New shapes were combined with an improvement in the quality of the fabric, which became fine and smooth and of a pale pink to grey colour. Some pots were partly dipped in a whitish slip (clay and water) over which a clear glaze gave an attractive mottled effect, varying from yellow and brown to apple green. A brighter green glaze was obtained by adding copper oxide.

The greater range of products, as shown, includes mugs copied from continental imports. A new design of ridge tiles came out, examples of which can be seen in Stamford Museum, and these were also sold as far away as Tattershall Castle. The most exotic item is the chafing dish, an early food warmer, which held hot charcoal; it was based on a metal prototype.

The success of these later potteries is indicated by their wide distribution. Products were marketed as far away as Lincoln to the north and Kings Lynn to the east, and you will find fragments in almost any field and garden in south Lincolnshire.

The parish registers describe the dramatic fate of the main industry: 'On the 25 of February 1637 a fearful fire happened in the Eastgate'. A 19th century historian William Marratt adds:

This fire destroyed the greater part of Potter Street, and did much damage to East Street (or Eastgate)

...[this] happened through carelessness at the Potteries, which were destroyed with the street and never after rebuilt.

This statement is not strictly true, as there are one or two later written references to individuals who continued working until almost the end of the 17th century.

Large two handled ale-pots from the later kilns were dug up as long ago as 1893 near the Gas Works, and at first mistakenly identified as Roman. Foundations of both a later and earlier medieval kiln were excavated by N. Kerr in 1973. The early one had four flues equal distances apart, the 16th century one had three; peat fuel used in such a kiln, which probably looked like a small version of a bottle kiln.
Kirkby Laythorpe 1982
(demolished 1984)

Kirkby Laythorpe 1988
PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS
BY HILARY HEALEY
Food recollections during the war
At home in Nocton Vicarage and away at school in Staffordshire during the Second World War

We had a very large garden, like all old vicarages, probably once kept by a large team of gardeners. Arthur Pygott did the vegetable gardening, and also grew for his own use, that is as an allotment. Later he had a boy, Kenneth Melton, then presumably just out of school. The Village Produce Association grew out of the Pig for Victory campaign. It was very active, with an autumn (or late summer) show. This was highly competitive, especially among a group of local enthusiasts, not necessarily all from the village, who competed for the tray of mixed vegetables. This was quite an artistic display. Size was important in the individual veg classes. Arthur's great success was producing an onion that measured 14 inches round the 'waist'!

We kept goats, which I learnt to milk. When indoors and being milked the goats ate 'nuts', which were like sugar cube made of bran. I did try eating them but was not over impressed. Another goat keeper in the village made butter. Mother made butter and milk cheese, but gave up the butter making as churn ing in those days was very laborious.

We were not badly off, though I suspect our parents would not have let on if there were problems. There was at least one clergyman who contrived to arrive at mealtimes, which did not go down at all well. But we had our own fruit and vegetables including soft fruit, and an orchard of 60 trees including quince and crabapple. Pears, plums, damsons and medlars grew around the garden.

There were also half a dozen chickens, Rhode Island Red, so we usually had eggs. I don't recall fox problems but I think they must have occurred, and I was once scared by rats in the chicken house, which was in part of an old barn. Mother would not eat her own chickens when they were old, so they were collected and new ones bought.

Chicken was a great treat especially for Christmas – or a cockerel, which was bigger! We would occasionally be given pheasants in winter, a hare or rabbits and pigeons, but we never had rook pie, which has been a great disappointment to me.

Our mother bottled a great deal of fruit, and apples were laid out in trays in the attic. She preserved runner beans in jars between layers of salt and treated cucumber slices similarly. Father grew the little ridge cucumbers outdoors; they could be bitter if all the male flowers were not removed. He tried many unusual vegetables such as salisbury and chard, but did not persevere with most of them.

At one stage he grew some particular marigolds (tagetes) for the war effort; we picked the seeds as soon as the petals were gone, but I don't know what they were used for – possibly some sort of oil. Father was a pipe smoker and grew tobacco for a while. This was hung up in the very dry attic, where it did quite well, but I think he gave up smoking soon after. 'Invasion stores' were kept in a large unused kitchen at the vicarage. Large cardboard boxes or crates, mostly of tinned stuff such as vegetables, especially peas and M&V (meat and vegetable stew), but some margarine and possibly dried goods (more peas). Later, when the crisis was over, M&V was on sale and was a very nourishing stew. Peas were canned at Barnby, I seem to remember.

If we were in Lincoln or Grantham and went to the pictures, we might have tea or lunch at the cinema. In Lincoln we went to Boots café, which was a special treat, and also used their library a lot. We ate at one or two British Restaurants, and I do remember one at Spalding in the Sheep Market.

We had half a share of a pig at least twice (that would be two years, I think, once a year) with Arthur Pygott, who always called the pig Joey. We may have had more, but I don't remember as we were always away during pig killing.

During the war many food products had their distribution 'zoned' to within a limited radius of the factory. This was the case with Shredded Wheat, of which we were rather fond, but Lincolnshire was too far away from Welwyn Garden City. Luckily an uncle and aunt in London were within this and so we exchanged parcels of vegetables and apples in season for parcels of Shredded Wheat. We had porridge every day in the winter.

I don't remember much about meat. We were introduced to every sort of offal – kidney, heart, liver, sweetbreads, which I loved, but I don't know if it came for any fewer coupons. I only grew to like tripe later, but I loved pigs' chitterlings, which I went on buying at Curtiss's in Lincoln well into the 1970s. I liked Spam and corned beef as long as there was no gristle present, and remember both these being made into fritters. I never tasted whale, though I was keen to try it. That was probably just after the war. I'm not sure whether I ever tried Smok (was it Norwegian?) but I never turn fish down!

We never had horse meat but there was a horse meat butcher in Lincoln, on the High Street, somewhere south of where Marks and Spencer now is. There was a very strong smell to the meat as one passed the shop, and that was rather offputting. Opposite the High Bridge Café on the north side
of the river was Macfisheries, which was a fascinating place. A favourite Lincoln shop was Scott's, the old family grocers at the upper end of High Street. After the war they sold Fullers cakes, which were a great luxury. An interesting episode was when Mother bought a Fullers walnut layer cake in a fancy box. It had been made with a bad egg and it smelt from the moment we opened the box. It was replaced but the whole business took weeks. Mother did a lot of baking, mostly sandwich cakes as I remember, but plenty of pastry. I have to confess that I always wanted bought jam tarts as I liked the very short pastry from a shop, especially a little baker's in Carre Street in Sleaford.

One imagines that deliveries by the butcher, baker and fishmonger would not have come during the war, unless by horse and cart. But I suppose some came on bikes from bigger villages. The baker had a huge flat basket with all his various loaves in it. From the butcher we purchased 'lights' for the cats on a Saturday. These had to be boiled for some time - not a very pleasant smell, but just about bearable. Bought fish and meat pastes were good for sandwiches or on toast, as well as mashed up sardines. Marmite and Bovril, honey and marmalade figured high on our menus. We must have bought honey locally.

Smith's Potato Crisps more or less owned the village, and so we were introduced to crisps, especially at the Christmas party that the estate gave at the village hall. I still have a Puffin book signed by Frank Smith himself! The American hospital at Nottin Hall also splashed out with occasional children's treats, though the only food I recall from them was Hershey chocolate bars and tubes of boiled sweets very like Polo mints in appearance. They were lifebelt shaped and called Lifesavers, and I think could be mixed fruity flavours or a single one.

My sister and I were away at school in Staffordshire, the idea being to avoid the many aerodromes in Lincolnshire. Ration books had to be handed in, as they did if one went to stay with friends and relations. Damsons grew more or less wild in the locality and it seemed to me that we lived on damson jam and stewed damson, so that I did not eat damson jam again for years.

We had a lot of root vegetables, presumably locally grown, especially swedes and parsnip, which I did not care for, and beetroot ditto. One day we were given a horscht, which most of us disliked; it never appeared again. Grated cabbage and carrot in salads we called 'rabbit food'. In those days salads were strictly a summer dish. Suet puddings were called 'stodge' and pastry with currants was 'squashed flies'. Irish stew, with pearl barley, was often served, and a Lancashire hotpot with potato slices on top, and we had some good mince dishes. Meat dishes were always well cooked. I have no idea where the fish came from but we did have it on Friday, with fishcakes at other times; the latter were one of my favourites. We occasionally had a herring or a kipper each for breakfast and if you didn't learn to de-bone them you would starve! There was sometimes smoked cod or haddock. Surplus kippers reappeared in what was probably a fricassee, in a white sauce that we knew as 'kipper slosh'.

We once or twice had a sort of kedgeree at the junior school, but being unfamiliar with rice as a savoury dish I was not that keen. Persecution, however, I thoroughly enjoyed another junior meal, which was Rice Krispies and gravy! Of course, the Krispies would not have been sweetened and the gravy was the real thing. It was also important to eat quickly as, if one's whole table had finished, then we could go up for seconds!

Our sweet ration was available on Saturday, though we had probably brought it home at the beginning of term. It might only be two pieces (not a whole bar) of chocolate or two loose sweets. We looked to various other substances to obtain sweetness - dried milk, drinking chocolate powder, Ovaltine and Bournvita. 'Fruitarian cake' was an early, unrationed, vegetarian cereal type bar that some pupils had, and sometimes one could get hold of dates.

Some of us took to keeping these dietary supplements in our lockers and scooped the contents out in handfuls. I was too clever and brought my Christening spoon along to use (no plastic ones). Then suddenly we had an invasion of ants in the lockers; everything was seized and disposed of, including my treasured silver spoon. I was in a lot of trouble all round!

Once or twice a term, at weekends, parents and other visitors might appear and could take you out for a meal or two. You might also be left or sent a cake, which was shared with your table (ten people). Clearly this opportunity for over indulgence was of concern to the powers above and on Monday breakfast we would have some healthy dried fruit such as prunes or figs, to keep us going, so to speak. After several years of the figs I finally realised that the many little bits of fig that floated in the watery juice in which they had been soaked, were actually minute caterpillars. Fortunately no one believed this, and I imagined they were probably dead long before they reached us and I was not unduly worried.

Evening meals for the bigger juniors often consisted of bread and dripping with cocoa. The beef dripping was fine, especially if you got a bit of jelly gravy with it, but the cocoa was lumpy. We ate alongside a long hatch, and there was an outside exit nearby. On summer evenings the door was open and we could dispose of the cocoa outside. Otherwise we could dribble it into a large doormat set into a shallow recess. Why no one ever reported all this cocoa in or under the mat remains a mystery. On one occasion I led a small protest group aimed at larger meals and we then began to have fishcakes or egg on toast. Dried egg was not unpleasant when scrambled, just was not the same taste as real egg. Peanut butter and chocolate spread were popular at teatimes, as a change from damson jam, but they were probably late on in the war or just afterwards.
NIGHT LIGHTS
Driving home
late at night
across country, I leave the warm house, well-lit village
and turn suddenly into the dark
of country lanes.

This is the dark,
where every new light
half illuminates a mystery.
What are they doing, those two men at a field gate?
One takes a torch
and disappears across the grass
to unseen black cattle,

Rarely looms
the mass of darker building, an isolated cottage
with one square of high yellow window.
Late roarer or light sleeper?

More lights ahead
moving erratically.
And as I pass
the yellow armed
JCB swings into view.
Scouring a drain?
Digging a pond?
Levelling an ancient monument?

From a lonely track
cul-de-sac
two pairs of headlights
silently rejoin the road.
Guilty lovers
or agricultural theft?

A pinpoint of bicycle lamp
going home?
Going where?
Out in the middle of nowhere.
No Persons Land.

HEDGES, 1970
Today I saw some hedges, just a few.
Not the prim privet of the private plot
Or the overgrown rambler on the cottage lot
Nor the long field hedges in ordered lines
But other survivors.
The short stretches reprieved.
Dying, split and slashed,
Cut and gashed rather than plashed
With white wounds machine ripped.

And then a stubby, shrubby hedge
Short and bristling
Where honeysuckle licked and curled its tongues
Around the straight hawthorn.
Here and there
the bright green burst
of acid acid elder
Or purple maple, like a thornless thorn.
Now the hedge widens, spreads,
and reaches out and up.
With here a tree
and there a splash of flowers.

Then suddenly
the hedge was gone
and the road ran on.

CATS
These are the nights that cats like,
Out on the tiles and along the larch lap,
Roads and fences are their network
Stalking or walking or taking a catnap.
Spreadeagled in cool corners
And on the roofs of sheds and cars.
Settled comfortably on kerbs and pavements.
Padding with measured tread along the garden walls
inscrutable in silence and silhouette.

A SPOON
A wooden spoon upon a shelf
Got tired of lying by itself
It soon set up a dreadful howl
And fell into a puddling bowl
So it managed to cause a stir after all.

POEMS AND DRAWINGS BY HILARY HEALY
A Marsh for all Seasons

I T IS TRUE that the fens are flat; it is not true that flat equals boring. The farmland changes colour with the changing light of seasons and crops, but for real timeless atmosphere go down to the marsh. In Lincolnshire there is the world of difference between fen and marsh. Fen is inland, affected by fresh water; marsh is land affected by the sea. The fen may be drained and managed, but the marsh remains unchanged unless captured by new sea walls.

One approaches with anticipation. Leaving the village by old winding lanes you first find the erratic medieval sea bank, standing high 600 years ago. Beyond it lies a newer landscape, a vast sky over vast fields, and a straight road making for a level bank that masks the horizon. Somewhere out there is the sea.

Against this newer bank are grass fields, with scraps of hawthorn and black iron buildings, once a farm. Two poplars create the only landmark, with stiles and gates in silhouette. Climb the bank, and the world is before you, stretching to three of the four horizons and dotted with the dark-skinned cattle and horses. Sadly, these days, there are fewer sheep, for they do less damage to the banks.

Marshes are grass, mud and water. Long grass by the worn path gives way to short grass and seaplants, in summer buzzing with insect life. Mud itself has a bad press, but is here in its element, taking many forms and colours. In the sun it shines like satin; in dry weather the shallow pools crack into crazy drought patterns. Damp surfaces are impressed by hooves, paws and boots, or threaded by the delicate trails of the wandering wader.

But this landscape cannot exist without water. At low tide the creeks hide in a grey-green prairie, and invisible geese chatter at the water's edge. On spring tides it becomes a lake. The incoming current rushes along creeks, but fills pools almost imperceptibly, marked only by subdued gurgling and the eddying of surface vegetation. Often only by watching a particular tuft of grass for several minutes are you aware that the water is rising. After dark disembodied cries, of both birds and animals, are the only sounds.

At high tide the grazing cattle wait until almost surrounded before starting slowly for the bank. Every now and then one disappears into a creek with an horrendous splash but resurfaces to resume its lumbering progress. On one exceptionally high tide a particular group set off too late and then calmly turned back to the place where they had been grazing, on slightly higher ground.

But this is not a mere picture. Painting, birdwatching, walking, learning how to cross slippery creeks, creative writing, everything is possible. And the ultimate joy is picking autumn samphire, a bright, succulent plant, good to cook or preserve, but crisp when fresh, especially with fish and chips. Come back and try it some time.

Hilary Healey, 1998
Medieval Saltmaking

An extract from The Archaeology of Quadring © Hilary Healey

A row of Hawthorns on a saltmire at Wainfleet

...on the west side its banks all along for several Miles a great many antient salt Works may yet very plainly be traced. A few of the pannes to hold the Sea water seem not to exceed an acre. Near each is a sill hill where the Boiling utensils were placed.

John Cragg describing Bicker Haven, c. 1790.

Quadring Eaudyke was probably an early hamlet of Quadring on the banks of Bicker Haven. The name can be translated as 'Quadring Riverbank'. The Eau- prefix is from the Saxon 'Ea' meaning a river. Here can be seen not only the parallel lines of old sea banks but also the spectacular remains of the mounds left from saltmaking. Two 'salt-pits' are mentioned in Quadring in 1086; they would certainly have been situated by the sea bank at Quadring Eaudyke. Today only a narrow strip of the parish extends into the former Haven, north of the green lane known as Warren Road, but at one time more of Quadring parish lay south of this lane. When the Haven was still tidal the marsh outside the sea bank would have been subject to common rights, but after the Haven became dry new boundaries were laid out.

The sites of medieval saltmaking are distinctive in two ways. In the flat fen landscape any upstanding feature, even of only a few feet, is deemed a hill. A series of these 'hills' lies all along Bicker Haven. Even where sites are less mounded, or have been partly levelled, patches of light, dark, and even reddish, soil catch the eye, and are especially distinctive from the air. These are marram saltmire mounds, consisting entirely of waste material left by the medieval saltmaking industry. A comparison might be made with slag heaps in mining areas. The manufacture of salt from seawater was an important industry from pre-Roman times. Though methods varied in detail there are three basic stages in the process: collection, filtration and evaporation. Evaporation can be carried out entirely in the sun and wind in southern Europe, but in this country a stage of heating the brine over fires always 'seems to have been necessary. It is the burnt and reddened soil from these hearths that provides some of the most striking archaeological evidence of the industry. The chief requirements for saltmaking were a sheltered location such as a haven, with a convenient source of fuel not too distant.

It was not actual seawater that was collected but the upper layers of silt or sand. Following the fortnightly high 'spring' tides, as they are known, this silt is heavily impregnated with salt. The process involved scraping up the silt with wooden harrows and then storing it in covered heaps until required. It was then washed through with fresh water and filtered throughcurves. The discarded silt, together with any spent fuel ash and fragments of repaired hearths, was dumped to one side and gradually formed the mounds of waste. The brine after filtering was still stronger than sea water; the strength is said to be achieved when an egg will float in it. Brine was boiled in shallow rectangular trays. Early medieval trays were of lead. Surprisingly, the lead did not contaminate the salt, or melt during the process. The trays would be set on a clay-built hearth with steady peat fires burning underneath.

Once the water had boiled dry the fires were put out and the salt packed into tapered wicker baskets. These would have been hung up, allowing any remaining water to drain off, and were then ready for transporting. Salt was conveyed inland by cart or packhorse from Donington to Grantham and the Midlands via the present A52. This much travelled medieval route gave its name to Saltersford south of Grantham and the road is still locally known as the Salters' Way.

Even with all the essential materials available, good weather was also important for saltmaking, and it was only carried out during the summer months. A certain amount of sun and wind would no doubt aid evaporation.
Archaeological excavation in Quadrings

The accounts of medieval saltmaking practices already given are taken largely from records of the 17th and 18th centuries, some of which are illustrated and quite detailed. In some counties the industry lasted from at least the 11th to the 18th century, and it is believed that techniques changed very little over this period. In Lincolnshire activity ceased in the 17th century, local salt being displaced in favour of a much whiter imported product from the Bay of Biscay.

The excavations of a 14th century saltmaking site north of Warren Road, Quadrings Eandyke, in 1968-9 and a 15th century one at Wainfleet in 1983 confirm much of the written information. Peat was used for fuel, and elsewhere in Lincolnshire there are documented instances of rights to peat cutting being directly connected with leases of saltmills. In the 14th century peat would have been available some five miles away from Bicker Haven, in Dunsby Fen; today the nearest source is closer to Bourne.

The hearths excavated in Quadrings were constructed in pairs, and were probably partly roofed over. The salters had a hut against one wall of the hearth complex, with walls of turf. A dark stain in the soil showed where the grass used to be. These sods must have been set around a timber framework fastened with iron nails and the building thatched with reed. Trodden into the hut floor over the seasons were broken pieces of pottery as well as the remains of meals of both fish and flesh. Shell and bones found included cockles and mussels, skate, sheep and even curlew.

The saltmakers occasionally lost their belongings or threw away damaged articles. Several broken belted buckles were found as well as an early 14th century token, the kind of thing that could be exchanged for goods. In a rubbish pit on the site they had dumped a knife and an old sickle, together with some very large meat bones.

Siting up of Bicker Haven

The progressive siting up of Bicker Haven over some seven centuries was the principal cause of its eventual abandonment as a navigable waterway. As the tidal waters retreated, the salters kept moving to stay near the sea, but their days were numbered, not only because of the siting up but also due to the fall in demand for English salt. There were additional problems in that watercourses such as the Mar Lode could no longer discharge into the Haven, since the marsh was now higher than the land inside the sea banks. New, deeper outlets had to be cut and seabanks raised.

In the 1500s the Commissioners of Sewers, who had the job of inspecting and ordering maintenance of drainage and flood defences, were particularly concerned about the state of a bank near a bridge aett the saltcotes, at the end of an old ryver wher the salt water cometh in. This was a bridge over the Bicker River, the last tidal stream to flow through the Haven. They described the bank as 'defective both in heighg and bredd [height and breadth]' and must be repaired and 'exalted [raised]' to at least 'six foot' high. This is low by modern standards.

However, by 1622 the Monks Hall tenants with land at the edge of the Haven had become very aggrieved and they complained to the Lord of the Manor. They said that saltmaking had ceased and the saltcotes, the actual buildings, were now 'decayed and gone', that the 'hills were very barren and the floors or bottoms very wet' so that they were not worth the rent being asked.

The response is not recorded but the salters did go out of use and gradually grew over with thin grass and scrub. The salt industry has had a lasting effect on agriculture; the waste silt on the mounds contains no organic matter and is almost sterile; in dry seasons young crops may be slow to develop, or even fail. These sterile patches are often described as 'hotbeds' or 'hotspots'.

Recollections of the City and County Museum

As we celebrate the opening of The Collection, here are some memories of the old City and County Museum. The City and County Museum was just that. I first got to know it in the 1950s, when it embraced the archaeology, geology and natural history of the county as well as the city. I was a student at Lincoln School of Art, and already interested, through pottery classes, in historic ceramics, which we used to go and draw. I think the museum was also a free, dry place to go on a Sunday afternoon, but I may have got this wrong.

This pottery interest coincided with finding some odd sherds in drainpipe trenches in our Alkameer garden way down in the tens. Hugh Thompson, then Assistant Keeper, I think, was very excited about this pottery; some of the fragments being ‘exotic’ French imports, then only recently identified. I was already hooked on medieval pottery!

On a less successful note, some pieces I would now describe as Post-Medieval pottery were a puzzle to Tom Baker, and it was, I believe, the mid 1960s before a specialist group was formed to study this later material. Sadly for me the cleaner at Lincoln School of Art had thrown away my box of three nearly complete pots because it rattled! You can’t win them all.

The small number of museum staff were always ready to look at finds and identify them. In the later 50s and early 60s keeper Ben Whitwell and his assistants (at one time a young Catherine Bowyer, now Wilson) always had a stand at the Woodhall and County Shows in the marquee run by the then Lincolnshire Local History Society.

In addition to artefact displays they had a set of 6 inch to 1 mile maps of the whole county. People soon got to know the tent and would make a beeline for the museum stand to show their latest discoveries and have them identified and put on the map. Stone and bronze axes, old glass bottles, coins, Roman pottery scatterers, odd shaped lamps of this and that, clay pipes, all kinds of things were brought in. The important thing was that someone was there to handle the objects and talk — it was a hands-on experience long before that expression was invented, and become so well-known that often finders would describe something and say ‘well, I’ll bring it in next year’ and bring it they did! This was, in its way, the beginning of the Sites and Monuments Record already begun by C. W. Phillips in the 1930s, years before the term, let alone a special SMR Officer, ever existed. Lincolnshire was well ahead of its time!

The Archaeological Notes in the Lincs Arch and Arch journal were begun by Denis Petch in the 1950s. The little office, piled high with boxes and bags, was tucked away at the back of the library, reached I think through a little yard, but perhaps our president will remember better! The staff were allowed to come out into the county now and again to follow up reports of sites and finds, and visited everywhere from Holbeach to South Kyme to Old Bolingbroke, when finds were reported. They were often involved with the Lincoln Archaeological Research Committee, both inside and outside the city, but that is probably another story.

Lincolnshire Past & Present 61 Autumn 2005
OBITUARY

Brian Dawson
16 August 1939 – 22 November 2013

The recent death of much-loved traditional singer and song collector Brian Dawson came as an enormous shock to the folk community of the county. His popularity as a singer and interpreter of Lincolnshire songs was immense. Brian was much more than a local singer though. His talents were nationally recognised and he took Lincolnshire music and culture to festivals the length and breadth of Britain.

Brian's interests, however, were not centred wholly round folk songs. Brian carried a burning passion for, and knowledge of, all aspects of his home county's heritage - its architecture, archaeology, dialect, social history, folklore and traditions. Despite this broad knowledge base Brian was not widely published, but he did contribute 'The Herring Song' to his great friend Ethel Rudhims' festschrift and 'Two Songs and a Singing Game' to David Robinson's. Brian was a crucial figure in terms of collecting traditional songs in the county, always seeking the opportunity to visit older singers and always willing to give credit to those he collected from.

Many years ago Brian told an audience that he had played at over 500 different Lincolnshire venues including his time with the Lincoln-based folk dance band The Redwings, with Grimsby-based Broadside, and subsequently with his numerous one man shows. That figure must have almost doubled by the time of his death. He was well-known and well-loved throughout the county, not only by folk aficionados but by the very people he enjoyed playing to most - the ordinary Lincolnshire people, those who heard him at the WI meetings and the Rotary Clubs.

those who attended his frequent village hall performances where he was so much appreciated and where he was asked to return again and again. One such place was Howsham Village Hall where on 9 November 2013 he suffered a heart attack. He died on 22 November without regaining consciousness.

Ageless and timeless, Brian Dawson was the voice of the county. Through him the songs of old Lincolnshire and the characters within came alive. Although he thoroughly detested the oft-used epithet, Brian Dawson truly was and always will be 'Mr Lincolnshire Folk'.

Fiddlers Green

As I roved by the dockside one evening so rare To view the still waters and taste the salt air I heard an old fisherman singing this song, Oh take me away boys, my time is not long.

Wrap me up in me oilskins and jumpers No more on the docks I'll be seen. Just tell me old shipmates I'm taking a trip mates, I'll see you someday in Fiddlers Green.

Now, Fiddlers Green is a place I've heard tell Where fishermen go if they don't go to hell, Where the weather is fair and the dolphins do play And the cold coast of Greenland is far, far away.

The sky's always clear and there's never a gale And the fish jump on board with a flip of their tails. You can lie at your leisure, there's no work to do And the skipper's below making tea for the crew.

And when you're in dock and the long trip is through There's pubs and there's clubs and there's lasses there too, The girls are all pretty and the beer is free And there's bottles of rum growing on every tree.

I don't want a harp nor a halo, not me, Just give me a breeze and a good rolling sea And I'll play my old squeezebox as we sail along, With the wind in the rigging to sing me this song.

Tom Lane, Heritage Lincolnshire

John Connolly

In the summer of 1939 Dr Tom Kirk decided to keep a diary - he saw that a war was imminent and decided to make a record of how it affected him and his medical practice in Barton while noting the main news items of each day. When the war ended he stopped, but here we have now the transcription of his eye-witness account of these events in a large format volume.

'This is not an easy read, being full of daily fragments, but it is full of interest; this is largely due to the informative additions to almost every diary entry made by the editors. This is especially true of the expansion (and, often, correction) of the war news. The explanation of medical matters is also very clear and helpful. The greatest difficulty is keeping abreast of the large cast, which necessitates frequent cross reference to the helpful notes (at the beginning of the book) on family, friends, neighbours and associates of Dr Kirk.

What comes across most strongly is his heavy work load spread over branch surgeries and involving up to sixty house visits each day and frequent emergency and night calls. Domiciliary midwifery, often requiring the use of forceps under anaesthetic, must have been time-consuming and disruptive. These days nearly all confinements are in hospital and a GP can opt out of all night and weekend work. And yet, he still found time to be heavily committed to local affairs, such as involvement with the Home Guard, youth work and medical committees as well as personal music making, drama, play reading, dancing and entertaining. He even managed an afternoon of golf at Woodhall occasionally. All this at a time of great national anxiety and fear of bombing alerts.

His wide interests and busy life make these diaries of great interest to the general reader but will be even more absorbing to those who know Barton-on-Humber and district. They provide a detailed record of the war from a civilian's ground level point of view and have a particular value for that reason.

Dr Michael McGregor, Bourne LUDLAM, A.J. and ELDridge, P.J. Gone but not forgotten. Ludborough, Lincolnshire Wolds Railway Society, 2013. [4], 45pp. ISBN 978 0 9926762 0 9. £7.95 pbk. (plus £1.10 postage from the LWRS, Ludborough Station, Station Road, Ludborough DN36 5SQ).

On the cover it reads: 'The tracks have long gone but many of Lincolnshire's old railway stations have taken on a new life. The authors have taken six former lines in the central part of the county and followed, as far as they could, the former tracks of lines closed 40 years ago. In doing so they have shown what survives of the old railway buildings and their current usage, mainly as private dwellings.

They have contrived, therefore, to provide a 'before and after' view of places along the East Lincolnshire main line and branches off - to Spilsby, Bardney, Mablethorpe - together with the Boston-Lincoln line, and the 'new line', which cut across the county to provide a shorter route from Lincoln to Skegness.

Each section is illustrated with historical pictures of the former glories accompanied by nice colour pictures of the present condition of the stations.

It is all very well done by two well-known local railway historians and fills a useful gap for enthusiasts. One hopes that sales will be so good that the authors are encouraged to explore further. There are quite a few stations still surviving elsewhere and some, like Gedney, are so dilapidated that they may not be here much longer.


This is one of the latest in the ever growing series of railway line photographs by this well known publisher, this in its Midland Main Line series. It follows their standard format of using captioned photographs accompanied by old Ordnance Survey maps to describe a railway route, including all the stations and many other features along the way.

The book includes a good selection of photographs, all black and white, of all of the stations and many signal boxes on the two routes, Nottingham to Lincoln and Rolleston Junction, via Southwell to Mansfield. The line between the latter two stations, in particular, has been rarely visited by railway historians and this is particularly welcome.
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Tom Lane, Heritage Lincolnshire

John Connolly
The book starts with a very brief introduction to the geographical setting and railway history of the two routes. This does, however, omit any reference to the fact that the Nottingham to Lincoln railway was the first to open in Lincolnshire, in 1846, an attempt by the Midland Railway under the direction of George Hudson to capture the Lincoln traffic prior to the opening of the city's second railway, from Peterborough, two years later.

The photographs have been selected to span a long timescale from the early days of photography up to almost the present day and include some modern steam specials.

Ordinance Survey maps, mostly of 1:2500 scale, show the early twentieth century layout of the stations and add considerable interest. Those of Nottingham and Lincoln show well the complex nature of stations, sidings and junctions, the only problem being that because these span two pages their legibility suffers in the centre where the pages are bound.

There is a very good use of former Midland Railway maps of the Newark Curve, linking the Midland and the Great Northern Railways, the Lincoln area and Mansfield. These identify the multitude of private sidings and colliery branches. Other excellent illustrations include timetables, tickets and gradient profiles.

My one major criticism is that the book almost fails to mention the west to south curve at Rolleston Junction, put in by the Midland Railway between the wars to take coal trains from the Blidworth and Bilsborough Collieries on to Nottingham and the south. The one reference is very brief and its history is little known.

Overall, this is a welcome addition to this publisher's series and serves as a good introduction to this part of the country's railway history.

Stewart Squires, Southern

Patrick Otter is a former Grimsby Evening Telegraph reporter who has written several books on Bomber Command in north Lincolnshire and this much larger volume is destined to be the definitive work on No. 1 Group Bomber Command, which was based in that area during WW2. Although some of its airfields were in East Yorkshire early in the war – as a generalisation 1 Group's airfields were those between the Humber and the Witham and it was one of the largest of the Command's seven operational wartime Groups. For the first three years of the war 1 Group was equipped with the twin-engined Vickers Wellington, much the best of the three medium bombers, with which the Command entered the war but by 1943 had re-equipped with the incomparable Lancaster, which it flew until the end, in May 1945.

Like all the Groups, 1 Group was international in its crews (one crew photo of 626 Squadron at Wickenby shows a West Indian air gunner) but it also had a complete Australian squadron, 460 at Binbrook, and several Polish manned squadrons at Hemswell and later Faldingworth. The book details the squadrons, their operations (mission is a US term!) and the many tragic losses that occurred, not just over Europe. Many aircraft were lost in accidents in this country and all over the UK due to bad weather, aircraft failures and crew inexperience – some 340 Lancasters crashed in Lincolnshire!

Inevitably the text is sometimes repetitious as many raids were very similar to each other but the author's research into the experiences of some of the crews adds the personal touch and the ground crews are not neglected – the chapter titled 'Living in a sea of mud' adequately sums up their lives. Additionally there were the wartime winters, when snow was common particularly on the airfields on the Wolds – Ludford Magna, Binbrook and Kelstern suffered greatly! There are many photos, which again are inevitably mostly crew photos as photography was, of course, forbidden on wartime service camps, but some are of great interest to local historians. There is an index and brief histories of the airfields and squadrons involved are given. Overall this book is a valuable addition to the works on the RAF in our county and is recommended to anyone with an interest in the subject.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham

PAINTER, Bill. The transportation of 15 female convicts from Lincolnshire to Australia, 1787–1851: 'to a land beyond the sea'. [The author]. 2013. [5], 88pp. No ISBN. £8.95 pbk.

There have been small publications on Lincolnshire deportees in the past but this one specialises in women only to Australia. Mr Painter has made good use of the records available to give a picture of life in the County, on board ship and a little in the new land.

This is virtually a gazetteer with a systematic pattern of recording. Each chapter has a short introduction, followed by a description of each vessel with the names of the Lincolnshire women travelling on it and, finally, a profile of each woman. There are vivid descriptions of the vessels, the living conditions for criminals and the role of the master and the surgeon. Logs of the latter explain problems on board and often show consideration and humane treatment for the welfare of their charges.

Mr Painter has gleaned, in many cases, details of the background of the offenders, their home and families and the offences they committed. He does explain the various courts, and procedures leading to conviction. In some cases he is able to give details of their behaviour, subsequent criminal convictions or marriage in New South Wales or Tasmania. It would have been more satisfying if these details could have been extended to give each story a definite conclusion although he does point out that the women often disappear from the Australian records.

Family historians will find the volume useful especially since lists of ships involved, lists of women transported and lists of places in the
Antony Lee describes a recent acquisition at the museum...

An Early Medieval pendant made from a Gaulish Iron Age coin, from Horncastle

An interesting trend in artefact studies over the last few decades has been the emergence of 'object biographies', the idea that the objects we interact with on a daily basis shape our lives and experiences just as much as we think we create and control them and that our relationship with objects can change over time. Some objects have more interesting stories to tell than others, sometimes extending far beyond the initial interaction they had with the culture that originally created them. This pendant, discovered by a metal detector user at Horncastle in early 2012, is just one such object that has been altered by different cultures over time.

The heart of the pendant is an Iron Age silver coin, produced in northern France in c.70-60BC by the Sueesian tribe. The Sueesians, though their tribal lands occupied an area just to the northeast of Paris, were a Belgian tribe. Caesar mentions the tribe in his 'Gallic Wars', writing that they possessed extensive and fertile lands and had, in Caesar's own lifetime, been under the command of the most powerful man in Gaul. This man, named Diviciacus, had ruled over many of the Belgic tribes and even over parts of Britain, though the extent of his British territories is not known.

The coin, still identifiable beneath its later adaptation, bears a male portrait with a strong nose and wavy hair on the obverse. The reverse, obscured by the addition of the Early Medieval inlays, bears the image of a lion, struck off centre.

The life of the coin between its minting in the 1st century BC and the Early Medieval period is lost to us, but it was in the 6th or 7th century that it was rediscovered and began its second life as an item of jewellery. The Early Medieval conversion consisted of the addition of a suspension loop and three gold collets and the gilding of the surface of the coin. The collets were inset with stones, of which two survive, one of green glass and the other of garnet. The symmetry of the collets suggests that the missing stone may also have been a garnet. The arrangement of the suspension loop and collets is of interest, as it references the lion on the reverse of the coin rather than the portrait. Due to the die orientation of the original coin, the portrait sits at an odd angle but was clearly not intended to be seen when the pendant was worn. The collets, however, surround the offset lion, giving the appearance that the beast is standing upon them.

The conversion of Iron Age coinage to jewellery is not unknown and appears to be a Frankish custom. Although Gaulish Iron Age coins circulated in Britain, it is most likely that this example remained on the continent until after it was converted into a pendant, and entered Lincolnshire in its final form.