

Friends of the Centre for English Local History

# NEWSLETTER

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*The 'Honour Oak'*

# *Newsletter*

**Number 33 October 2020**

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# EDITORIAL

Phil Batman

*Everything comes to an end ...*

These words used to appear in bold imposing text on an awning above the reception desk at a large children's hospital, to greet patients, parents and visitors. They struck me as shocking and stark when I first encountered them, but then it dawned on me that they are in fact a comfort.

All suffering comes to an end, one way or another. And so it will be with the current coronavirus pandemic. Just as it was even with the Bubonic Plague, and the 1918 flu pandemic. That epidemic is said to have infected 500 million people or a third of the world's population, and killed 50 million. There was no vaccine available, and it was contained eventually with isolation, quarantine, personal hygiene, disinfectants, limited public gatherings, masks, and lockdowns. But it did pass, when society developed a collective immunity.

This all sounds oh-so familiar? This Newsletter has a slightly different format from previous years, largely because the virus curtailed our usual seminars and excursions. But it appears when there is hope (if not promise) of a vaccine on the horizon, and the online seminar programme begins again in October. Last season's seminars that were held before the pandemic took hold are summarised. We have the usual healthy bibliography of publications of the Friends and Staff, and some reviews of works published by current and former historians attached to the Centre.

Those are the familiar features. A novel addition is the thoughts and experiences of daily life at the time of the worst of lockdown, written by Friends in a sort of sequel of Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*. And in place of the Hoskin's Lecture report, we have some timely descriptions of works in progress and entertaining finds from the archives. Thank you all for your submissions.

This is a very strange time, and we don't know how long it will last. But it will come to an end if history is anything to go by, and in the meantime, keep well!

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*The 'Honour Oak'*

*... marks the one-mile limit allowed to paroled Napoleonic prisoners-of-war in Tavistock (p. 61)*

## *CHAIR'S REPORT*

It has been a challenging year and one of the most difficult that the Centre and the Friends has had to face. At the start of the year we received the bombshell from the University that they intended to close Marc Fitch House and relocate the Centre to the main campus. This was followed in March by the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing lockdown. The University has put the closure of Marc Fitch House on hold for the duration of the emergency although they have confirmed that it is still their aim to sell the building when the market permits.

In his letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020 the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Nishan Canagarajah, stated that it was his intention to 'create a coherent new space for the Centre within the Attenborough Building which will include a resource centre to house the Marc Fitch Collection and maps'. The full letter can be seen on the Friends' website. Despite the financial impacts of the pandemic we must ensure the Vice-Chancellor and the University honours this commitment. The Friends will work with the Centre and with the University to find an acceptable solution that supports the Centre's students and enables it to continue its outstanding research work. In the academic world English Local History has an impressive reputation that benefits the University and this must not be lost.

Like all organisations in these troubled times the Friends have had to adapt to the new world in which we find ourselves. Sadly, it has been necessary to cancel all face-to-face events including the Spotlight Conference planned for March 2020 and the proposed study weekend in Derbyshire. Hopefully these will only be postponements and we will be able to meet again in 2021. However, the safety of our members is our priority and we will not meet again until it is safe to do so.

We are responding to the changing world in a number of ways. All Committee meetings are now held online, this has worked well and saved a lot of unnecessary traveling for members and will probably continue post pandemic. The postponed Spotlight Conference will be held as an online event in February 2021 and we are looking into the possibility of holding other online events for members. Probably one of the most important achievements during the lockdown has been the relaunching of the website and the establishment of a strong presence on social media. It has attracted much interest and helps to demonstrate that we are still an active organisation and I would in particular like to thank Anne Coyne and John Parker for all their efforts.

Although we face many challenges that will change the way we operate as the Friends it has also created opportunities and made us think about how we engage with our members. In the coming year we will seek to build on these opportunities and our aims will be to;

- Support the Centre and its students,
- Grow the membership of the Friends, and
- Provide a wide range of online activities for our members (and when possible face-to-face events).

We are always seeking new initiatives and if you have any ideas or suggestions please contact us via the website and social media. I have also included my email address if you would like to contact me directly. I would like to thank our members for their continuing support and the Committee for their efforts as well as Phil Batman for again pulling together our Newsletter. Finally, I would like to congratulate Professor Andy Hopper on his appointment as Director of the Centre for English Local History in September 2020, we look forward to working with him in the coming year.

**Michael**

Dr Michael Gilbert

Chair, Friends of the Centre for English Local History

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# *THE CENTRE*

## **CENTRE REPORT**

**Richard Jones**

I must admit that I am struggling to recollect September 2019. So much has happened in recent months that the start of the last academic year is now obscured from the memory. This Centre report, my last as current director, must therefore begin in the here and now.

A few days ago we were informed that the university has no plans to reopen Marc Fitch House for the foreseeable future. We have not had access to the building since March when the campus was shut down in response to COVID-19. But there was cause to believe that the building would become usable again as the campus reopened. After all, its off-campus location seems advantageous as the estate planners seek to dissuade large numbers back on to main campus to maintain social distance. The internal arrangement of the building also lends itself to the new circumstances unlike many other campus buildings such as the Attenborough Tower. We have two staircases and wide corridors would allow a one-way system to be adopted. Staff offices and communal spaces such as the library, seminar room, and map room are sufficiently large and airy if occupancy levels were carefully monitored. However, the university seems to see things differently. Its rationale is rather hard to fathom. It has taken the decision to keep most of its satellite properties closed for the time being in a move that appears to be driven by financial considerations rather than staff and student safety. We shall continue to lobby for the reopening of Salisbury Road at the earliest opportunity and continue to stress the importance of maintaining and heating the building in order to protect our important collections even in the absence of staff and students.

Remarkably, that we are in a position to do ask for this is an unexpectedly positive consequence of COVID-19. For back in January, the university announced, without any prior consultation, that it intended to sell Marc Fitch House and History's other property, 6 Salisbury Road. This decision was itself driven solely by financial considerations. Holes in the university's accounts needed plugging. Asset stripping was the preferred course of action. Had coronavirus not intervened, the university wanted the house cleared shortly after Easter, the building sold by 31 July, and the Centre (as well as our colleagues in History and Urban History) relocated to main campus by the start of the 2020-21 academic year. Sale boards went up in February. Viewings by prospective purchasers took place throughout March. Then came full lockdown and the sale was eventually suspended in June.

Currently the building is off the market. But unfortunately this is not a matter that is going to go away.

As local historians we are acutely aware of the significance of attachment to place. Since 1989, 3-5 Salisbury has been our home. Friends will be aware that the property was purchased and fitted out with money generously given by Marc Fitch. The building was rightly and properly named after him. As the plaque inside the main door reads:

‘Marc Fitch House was opened by Major-General His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, President of the Marc Fitch Fund through the generosity of which these facilities were provided for the study of English Local History. 11 April 1989.’

Since that time, the building has come to house the Marc Fitch library, our map, photographic, and antiquarian print collections. It has hosted countless meetings, seminars, and symposia. It has been used by dozens of outside academic bodies, including Victoria County History, for whom it has become home from home. The Medieval Settlement Research Group, for instance, traditionally host their annual winter seminar in Leicester. The building has been home to the English Surnames Survey as well as a base for teaching and socialising for many generations of MA and PhD students. In short, the building has served as it was originally intended to serve: as a central hub for the national study of local history.

The Centre’s own identity has inevitably become bound up in the building’s fabric and its loss will be difficult to bear. But we continue to fight hard for the future of Marc Fitch House arguing that it represents far more than a just a building and fearing the reputational damage that will be done to the university if it disposes of one of their greatest assets. Pragmatically, we are also fighting hard to ensure that, were the building to be sold, the Centre is allocated appropriate space to build a new and exciting intellectual space at the heart of the university campus. Initial plans pre-COVID were that the Centre (and the wider entity, the Marc Fitch Historical Institute) would be broken up and housed in the Attenborough Tower, something that we resisted forcefully and which we were in the process of resolving. It is reassuring to note that the Vice Chancellor has signalled his wish for the Centre to provided with space equal to or surpassing that which we currently enjoy. Clearly the Attenborough Tower is not that place without a complete reorganisation. Indeed the Attenborough Tower may never open again because of the problems of making it COVID-compliant. Perhaps, unexpectedly, the pandemic, which is requiring the use of campus space to be radically rethought, actually provides an opportunity to build a carefully considered and bespoke new home after all.

Everything else feels a little secondary to these pressing issues that, if not well handled, represent an existential threat to the future of the Centre. But there are, nevertheless, positive things to report. This year we welcomed our first cohort of MA students on the MA History (Local History Pathway) programme. We shall continue to build capacity on this campus-based course in years to come. Plans for the introduction of our Distance Learning MA have been considerably advanced during the year. Currently, they too have been put on hold because of coronavirus; but it is good that we have thought about teaching delivery in this mode given the forced requirement to move most teaching on-line in the current situation. Of course, our planned conference in September had to be postponed. And our seminar programme was curtailed. But we are looking to move our seminars on-line next year. While this will reduce the social element of these events which are greatly appreciated by attendees, it will have the advantage of opening these sessions up to people who cannot get to Leicester on a Thursday afternoon.

2020, then, has been, well...challenging! But while it is easy to get caught up in the nonsense of the present, it is worth reflecting on the past. Across its 82-year history, the Department now Centre has constantly had to adjust to changing circumstances. Over the years, it has proved to be adept at plotting new courses, navigating choppy waters, reinventing itself without losing sight of its core principles and intellectual focus. It has shown itself to be resilient and innovative. Ultimately this is because the Centre is not just a building, it is a community of people. Whether in Salisbury Road, or in a new home on main campus, if we remain determined and unified in our ambition to deliver teaching and research in local history of the highest calibre, then the Centre will continue to flourish and remain a jewel in the crown of the University of Leicester.

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## IN CONVERSATION WITH CHARLOTTE YOUNG ...

### Honorary Visiting Fellow



#### **Where were you educated? What and who had the most influence on you at school?**

I had quite an unusual education. Due to ill health I only attended high school for a few weeks, and my mother had to make the very brave decision to home educate me through my GCSEs, although I went back to school to study for my A Levels. That entire experience had a huge influence on me because I had to learn to think for myself and rely on myself to get the work done – there were no teachers there to prompt me or support me. However, it also gave me a tremendous amount of freedom because my mother allowed me to pick the subjects I found the most interesting, rather than having to study whatever the school picked, so I was able to focus in on topics I enjoyed.

#### **Did you always want to be a historian?**

Not quite. Until my early teens I thought I wanted to be a teacher, but as my interest in history grew my aspiration changed too. Fortunately I've been able to combine both jobs over recent years thanks to the teaching I've been able to do.

#### **What has been your career pathway? What brought you to Leicester?**

My career pathway has been quite an unusual one. When I was 15 I did some work experience for a genealogy research company called Sticks Research Agency. I was very interested in family history

and wanted to know how feasible it was to make a career of it. As it turns out, it was very feasible because I am still working with SRA to this day. It's such a wonderful company to be a part of because no two commissions are the same. Even before I went to university I learned the key research skills I would need as a historian through my work at SRA.

I then went to Canterbury Christ Church University where I unsurprisingly studied History, before transferring to Royal Holloway to do an MA by Research and then a PhD. Academia was the aspiration, but there's so much uncertainty surrounding early career researchers that I wasn't sure I'd manage it. However, fate has been kind to me. In November 2019 the wonderful team from the AHRC-funded Civil War Petitions project here at Leicester approached me and offered me the role of research assistant. When Andy Hopper suggested I apply for an Honorary Visiting Fellowship with the Centre I jumped at the chance to remain associated with Leicester and join such a vibrant community of researchers.

### **What or who sparked your interest in history?**

During my childhood I grew up surrounded by literature, both books and adaptations. Cartoons weren't exactly banned in our household, but I was certainly encouraged to watch slightly more highbrow programmes instead. By the age of 6 or 7 I had the 1995 adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* memorised word for word. At first I think it was the pretty dresses which interested me most, but as I grew older I began to be interested in how people's lives were different in the past and it spiralled out from there.

### **What is your particular area of historical interest?**

My area of interest is the English Civil War, and specifically a policy called sequestration. This allowed Parliament to 'legally' confiscate the real and personal estates of Catholics and royalists on the grounds that they were responsible for the war. At the moment I'm working on expanding my research out to include other civil conflicts, particularly those in the USA, because sequestration was copied and adapted at various times through history.

### **What would you ideally liked to have been if not a historian?**

I would have loved to have been a ballet dancer. It's such a magical and captivating form of theatre. My mother and I try to see at least one production at the Royal Opera House every year if we can. I used to take ballet lessons as a child but gave it up at quite a young age because I didn't like people

looking at me when I was performing. I still don't like being looked at, but fortunately now I'm able to fake confidence so when I'm giving a paper or teaching a class nobody can tell how nervous I really am!

**Who do you most admire as a historian?**

The person I admired most, and it breaks my heart that I have to write this in the past tense, was my PhD supervisor Professor Justin Champion. He passed away in June this year after a long illness and he will always be greatly missed. Conversations with Justin were never dull. He was as likely to launch into an intellectual discussion of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century radical political thinkers as he was to talk about the time his Cambridge University Library card stopped him being arrested on a coach in Peru, or how after finishing his PhD one of the odd jobs he had was helping to build a morgue. The word 'genius' is thrown around a great deal in modern life, but it can be applied without hesitation to Justin. He leaves behind him an enormous body of work, and the fields of early modern religion and political thought have benefitted greatly from his scholarship.

Ever since we met he was the first person I would share my discoveries with, and the first person I would turn to with questions or problems. He would celebrate my discoveries, answer my questions, tell me to stop being so stupid when I began to doubt myself, and be my greatest advocate and cheerleader. Justin gave me the freedom to pursue whatever strand of research I wanted to, offering nothing but encouragement, enthusiasm, and positivity, no matter what bizarre ideas I came up with. I would not be the person I am today, or be where I am today, if I hadn't had his support and guidance.

**What part of your job do you most enjoy? Least enjoy?**

There's so much that I enjoy about my job, and I'm really lucky to be able to say that. I love being able to research the lives of people who have been forgotten by time, and bring their stories back to life. I suppose my absolute favourite thing is being in an archive and having a breakthrough; the moment when you have to stifle your joy into a high pitched yet quiet squeak when in reality you want to jump up and down and shout 'yippee!'.

The part of my job I least enjoy has nothing to do with the job itself. The uncertainty of being an early career researcher and not knowing how the next few years will turn out is definitely my least favourite part of my work, but sadly this is a common problem faced by many academics and not at all specific to me.

**Who do you most admire in other walks of life?**

I have huge admiration for anyone in the medical profession, and never more so than at the moment with the COVID-19 pandemic causing such devastation around the world. To have the ability to help people and heal people during this crisis is truly commendable.

**Do you have any other passions outside history?**

I inherited a love of photography from my grandfather. In the 1960s he converted his garden shed into a darkroom, and when he died I inherited all of his old slides. I love travelling to remote places and taking photographs of the landscape.

**What are your ambitions?**

At the moment my biggest ambition is tied to a project I'm working on. I'm writing a biography of the regicide judge John Bradshaw, who is universally considered to be a tyrant and a traitor because he sentenced Charles I to execution in January 1649. His career unexpectedly became a large part of my PhD research, and I quickly realised that his life is a largely untold story. I want to provide a new interpretation of his career and challenge the generally accepted view of him, which is the direct result of the post-1660 smear campaign launched by Charles II and his supporters. Some of the insults they came up with were very creative. My personal favourites were that he was a state crocodile with an impudent forehead. I'm determined to defend my beloved Jacky B, as I affectionately call him, and show that actually he was a good man who was doing a very difficult job in very difficult circumstances.

**What has been the highlight of your career so far? Any low points?**

Joining Leicester is of course a huge career highlight!

I suppose the low point would be being made redundant this year from my teaching role due to university cuts as a result of COVID-19, but I am in a very fortunate position. I have other work to fall back on, and this wonderful new affiliation with the Centre for English Local History means that I am able to keep a foot in the door of academia for another few years. The dream isn't over yet!

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## RESEARCH SEMINAR PROGRAMME 2019-20

### **William Lord Cavendish and his ward, his step-son, Francis Wortley [and his siblings], 1604-12**

*Prof Peter Edwards, Emeritus Professor of Early Modern British Social History, University of Roehampton*

*10 October 2019*

Sir Richard Wortley of Wortley Hall in the West Riding died on 25 July 1603, leaving his widow, Lady Elizabeth, with eight young children - three boys and five girls - to look after. Her response was to marry her virtual neighbour, William Cavendish, the second son of Bess of Hardwick, the Countess of Shrewsbury, on 2 July 1604. If William undoubtedly loved her, she seemed cooler, though she liked the added status and income. Indeed, she continued to style herself Lady Wortley rather than Mrs Cavendish until William paid £2,000 for a peerage the following Spring. At the time of their marriage, the eldest son, Francis, was almost thirteen years old. Lady Elizabeth secured his wardship but Cavendish paid the fine of £1,000 to the Court of Wards and Liveries and had the boy's wardship assigned to him. Apart from the fine, Cavendish paid annual sums to the feodaries, and if he obtained an income from the estate itself, he had to administer it and pay for the upkeep of Francis and his siblings in a way that reflected their social standing. The crucial question that the talk addressed was the extent to which Cavendish acted honourably, given that so many guardians reputedly exploited their ward's property for their own advantage.

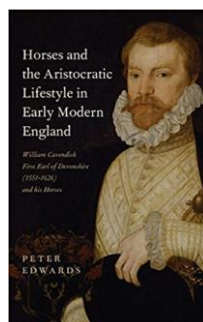
A younger son, William profited from the fecklessness of his older brother, Henry, because their mother, tiring of his irresponsible behaviour, made William her *de facto* heir. Together, they enlarged the family's estates, which further benefited William after Bess's death in 1608. In 1604, therefore, Lady Elizabeth would have viewed William as an ideal husband and step-father. Economically, Cavendish's stewardship of the Wortley estate was beneficial. Because, as the two estates lay close to each other, it was easy for his servants to supervise the Wortley lands and to integrate the various agricultural and industrial activities into a single economic enterprise. It helped that the two estates possessed similar resources and outputs: agriculturally, grazing predominated, as metal-working did industrially. Cavendish's officers regularly toured the Wortley estate and involved themselves in the detailed management of the estate. For example, sheep and cattle, bought in northern fairs, grazed on Cavendish and Wortley pastures before moving southwards for finishing off and sale in the South-East. Although Francis Wortley reached his majority in 1612, Cavendish continued to administer that part of the Wortley estate that formed his wife's dower lands until his death in 1626.



*Hoefnagel's painting of 'A Marriage at Bermondsey', dated to the 1550s.*

Although parsimonious and austere by nature Cavendish indulged his wife's love of jewellery, silverware and fine cloth. He also gave her a generous allowance for herself and her children, and ensured that they were brought in a manner suitable to their station in life. The children learned to ride and the boys at least hunted, while the girls were taught to sing and play musical instruments. Cavendish and his wife regularly travelled between Hardwick and Wortley, seated in coaches which he often changed, and pulled by horses brought over from Holland. Other horses were bred on the two estates. Wortley was a source of deer and venison, while old horses ended up as dog-meat. If Cavendish often lost small amounts at cards, his wife appears to have been a more successful player! The family visited London each year for a mixture of political, legal and social reasons. Cavendish was no courtier and would have found the louche court of James I distasteful but as an aristocrat he could not avoid waiting on the king or entertaining his peers and associates. He regularly attended sessions in the House of Lords, pursued legal cases through the courts and oversaw his investments in overseas trading companies. Lady Elizabeth, on the other hand, enjoyed the social season and the chance to shop for fashionable goods.

### **Further reading**



A version of this paper will appear in a collection of essays read at Prof. David Hey's memorial conference at Sheffield last year, edited by Prof. Richard Hoyle.

Prof. Edwards most recent publication is a book on William Cavendish in 2018, entitled '*Horses and the Aristocratic Lifestyle in Early Modern England: William Cavendish, First earl of Devonshire [1551-1626] and his Horses.*' He has written extensively on the multi-faceted role of horses in early modern society, an interest which grew out of his post-graduate research on agriculture and rural life under David Hey at the English Local History Department at Leicester and under Joan Thirsk at Oxford.

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### **Sequestration in Leicestershire during the English civil war**

*Dr Charlotte Young, Visiting Tutor at Royal Holloway, University of London*

**24 October, 2019**

[Delivered by Prof Andy Hopper, in Dr Young's absence due to illness]

Sequestration refers to the confiscation of property of Royalists and Catholics by Parliamentarians during the English Civil War and Interregnum. Anyone believed to support the Royalist cause in any way was termed a 'delinquent', and was liable to lose their property.

The talk began with a letter sent by Lord Arthur Capell in September 1642 to two of his servants, instructing them to send the profits of his estates in the west country to the Marquis of Hertford so the money could be used to support Charles I's military campaign. However, his messenger, William Bushell, was arrested and the letter sent to the House of Commons. Their response was to immediately confiscate Capell's estates, but quickly followed with a decree to sequester 'all delinquents'. This was designed to stop any other Royalists from providing Charles I with material or financial support, as well as relieve taxation and fund the Parliamentary military campaign. The sequestration ordinance was passed on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1643.



*Lord Capell taken from a painting called 'The Capel Family'. © The National Portrait Gallery*

Committees were established to enforce the order at local level, and there was a high turnover of committee members. The reports from Leicestershire are missing from the National Archives, possibly having been misfiled. The committees hired officers to enforce sequestration, when moveable goods were seized. The seizure of real estate was more problematic, and families could be left homeless.



*The Pillar Chamber at Bolsover Castle*

*(Sequestration in progress; goods brought in and inventory being made)*



3,865 appeals against petitions were received by Parliament's main committee, but only 270 of them remain. Many more survive from the Committee of Compounding, which was set up to enable people to claim their real estate back. As the war progressed, the areas which were sequestered changed. Two thirds are traceable to an individual town. There are 91 sequestration appeals which can currently be traced to Leicestershire. Appeals from this county peaked in 1645, which is consistent with a wider national pattern of local submissions to Parliament followed Royalist defeat; in this case, Parliament reclaiming Leicester from the Royalists on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

The talk provided examples of appeals from Leicestershire, for example the maintenance requests of Robert Green. Appeals tended to follow a similar pattern. There was the appeal of the vicar John Dixon, who was accused of Royalist behaviour. He was the vicar of Glenfield Parish, and there are entries in the register of the churchwarden accounts relating to his behaviour. The Compounding files describe the new incumbent Mr Port refusing to provide maintenance money to Mrs Dixon, but ultimately her husband was restored to the rectory after the Restoration. In a further example, Mountjoy Blount, the Earl of Newport, petitioned for the maintenance of his family. Appeals could be complicated because children lived in different places, some with Parliamentary families rather than Royalist parents. Sir Richard Halford of Wistow tried to deny Royalist sympathies, but investigations by the Leicestershire county committee revealed his association with 'disaffected and malignant persons', and he was later imprisoned in Leicester. An initial inventory of his possessions listed multiple raids on his property, including by plundering soldiers removing horses. Plundering was used interchangeably with sequestration. The inventory totalled £3000, and his estate was laid waste. A second inventory was found for the same family, and a third inventory made by sequestrators after the removals had been completed. Sir Richard was taken to London for examination for knowledge of his associates. The Committee for Compounding offered him a chance to regain his estates by paying a £5,000 fine, but he was later able to negotiate a reduction to £2,000. He was discharged in March 1647.

In conclusion, the sequestration in Leicestershire is a good example of victors making the enemy pay for the war and of the complexities Parliament hadn't anticipated when they introduced their policy of property confiscation. They didn't take into account ownership disputes, pre-existing debts, or that maintenance would be required for the families of delinquents, so quickly became out of their depth. It's currently unclear how many families were sequestered, but probably between 5,000 and 10,000. The policy raised between 4.5 and £6 million for the Parliamentary cause. With the Restoration of

the Monarchy in 1660 the policy ended, and one of the first issues Charles II faced upon taking the throne was requests for compensation from disgruntled Royalists.

### **Further Reading**

Roy Sherwood, *The Civil War in the Midlands 1642-1651* (Sutton, 1992)

Jerry Brotton, *The Sale of the Late King's Goods* (Pan, 2017)

Sidney J Madge, *The Domesday of Crown Lands* (Routledge, 1938)

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## **Communities in contrast: Doncaster and its rural hinterland, c. 1830 – c. 1870**

*Dr Sarah Holland, Assistant Professor at University of Nottingham*

*7 November 2019*

Dr Holland began her talk outlining how childhood curiosity shaped her research interests, leading to a PhD and book. Historians have long sought to explain village differentiation, underpinned by the notable contribution made by Dennis Mills in the 1960s and 1970s and the development of the ‘open-closed’ settlement model. Inevitably the model has been subjected to critique, and Mills himself acknowledged that “the distinction between open and closed was not always a sharp one”. Indeed, Dr Holland’s aim was not to undermine the value of the model as a useful starting point but to explore its application to an understudied geographic area and evaluate the limitations.

Doncaster, situated in the southern portion of the old West Riding of Yorkshire (modern South Yorkshire) was an important market town. Little work has been done on Doncaster’s nineteenth century rural history. The town is best known for its Roman fort, horse racing, and twentieth century coal-mining. The town’s central market place was a focal point for trade and knowledge, and was important in fostering positive mutual reciprocal relationships between the Corporation and the agricultural villages. The area included good agricultural lands and low lying marshy areas. In spite of change triggered by the arrival of the Great Northern Railway in 1848 and the subsequent establishment of the Great Northern Railway works in 1853, the majority of Doncaster’s rural hinterland was not heavily industrialised until the development of large scale collieries in the early twentieth century and agriculture remained an important economic force in the district. Moreover, a reciprocal relationship was fostered between town and country, which she argued was vital for understanding the history of these rural communities.

Dr Holland explored the diverse ways in which landownership manifested itself on rural communities, and demonstrated that social hierarchies and agency were far-reaching concepts that transcended landownership. She highlighted the role of differentiation in landownership, the clergy and farmers as leaders within rural communities, and geography in determining the location of rural industry. She then explored the shared concerns which underpinned the development of rural communities, including living and working conditions. This in turn bestowed agency on the labouring population, not least through their collective bargaining power at the hiring fairs.

Sprotbrough fitted Mills' model well, being long-owned by the Fitzwilliam (later Copley) family. They employed a land agent, and built a number of cottages in the nineteenth century but still had to employ labour from other villages; this was found to be a common issue with other villages. In Lower Sprotbrough, situated on a river at the periphery of the estate, a certain amount of religious and political independence was allowed to develop. Warmsworth and Levitt Hagg had two landowners. An absentee owner had 81% and employed a land agent, with a presence through a younger son. Much of the income came from renting out quarries to commercial companies. The owner of the other 19% left useful diaries which showed their greater interest was in agriculture and drainage schemes. Rossington was different again. In 1838 it was sold by Doncaster Corporation to James Brown of Leeds – an industrialist. He rebuilt the estate and parish church, and provided a school and estate cottages. This was symbolic of his new role as a country landowner.

Dr Holland suggested that the labouring population was largely absent from Mills' model, except as a quantitative measure. However, they were found to have agency through the hiring fairs – they were the people with skills, and knowledge of farming the area. In good times there was a surplus of demand over the number of people, and skills such as working with horses commanded higher wages. A gap was beginning to emerge between more highly skilled workers and younger, inexperienced workers with low skills. She also spoke about the attempted reform of hiring fairs, with early evidence of moral campaigns in the Doncaster area. Women and children were also subject to moral campaigns by clergy who thought they should remain in the domestic sphere. However, they were economical for farmers to employ. The contrasting views which she uncovered were not based on village types.

Dr Holland concluded by saying that while she didn't refute the models, she found that they concealed other factors and spheres of influence. For example strong Anglican clergy, and their relationships with landowners and freeholders, could be more influential than landowners; this was found to be as great in estate villages as in non-estate villages. At the heart of her paper, Dr Holland

demonstrated the pivotal role of the market town, Doncaster, in shaping rural communities. The redevelopment of the market infrastructure was characteristic of a reciprocal relationship that was emerging between town and country in the district. Doncaster also became an important forum for political debate, which facilitated independence in rural politics. The complex inter-relationships between rural communities and particularly between rural communities and the market town were of utmost importance. Indeed, rural communities cannot fully be understood without examining their relationship with each other and with the market town.



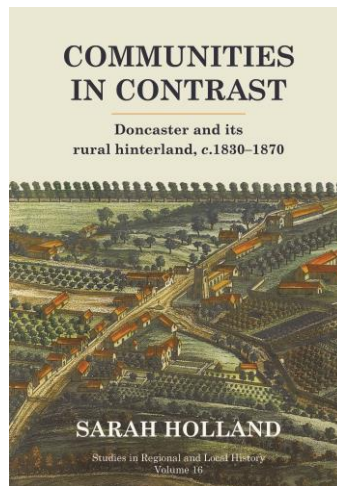
*Doncaster Corn Exchange, 1873*

### **Further Reading**

S. Holland, *Communities in contrast: Doncaster and its rural hinterland, c. 1830-c.1870* (University of Hertfordshire, 2019).

D. Mills, *Lord and Peasant* (1980)

S. Banks, 'Nineteenth-Century Scandal or Twentieth Century Model? A New Look at 'Open' and 'Close' Parishes', *Economic History Review*, 41:1 (1988), pp. 51-73



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## **Contrasting communities: two Warwickshire villages coping with adversity, 1280-1580**

*Prof Christopher Dyer, Emeritus Professor of History, Leicester*

**21 November 2019**

When Dr Paul Stamper was prevented by injury from giving his advertised seminar, Prof Dyer stepped in to fill the gap. He prefaced his talk, when the chairman said that he would be breaking new ground, by modestly denying the talk's novelty : as his PhD supervisor would have said, it was 'the old dog's biscuit'. He hoped to use his work on two specific villages to address a general problem.

The two villages in question in south Warwickshire (once north Gloucestershire) are Welford-on-Avon and Weston-on-Avon. Weston is now the poor relation of the two villages. Welford appears on the OS map, although Weston does not, reinforcing its subservient role. Welford has the appearance of a 'typical' English village, whose thatched cottages have appeared on chocolate boxes and birthday cards. (Incidentally, Prof Dyer was brought up and went to school in Welford!) Using a map of late 19th century and observation of currently visible timber-framed buildings, Prof Dyer was able to reconstruct the likely polyfocal form of the medieval village of Welford, and the one-street plan of Weston. This was based on the assumption that timber framed houses of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were sited on the footprints of medieval houses.



*Welford-on-Avon*

Some new source material on the two villages has come to light, namely a survey of 1540 and Court Rolls of the 15th century. They had very similar agrarian and social profiles in the 13th and 14th centuries. The villages lay in champion country. They farmed good land, with a predominance of cereal crops on extensive arable fields. The field system of Welford of 1540 shows four fields, having originally been two. It had been cleared of woodland by the Roman period. Little ridge and furrow survives in aerial photographs; one field containing very well preserved ridges, having been seen by Prof Dyer in 1953, has survived until today. Welford had no road to its west; its most important connections were from north to south on the road that once crossed the Avon by a ford, which had been replaced by a bridge by the early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The social history of these two villages was similar before 1500. How did these villages react to the 'stress tests' of the Black Death of the 14th century and enclosure of the 16th century? They were both reduced in size in the mid-14th century, mainly by the Black Death, and both recovered in the subsequent decades. The population of Welford peaked around 1300 and fell with a general population decline in which the Black Death was a major factor. The population of Weston also peaked in 1300, following which there was a recovery up to about 1500, and then a drastic fall to a low in 1525. Other neighbouring villages showed terminal decline.

The fall in population had many negative consequences, such as buildings being neglected, and houses ceasing to be inhabited. There was a shortage of heirs, and people left the village. But people showed resilience and rebuilt their lives: new immigrant families replaced those who died or left. One particular individual, Thomas Holtom, was typical of a new cohort of husbandmen and yeomen who took on more land when families died out. He left part of his arable uncultivated, thereby increasing pasturage for sheep. By-laws, or stints, limited an individual in the number of beasts he

could pasture. The fields were reorganised into four fields, with a four field rotation, controlled by the manor court. Holtom held 39 acres, with a disposable surplus of £2 per year. Holtom joined the fraternity at Stratford-upon-Avon, where he made contacts with business men who made it easier to sell produce.

Welford got through the problems of the Black Death, and was stable by 1540. Weston also recovered in the short term, and in fact more landowners joined the fraternity in Stratford than Welford. The villages were faced with a new challenge, namely enclosure. Welford enjoyed the benevolent rule of a remote monastic lord, but enclosure of Weston by a hostile landlord, Edward Greville, forced people out. However, Ludovic Greville also subsequently acquired Welford and persuaded or pressurised villagers to enclose. They took their complaints to the Privy Council in 1575, who sympathised with the villagers and encouraged compromise. A series of sales were made after 1576, with conversion of tenure from copyhold to freehold. The landlord thereby made money, but the tenants were not evicted. Incidentally Ludovic Greville murdered two people, and refusing to plea was pressed to death. Ludovic was driven to raise revenue from his lands by the expense of building a pretentious new house.

In conclusion, Welford climbed back out of its recession, while Weston shrank to a small hamlet. Why such a pronounced difference? An easy explanation was that Weston fell victim to predatory lords, the Grevilles. However in the late 16th century Welford in turn was threatened by the same family, resisted, and survived (indeed it was probably strengthened). We are left with a dilemma - why was one village able to offer stout resistance, while another caved in to the aggressor? Possibly Weston gave in to the Grevilles and submitted to piecemeal attrition, but Welford set up opposition, were led by an able and confident free tenant called Milner, and may have found good legal advice. They won some sympathy from the Privy Council, who found Ludovic Greville a pain.

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## **Ancient People and Modern Places: Landscape History and a Sense of Identity**

*Prof Francis Pryor*

*5 December 2019*

Francis Pryor began his talk with a preamble that he loathes 'cut-off points' in historical debate, preferring trends that look at landscape through time. Landscapes are a means of uniting the past with the present and over the past 50 years we have seen large scale excavation of pre-Roman farms and settlements that can now be seen as a backdrop to what came later. Nowhere is this more evident

than in the Fens around the Wash; he put a myth to bed, notably that the fens are ‘flat and boring’. They are not – they do have hills!

It used to be thought that the Fens were a remote, hostile, impoverished and backward region, but recent research has revealed settlements and landscapes of extraordinary diversity and growing prosperity which came into existence from about 5000-4000 BC and which continued to expand and develop through Roman and post-Roman times, into the Middle Ages. The people of the Fens learnt to live with their landscape. The Fens comprise a million acres, with large settlements predominantly situated around the edges. The soils of the Fens are of two types, namely peat and silt. Peat began to form 3-4,000 BC and is very nutritious. Silt is resistant to shrinkage when drained and less nutritious. Accumulations of peats and tidal silts have buried entire landscapes almost intact. Indeed, they provide the background for the development of rich monastic and urban communities from the early Medieval period and into the Middle Ages.

Barrows existed in the Fens with ditches and cremations. Over 200 have been found to date. Also field systems exist dating back to the Bronze Age and 2500 BC onwards, the earliest fields found in Britain. This was a highly developed prosperous landscape. The field systems were carefully laid out, with a complex pattern including right angled boundaries. Farmers took pains to prevent the mixing of stock bloodlines by alternating entrances to fields. Stock-handling yards are also seen in the field systems, aimed to keep animals herded up close together and calm. Draughting races were intended for flocks of up to 1000 sheep. (Sheep dog skeletons have also been found; these dogs did not work in the same fashion as modern collies, incidentally, but were trained to walk alongside a person!) Evidence of Bronze Age axe marks are found on wooden posts indicative of high-quality workmanship. About 63,000 posts are believed to lie hidden in Flag Fen (about a thousand have been dug), interspersed with metal work including swords and daggers, made from molten metal and complete with casting flaws. Some objects had come from a considerable distance, eg tin from the Alps. Bronze Age houses have been found, with a turf roof and central hearth. Excavations of the old course of the River Nene have revealed 8 Bronze Age boats, and evidence of fish farming. Eel farming captured hundreds per week. Most boats were oak, and kept wet to avoid splitting. One decorated boat has been found. Cereal crops were grown more frequently following the wetter conditions that began around 1000 BC. When Roman occupation began there is no evidence for a change in the local population. Evidence for the Fens becoming an Imperial Estate of the Roman Empire cannot be proved.





*A view along one of the main droveways of the Fengate Bronze Age field system, which was originally laid-out prior to 2000 BC. The figure is standing in the droveway along which sheep and cattle would have been driven.*

Three of the greatest cathedrals in Britain – at Ely, Peterborough and Lincoln – can be seen as late symbols of the region's success over some seven millennia. The area lacked the more rigid manorial system of the midlands and has been host to radical thoughts and ideas. Cambridge was probably a place of learning prior to the foundation of the University (in 1209) and towns like Wisbech and Spalding were home to Quakers and hosted learned societies, such as the Spalding Gentlemen's Society. Kings Lyn was a rich and prosperous town with close links with the continent, as was Wisbech with its impressive 17/18<sup>th</sup> century river frontage.

The talk concluded with some thoughts about the future of the Fens and the strong possibility that large areas will be inundated – probably within the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



*A view along the River Nene at Wisbech. The two – North (right) and South – brinks form what Pevsner has described as the finest Georgian river frontage in Britain. Many of these buildings were erected in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century by Quaker merchants and bankers. Octavia Hill, a founder of The National Trust, was born in a house on the South brink (now the Octavia Hill Museum). Note the recently heightened flood wall along the riverside.*

Francis Pryor studied archaeology at Cambridge, where he specialised in prehistory. During the 1970s he excavated prehistoric landscapes at Fengate, Peterborough. In the 1980s he worked on sites in the nearby Welland Valley and in 1982 discovered the Bronze Age site at Flag Fen. He started keeping sheep in 1980 and became a full-time sheep farmer in the Lincolnshire Fens from 1995.

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## **Putting the gentry in their place: Landscape perspectives on the Leicestershire gentry, c.1460-1560**

*Dr Katie Bridger*

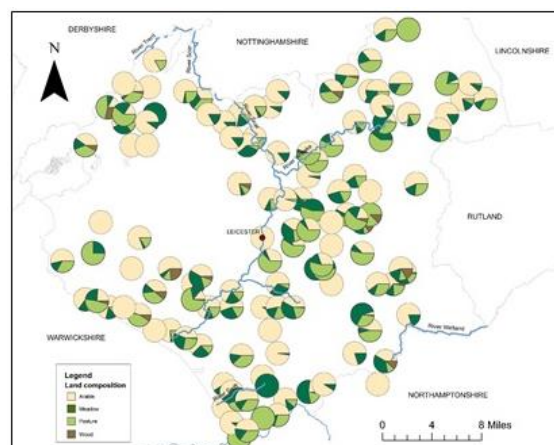
*23 January 2020*

Using a combination of contemporary sources and digital methodologies, this talk considered the importance of place in the lives of the gentry. Katie's doctoral thesis explored the significance of place in the construction and expression of gentry identity, c.1460 to c.1560. It showed that place, roughly defined as a geographical location or region entrenched in particular cultural or social meaning, emerged as a subtle yet intense influence on the gentry.

Using selected case studies from the thesis, the talk argued that the intensity of the relationship between the gentry and place increased substantially through the gentry's lives, and culminated in

their final statement in death. This was evident in geographical patterns of bequests made by testators to family members and parish churches, and of requests for burials in specific locations. The talk put these bequests and requests into the context of gentry territories, digitally reconstructed using landholdings extracted from their inquisitions *post mortem*.

Mapping gentry interests on the ground reveals geographical patterns that would otherwise be hidden, which can then be interrogated with further research questions. Figure 1 illustrates gentry land use in Leicestershire on a land type basis, comprising arable, pasture, wood and meadow. Katie extracted this data from the inquisitions *post mortem*, and proposed that this method can be used to improve our understanding of contemporary phenomena such as enclosure. Similarly, Figure 2 shows how mapping church bequests made by the gentry can invite further questions about the nature of their distribution, such as distance, family affinity and ecclesiastical patronage.



*Fig 1. Evidence for the composition of gentry land use in the Leicestershire inquisitions post mortem, 1530-1579*

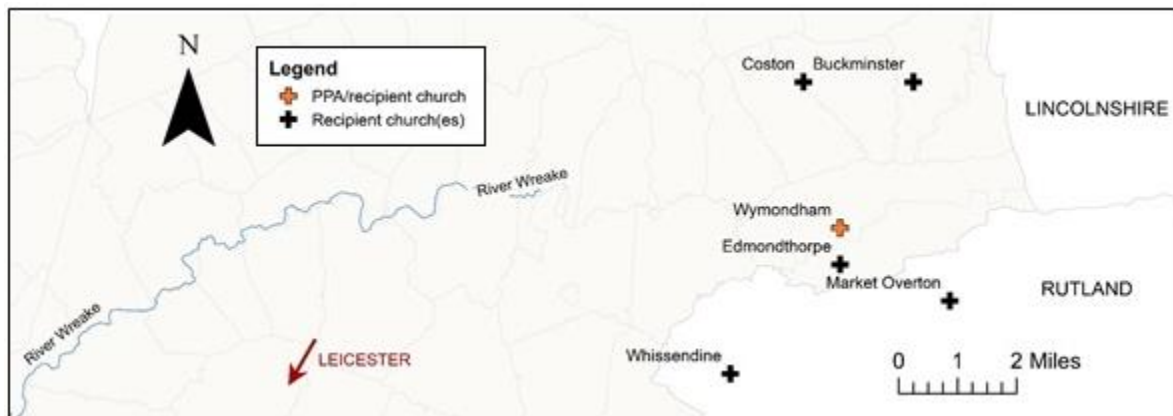


Fig 2. The locations of church bequests made by Sir Maurice Berkeley

(Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, *Wills and Inventories, 1522/5*)

By looking at the heart of gentry territories – at their ancestral nucleus – Katie argued that material culture emerged most explicitly in the expression of legacy, and that death was a final statement of gentry identity. The talk concluded that the equation of gentry identity cannot be simplified solely to the possession and inheritance of land, or to the decision to be buried near to ancestors. Putting the gentry in their place revealed that ‘place’ deserves its own role in gentry culture as the common denominator in their lives.

#### Further reading:

E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c.1422-c.1485* (Cambridge, 2002).

J. Broadway, *No Historie so Meete: Gentry Culture and the Development of Local History in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Manchester, 2006).

B. Campbell and K. Bartley, *England on the Eve of the Black Death: An Atlas of Lay Lordship, Land and Wealth, 1300-1349* (Manchester, 2006).

R. Copeland, B.A. Hanawalt and D. Wallace (eds.), *Medieval Practices of Space* (Minneapolis, 2000).

M. Hicks, *The Later Medieval Inquisitions Post Mortem: Mapping the Medieval Countryside and Rural Society* (Woodbridge, 2016).

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# Historical Pageants in Britain, 1905–2019: Locality, Community and the Performance of the Past

*Prof Paul Readman, King's College London*

*6 February 2020*

Historical pageants were a widespread form of popular entertainment in twentieth-century Britain. Presenting large-scale theatrical re-creations of scenes from local and national history, they brought the past to life as never before. Tens of thousands of people performed in these vivid extravaganzas of drama, music and dance; millions more watched them.

The rage for historical pageantry began in 1905, when the charismatic theatrical impresario Louis Napoleon Parker staged a pageant in Sherborne, Dorset. It was a sensational success, and what was called ‘pageant fever’ or ‘pageantitis’ soon took hold up and down the country. At social events before the First World War, fashionable ladies and gentlemen could expect to be asked, ‘Do you padge?’



*Louis Napoleon Parker, the best-known pageant-master of the Edwardian period, York in 1909.*

*David Clarke Collection, King's College London.*

Historical pageants presented the history of communities through a series of scenes featuring people and events from local history, myth and legend. They had a significant cultural impact, and not just in the Edwardian period—sometimes seen as their heyday—but right across the twentieth century. In the interwar period, pageants became popular not only in sleepy country villages, but also in industrial towns and cities such as Manchester, Birmingham and Leicester. For these places, the



dramatization of the long continuities of community history was often a means of articulating a progressive civic agenda in the context of economic depression.

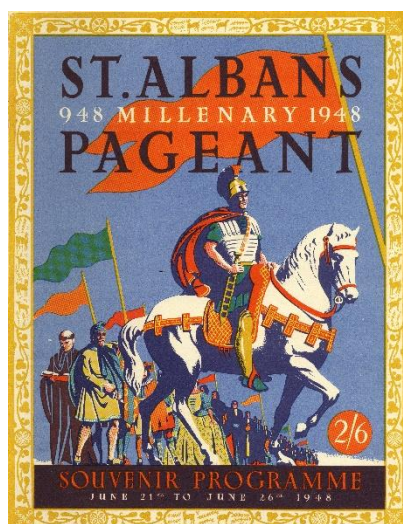


*Maypole Dancers at the Sherborne Pageant of 1905.*

*David Clarke Collection, King's College London.*

Indeed, pageants are best seen not as simple expressions of nostalgia or reactionary conservatism. They were popular with the political left as well as the right. Their celebration of the historical culture of localities amounted to an accommodative response to the challenges of modernity. Presenting history as drama was a potent means by which coherent local—and national—identities could be maintained amid the transformations of an increasingly speeded-up world. This potency is reflected by the persistence of pageantry into the twenty-first century, not least in the Somerset town of Axbridge, which stages a pageant every ten years (the next one is scheduled for the 2020 August Bank Holiday weekend).

To find out more about historical pageants, please visit [www.historicalpageants.ac.uk](http://www.historicalpageants.ac.uk), the website of the AHRC-funded *Redress of the Past* project, which contains a wealth of further information—including a full-searchable database of more than 650 pageants.



*The St Albans pageant programme from 1948.*

*From the collection of Mark Freeman. Reproduced with permission.*

Paul Readman is Professor of Modern British History at King's College London. He is principal investigator on the AHRC-funded project, *The Redress of the Past: Historical Pageants in Britain* ([www.historicalpageants.ac.uk](http://www.historicalpageants.ac.uk)). His publications include *Storied Ground: Landscape and the Shaping of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018) and, as co-editor with Angela Bartie, Linda Fleming, Mark Freeman and Alexander Hutton, *Restaging the Past: Historical Pageants, Culture and Society in Modern Britain* (London: UCL Press, 2020).

## **NOTICE OF RESEARCH SEMINAR PROGRAMME 2020-21**

### **Provisional Programme: English Local History Seminar Series, 2020-2021**

**Centre for English Local History, 5 Salisbury Rd, LE1 7QR, University of Leicester**

Seminars begin on Thursdays at 2.15pm unless otherwise arranged. Normal practice is for a talk of 45-50 minutes chaired by a member of Centre staff, followed by questions from the audience.

Owing to the coronavirus pandemic, we anticipate that the autumn, and possibly spring semester sessions also, will need to be delivered as online talks, probably via the University's Blackboard Collaborate system.

## **Autumn Semester**

8 October 2020 Matt Bristow (Institute of Historical Research), 'The pre-industrial Lowestoft Fish Office: another red herring?'

22 October 2020 Dr Bill Shannon (Independent Scholar), 'New Light on the Medieval Gough Map of Britain'

5 November 2020 Dr Adam Chapman (Institute of Historical Research), 'Where next for the Victoria County History?'

19 November 2020 Dr Melodee Beals (Loughborough University), 'The Provincial-Provincial Public Sphere: Scotland, New Zealand and the Newspaper Press in the Age of Telegraph and Steam'

3 December 2020 Professor Martin Johnes (Swansea University), 'Humbug and a Welsh Hindu: A Small History of Race, Language and Begging in 19th Century Liverpool'

## **Spring Semester**

21 January 2021 Dr Xuesheng You (University of Swansea) 'Women's labour force participation in nineteenth-century England and Wales'

4 February 2021 Dr Carry van Lieshout (Open University), 'Female entrepreneurship: business, marriage and motherhood in England and Wales, 1851-1911'

18 February 2021 Dr Bethany Marsh (Hertford College, Oxford), '“Overfrighted and feared”: feelings, attitudes and responses to fear during the 1641 Irish rebellion' *Evening online start at 7pm*

4 March 2021 Professor Phil Batman (University of Leicester), 'Migration from Swaledale during the collapse of the nineteenth-century lead mines'

18 March 2021 Dr Chris Zembe (De Montfort University), 'From Slave Trade to Scramble for Africa: The Making of Black Population in Britain'



# *FRIENDS*

## **LIVING HISTORY: LOCKDOWN MEMORIES**



*Tesco, Narborough Road, Leicester; queues of socially distanced customers at a time of panic-buying, May 2020 (courtesy of Philip French)*

### **Melton Mowbray Friday 22 May 2020**

This morning my wife Val and I have exercised with a walk from the house. For four weeks from 18<sup>th</sup> March we did not venture beyond our garden perimeter. Since mid-April on most days Val and I have been walking from the house for up to an hour, or I have gone for a short bicycle ride as I did yesterday morning. When walking around the southern parts of Melton Mowbray we see few other pedestrians, mainly dog walkers, and we make sure we do not go near them, by crossing the road if necessary. As we do not visit any shops our daughter delivers the weekly shopping for us. We stay at least 20 metres apart from her when she delivers the goods.

During the lockdown there have been two deaths of people whose funerals we would have attended in normal circumstances. David aged 90 used to farm at Kirby Bellars where we lived for 29 years. On the day of his funeral we stood outside his house and waved to the cortege as it set off to Loughborough. Kath was Val's school friend and they met up once or twice every year. Today we watched the funeral service in Reading on the computer.

After the daily exercise I spend most mornings researching and writing for the *Victoria County History Leicestershire* project. I had just completed the draft six chapters for the parish of Brooksby when the University of Leicester shut down and so the editing process was postponed. Rather than wait for re-opening I decided to tackle another parish, Asfordby, which lies 3 miles to the west of Melton Mowbray. Unfortunately I cannot visit any record offices or libraries, but there is much I can do online. This is rather time-consuming but there are moments of light relief, such as the report of July 1832 in the Leicester Chronicle that Mr C. Toon, saddler and harness maker of Asfordby, had married Miss Bishop of Grimston “after a long and tedious courtship of one week.”

The afternoons are mostly spent in the garden. I have just sown runner beans, dwarf French beans and cress in the small vegetable plot. Already coming on well are carrots, parsnips, broccoli, broad beans and peas. In mid-April we decided we wanted to buy three specific bushes but all the garden centres were closed. I looked online and found what we were looking for at a garden centre in Surrey, 130 miles away. I had to get up early one morning to write the order before the day’s online bookings reached a maximum and the site shut down. The plants duly arrived a month later and we aim to plant out tomorrow.

In late afternoon today I played the piano for about one and a half hours. I don’t claim to be very proficient but usually do this three or four times a week and I find it very relaxing at this difficult time. It takes me well over a year to play all my collection.

I also like reading novels, particularly in the early evening. Usually I borrow them from Melton library, but as this is closed I have resorted to our own book shelves. Today I am reading *Babbitt* (1922) by Sinclair Lewis. Later in the evening we will watch some television and we always look at the BBC 10 o’clock news for the latest update on the covid-19 situation.

Alan Fox

### **West End Corona Walk**

Today is Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020. I have to check the date on my calendar as most days seem the same during coronavirus lockdown. I am about to go out on what I believe is an allowed walk. The purpose of my walk is to get out of my flat for some exercise; meet up with a friend in a public park at least two metres apart to exchange books and DVDs; and to buy a face mask. I live in the west end of Leicester where there is a mixture of housing including many large Victorian era buildings converted into flats, guest houses and care homes. The population is very mixed, with white working

class, students, and a wide range of ethnic groups including a long-established (but now dwindling) Asian population and a prominent East European presence established in the last ten years or so.

Now from a coronavirus shopping/foraging viewpoint the mixed population is a great blessing as there are a wide range of shops and small supermarkets catering for a variety of tastes and needs. A local Polish shop has a notice on the door stating 'Face masks and sanitising gel available'. So I go in and look around and can't see any face masks although there is a stack of toilet rolls at £1.99 for six. I ask the assistant who is neither 2 metres away or wearing a face mask, if she has any face masks. The masks are retrieved from under the counter which makes me feel as if I have bought something dodgy.

On the return leg of my walk I am pleased to see the young staff of a Korean supermarket preparing to reopen. I am welcomed in by an assistant who is wearing a face mask and I have to hold out a hand for her to squeeze a drop of sanitiser into my palm. Just before reaching home I am reminded what the lockdown is really about. An ambulance is waiting outside one of the residential homes. If the message has got a bit confused in the last few days here is a reminder that we paradoxically need to keep a distance to help our communities.

Philip French

### **Knee Replacement**

I was lucky enough to have my second knee replaced in February, but this meant that I was a high risk for Covid 19 and lockdown was complete. I have been in total isolation at home, reliant on my children for shopping and any transport my husband needs. I do cross-stitch, so unwisely offered to do a name picture (using the flower fairy alphabet) for my grandchildren - now I have 11 to do before Christmas. At least it gives me something to do! I carry on with the physio exercises and walking. If I walk from the computer table to the back door, then to the front door, back to the kitchen (once round) and return to the computer it is a distance of 21 metres. My goal for May is a total of 10K. Otherwise it is reading, cooking (when I can get flour for cakes and biscuits) and jigsaw puzzles. I have good days and bad days on my legs, which affects my mobility and temper.

Sarah Gilpin

### **'Lockdown' week eleven.**

As a small child, somewhere on the way to grandmother's house, there was an old metal pre-war advertisement for Fry's "Five Boys'" chocolate. It featured five pictures of a boy, each with a

different expression with matching caption below. I should have to have been told the words: desperation, pacification, expectation, acclamation and realization.

In the early months of 2020, the news of the virus spreading to pandemic proportions must have given rise to feelings of *Desperation* among governments as they devised plans to repatriate citizens, who were quarantined on arrival. The government had to act to pacify its increasingly anxious population. *Pacification* had to include action to maintain health as far as possible, on behalf of the nation, to keep the NHS able to cope, to persuade all those who would be required to implement what was decided and to provide economic packages to assist all those who could not work under 'lockdown'. There were *Expectations* that everyone would obey what became the adage of 'Stay home, Save the NHS'. As news of the intended government actions filtered through, the rest of us also began to have our own expectations of the impending life-style.

There are two main meanings to *Acclamation*. The boy in the advertisement was no doubt supposedly 'eager to consent to a proposal' of receiving a chocolate bar. The population may not have been exactly eager to accept the government's proposals, but they were willing to consent for the greater good of the country. It wasn't long before someone instigated the idea that acclamation might be 'shouting in a person's honour' - well, perhaps not shouting, but clapping on Thursday evenings at 8pm, sometimes supplemented (in this road at least) by make-shift percussion. Rainbows and rainbow hearts appeared in windows, on fences, even chalked on pavements, all in acclamation of our NHS and then all the other key workers who helped to keep us cared-for, safe, fed and transported when necessary.

The boy's *Realization* was supposedly the enjoyment of his anticipated bar of milk chocolate. How far have expectations of our very different situation been realized? The full reality of it for me meant a rapid sequence of cancellations and postponements of the expected. Given a little time, ingenuity led to alternative solutions, at least for those with the relevant technology, as virtual orchestral rehearsals and church services were organised. Sadly, this member of the 'elderly' has had no occasion to be so equipped.

At the start, I had made a list of what I thought I might achieve during a set of twelve such weeks. Only some of the expectations have been realized, partly through slowing down, coffee breaks expanding to allow completion of some trickier Sudoku puzzles and, in a good way, the unexpected phone calls and chats. Socially, e-mails and telephone calls have become the mutual support system.

The reward for the Fry's lad was a Five Boys' chocolate bar. In these very different and difficult circumstances, the 'reward' for obeying the pacification proposals as expected of us has to be the diminution of the incidence of the virus and the gradual lessening of the restrictions. Perhaps there will be new realizations concerning which aspects of life are the most necessary to keep and which could, and should, be different in the future. A new opportunity?

Marion Hardy

### **Life in Lockdown**

This too shall pass. I remind myself of this on a bad day. The question is when? One day a vaccine will be developed and life will carry on, albeit differently, to how it was. My first brush with what came to be known as Covid-19 happened on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 as we prepared to fly home from Hong Kong. We spotted some posters which mentioned Coronavirus and showed images of people coughing. On the flight a message was read out concerning any passengers who had transited via Wuhan in China, they should make themselves known to cabin crew. Nothing to do with us ...

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March Boris Johnson told the nation that an unprecedented lockdown would start the next day. My partner works for the Royal Mail so became a 'Key Worker'. My main concern was my 87 year old mum, who although in good health, became categorised as 'vulnerable' simply due to her age. She lives alone and I will always remember her face through the window while she 'self-isolated'.

Here we are in late May 2020 and life has taken on a predictable and somewhat tedious routine. Shopping has become a grim necessity – queuing 2 meters apart, spraying the handle of the trolley and dodging other shoppers within the confines of the aisles.

Technology is our lifeline. We exercise each morning with Joe Wicks on YouTube. We quiz remotely using Zoom online with family on Saturday nights. WhatsApp keeps me in contact with friends. On Saturday mornings I help with the distribution of food via the FairShare charity. Supermarkets donate surplus goods and items near the use-by-date. I load up my car and head to a local café whose owner is producing meals for children who would normally receive free school meals and Sunday lunches for elderly residents of local care homes.

I worry for the young who will pay a high price for this pandemic. My nephew is home from University still hoping to graduate this year, taking his final exams online instead of the Excel Centre in London which has become a Nightingale Hospital. His younger brother turned 18 this weekend

and could not go to a pub to celebrate as they are all closed. The financial impact on the country is huge and I feel anxious about the future. It is hard to accept that life has fundamentally changed. From now on there is BC (Before Coronavirus). I cling to the hope that some positive aspects of the pandemic will last such as people being kinder to each other, respect for the NHS and a fresh initiative for environmental issues. It will be the strangest Summer.

Helen Norman

### **Life in Lockdown**

Today is Saturday, 23rd May 2020, exactly two months after Boris Johnson announced a nationwide lockdown. March 2020 will certainly go down in history as the month when everything changed. The official line regarding Covid-19 shifted in mid-March as the public became more and more uneasy. Partly to prove I could still do so, and partly to avoid travelling on public transport, I walked to Leeds and back. Although the roads were quiet, and passenger numbers on the many passing buses were visibly lower than usual, central Leeds was as busy as ever. Then everything really did change. The shops, restaurants, cafés, theatres, hotels, churches, football stadia all closed. Schools and colleges and universities too. Weddings were cancelled. The diary haemorrhaged. The world that we inhabited suddenly shrank.

After the flooding and gale-force winds that characterised the mild winter of 2019 to 2020, lockdown heralded the start of an extended period of warm dry weather with some of the bluest, clearest skies I have ever seen. It was an absolute godsend because it enabled those fortunate enough to have gardens to spend time outside, giving us an unprecedented opportunity to witness beautiful spring blooms burst into life. The birdsong was loud too!

The familiar, once-constant hum of traffic is almost non-existent. Our laptops, landline and mobile phones have been busier than ever. By the end of April, I had lost count of the number of emails and text messages I had sent and received; by the number of friendships fortified by a random phone call; by the number of contacts with my wider family; by soaring use of WhatsApp. Instead of practising the usual eclectic range of piano music requested for wedding ceremonies and drinks receptions, my husband Tony is capitalising on the unexpected opportunity to play for his own enjoyment. In recent weeks, cleaning has occupied a great deal of time and energy. Never has the house been so free of dust nor the cupboards, floors and drawers so immaculate.

The war we wage on Covid-19 has been largely fought in isolation and without recourse to the spiritual comfort of any place of worship. Never before have churches been universally locked on

Easter Sunday. But thanks to the wonders of modern technology, and a compliant Wi-Fi connection, we can stream church services from around the globe. Maybe God is telling us that we should make our faith manifest in the help and support we offer to others, not via collective acts of worship.

Although the pace of life should have slowed down, days seem to pass by with increasing speed. Horizons have shrunk beyond belief. Most of my solo walks are done with purpose: to post a letter or collect a prescription. No-one has dared mention Brexit for months. We are blessed to live in a friendly area where we know our neighbours by name and routinely greet one another or stop for a chat. I think we all appreciate the opportunity to join with the rest of the nation, stand on our doorsteps for five minutes from 8pm each Thursday and to “Clap for Carers”. Since the beginning of lockdown, our own next-door neighbours have been able to work from home. Both households include young children, and all four parents have been involved in the serious business of home-schooling. Not surprisingly, the more mature residents in our road, most of whom should be self-isolating until the end of June, have received numerous offers of help. Through their church in South Leeds, our next-door neighbours have publicised the abject poverty of many people living in that area and have rallied our own little community into providing some ongoing support.

Our weekday routine is punctuated by television news bulletins. We anxiously seek evidence of downward trends in the number of confirmed new cases of Covid-19 and in the number of people who have died within the previous 24 hours. We take in the latest statistics, study the graphs, appreciate the success stories, and empathise with the suffering of the victims and those who mourn.

What do I crave now? Certainly not a shopping spree, a whole new bathroom, cruise, or dream holiday. My most fervent wish is for a future where Covid-19 mutates to the point where it poses no risk to any living creature so no further pandemics can ensue. I would really like a global Utopia, where the pace of life is slower, the people kinder, more appreciative, and more generous than ever before. But most of all I pray that my beloved family, friends and acquaintances remain well, in mind and body, so that I can give each and every one of them a great big bear-hug, when it's safe to do so.

Carole Perkin

### **Life in lockdown: 20 May 2020**

Since 23 March 2020, like very many other people, I have been working entirely from home. In the first week of lockdown I did no work for three days. The weather was unseasonably good and we have a much-neglected garden; I had a massive blitz. I have spent more time gardening and spring

cleaning in the last nine weeks than I have done in the last five or six years. I am still content to be at home; which surprises me. I have been out only for essential trips. My husband has been to our corner shop, roughly weekly, for milk and has picked up a few other items. He has been working from home since the 25<sup>th</sup> and has had to go into work three times. We have chosen to stay at home to exercise. And yet the weeks have shot by. I am well-equipped to work from home and apart from archival research that I will need to do once I am able to, I have carried on as I normally would.

We are aware that whilst everyone is in the same storm, we are not all in the same boat. We are comfortably off, happy in one another's company and in a house with enough space for both of us to work from home and, when we need to, to get some distance from one another. We are able to use technology to connect with family and friends. As long as we are able to park our worries about family and friends and, provided we think no further forward than the next few days, and do not immerse ourselves in the news – which is and continues to be dreadful - we are content and have adapted. Our Monday Pilates class is now via Zoom in our lounge and not in the church we usually travel across town to. We have taken up music theory lessons with a friend from the Gallery Quire that I sing in, also via Zoom. The Ukulele Club that usually meets on Wednesdays in a town centre pub is managing to meet, again via Zoom, and has worked out that if one person leads a song and the others all mute we can play and sing along at home quite successfully. I have observed one court case via Skype for Business on 7 April. It was a bit of a culture shock to see the judge in what appeared to be her kitchen and in her "civvies", but she was clearly very used, even by that early date, to using Skype from home for court hearings.

I am Skyping my widowed mother daily. She is finding this far harder than I am. The prospect of being under long-term 'house-arrest', as she has taken to calling it, is a very gloomy one. I text my mother daily and also message my son, who lives alone, just to check that they are both ok – something I would never normally do, as I would usually assume no news to be good news. My mother's own unacknowledged anxieties which bubble up from time-to-time and the occasionally expressed anxieties of friends or other family members when we Skype or Zoom are impossible to deal with.

I ponder how I will feel when inquiries resume and I revert to travelling across the country, a resumption of deadlines; early starts and late nights. Will I feel safe? How will we balance the risk to health of more social contact as against the need to return to those working activities, to see families, to touch one another outside of the unit of two that we have become. In bleaker moments I wonder if I will ever see my son or my mother in the flesh again. But I must acknowledge that I have



valued the time and space to watch birds in our garden, to have lunch outside, to cycle along the main road to the market. This is a time of very mixed emotions. But the strongest emotion is relief that thus far those family members who have become ill – my brother who is an NHS nurse and night site manager for a big hospital, our great-nephew and his father – have recovered. I try not to think of anything else.

Sue Rumfitt

### **“It was the Best of times, it was the Worst of times”**

Charles Dickens’ famous line in *A Tale of Two Cities* might well be an appropriate start to describe these strange times. I doubt many people saw the chaos this new pandemic was about to inflict on us all. Indeed, the average person living here in Irthlingborough wouldn’t have been the slightest bit concerned by the spread of a flu-type illness in countries far away. My personal recollections really began leading up to a mid-March weekend. My wife and I had arranged a visit to stay with friends in South Yorkshire. I was to combine the trip by going to watch my favourite football team play. A couple of days prior to heading north, my son alerted me to the fact that all sports fixtures were likely to be called off for the foreseeable future! My initial reaction was one of shock, disbelief, sheer astonishment. Surely it would only last a few weeks at most? Talk of closures of shops, pubs, restaurants, hairdressers and the like were gaining momentum. Schools were to close and we were told we should stay at home. A Lockdown was subsequently announced and for everyone life changed virtually overnight! New words entered our everyday lexicon - in addition to Lockdown, there was Self Isolating and Social Distancing, Shielding and The R Number. Shops, restaurants, bars, and indeed most businesses have subsequently suspended trading. Schools were closed and children became accustomed to online learning.

From my personal perspective, Lockdown has had a positive as well as a negative impact. I suppose the best way to describe it is that it feels somewhat akin to living with a permanent Bank Holiday. If things ever return to normal, and in the absence of a vaccine, nothing is certain, there are things that I shall look back on with a certain loathing. Other things with some satisfaction. A regular occurrence on a Thursday evening, is to show our support for the NHS by clapping outside our homes. As the weeks have passed, more and more of us have joined in, eager to offer our gratitude in some small way.

On the negative side, I doubt I shall ever become used to queueing simply to enter our local Supermarket, those two metre markers ensuring Social Distancing or those marked direction markers

down each aisle. There's the preference from retailers for payment by card rather than cash even for relatively small amounts. Deserted car parks, shuttered shop fronts, face masks. I won't miss those early lockdown shortages of everyday items, toilet roll, rice, flour and garden compost to name but a few. Despite all of this, there's a definite sense of patience and calm and a new community spirit with so much time available. Society is no longer in a rush. Although FaceTime and Skype enable us to "virtually" see our grandchildren, my wife and I can hardly wait for the day we are once again reunited with them, simply for a hug or holding hands.

Daily reports of the number of new cases of the virus coupled with the numbers who've died have become normal. On the plus side, my wife and I spend much more time together, simply sitting in our garden and passing the time with trivial conversation. I've rediscovered jigsaws, plus the simple art of a walk, admiring the countryside and photographing these odd times. Perhaps when this lockdown is ended our way of life might have changed for good. Maybe it'll be fashionable for men to sport long hair again. More and more workers are able to work from home and I'd expect that to continue. On a bigger scale, less pollution has made for a healthier environment. Locals around our town even comment that without the traffic noise, they'd heard their first cuckoo for many years. Things that seemed so important to me prior to the onset of Corona Virus, now appear trivial, whilst things that I failed to appreciate are now a huge miss.

Chris Saxon

### **Bad Timing - Toothache in Lockdown**

For the past two days I have been in denial about the painful hard lump on my gum. Chewing a clove and taking painkillers haven't done any good. When I ring my dentist I just get the Ansaphone. Panicking, I called a dentist friend who insisted that I must keep trying my surgery where they have my records. 'Only in an extreme emergency we refer patients to a "Hot" or "Cold" Covid Hub as far away as Northamptonshire or Yorkshire. They'll only do an extraction and the form-filling is horrendous.' Eventually a lovely locum dentist rang me back, looked at my recent Xray and sent an e-prescription for strong antibiotics to a late-night pharmacy. Thank Heaven for the NHS!!

L. Stewart Smith.

### **83 year old sharing Lock-down with a friend.**

Opened my door to find a bag of groceries left by my son. Phoned the Care Home to check on my brother, also phoned brother-in-law and his wife who are both 92. My order from the local village

butcher was delivered by Sue, dressed in WW2 Land Army dungarees singing '*Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree with Anyone Else but Me*'. Made some soup, spent time on the Historical Society website.

S. Moore.

### **Technology Expert among other things**

Became a technology expert when my granddaughter taught me how to make WhatsApp video calls.

Not sure I always like what I see when I press the wrong button and it is me in the frame!

Today I decided to rekindle my baking skills and bake a Swiss roll. So it isn't always necessary to rely on Mr Kipling after all. Spent time on my computer adding information to the Edwinstowe Historical Society website. Wrote another short story for great-grandchildren. When e-mailed to my grandson and granddaughter, being the busy teachers they are at present having to deal with pupils over the internet, they have the task of downloading my contribution in order to read to their respective families. The stories certainly send me to sleep at night because I am worn out tasking my brain for ideas.

Tonight is Thursday, and at 8 p.m. I will join my neighbours to clap for all the NHS staff and other members of the community who have helped to keep things ticking over. An idea from one of the families on this small avenue is for each Thursday to be a "theme" night as well. This has been an introduction to get to know the neighbours who normally are seen waving as they pass by in their cars.

M. Wright.

### **Wonderful neighbours and VE Day 75 Community Celebrations**

VE Day was an early start and I spent the morning baking scones, preparing dinner and putting out bunting and flags in the front garden as well as setting up a table at the top of the drive displaying Edwinstowe WW2 photos and information. During the day many couples and families stopped for a look and Maureen, my next-door neighbour, directed people to view the information. Many positive comments were received. After lunch we set our chairs and tables in the front garden and many of our close neighbours did the same. We played several Vera Lynn songs on the Bose Bluetooth speaker.

At 3:00p.m. we acknowledged the two-minute silence to commemorate VE Day. We sat again, chatted, enjoyed drinks and scones and introduced ourselves to many people as they walked by, some with children and many with dogs eager for exercise. We waved to everyone who passed in cars. Pat, our neighbour, who was dressed as 'Pike' from Dad's Army, marched around the block. At 6:00p.m.

we went inside for roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and all the trimmings. Afterwards we joined our neighbours until 8:55pm when we went inside to listen to the Queen's speech. Back outside again we sang the Vera Lynn song, '*We Will Meet Again*'. As the weather was still very warm, we sat and talked until 9:30pm.

E. Hawkes

### **A family's 75th VE Day Celebration in Lockdown**

It was a very early start to the day. I completed my handmade bunting and had great fun climbing ladders and stringing it across the driveway, to the delight of passers-by. A few families with children stopped and asked about it then went on their way. Had a quick walk down the road to admire the colourful bunting, Union Jacks waving in the breeze and free sweets for lucky travellers. Best of all a quick chat for friendly neighbours, some already starting to celebrate with a cup of tea and cupcakes, drawing similarities between the situation for people in WW2 and coronavirus today.

I then dashed up to see two of my grandchildren, following the Government Guidance to the letter. Waved to them through the large picture window, their faces pressed to the glass and surrounded by NHS rainbows and slogans reminding people to 'Be brave' and 'Keep Safe'. WW2 bunting surrounded the window and slogans saying 'Thank You', to the brave soldiers marked this special day. Dressed as land girls and farm workers (7 years old) they showed their home made cupcakes with handmade Union Jacks on them. No hugs no kisses just miming 'I love you' through the window. Had a virtual Zoom meeting with all of the family, even Yoda the dog had his Union Jack bow tie around his neck. It was a great time and everybody put a virtual wish into the 'wish box', for after the Lockdown. We went out into the street at 8 o'clock, raised a glass or cup and toasted 'To those who gave so much for us, we salute you and thank you.' We then sang '*We'll meet again*' with Vera Lynn. People chatted, joked and danced keeping two metres apart as requested by the government. What a great memory of a virtual and distanced VE Day in Lockdown but so much fun and goodwill.

M. Share.

### **Lockdown 2020**

There is an old saying where I come from 'all dressed up and nowhere to go'. Well, that has not applied to me since 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020. I have not been dressed up and I have had nowhere to go, because it has not been allowed. The daily walk, a visit to the pharmacy, socially distanced shopping has been the limit. Thankfully, the weather has been largely sunny and warm. I miss seeing my friends, but we all keep in touch by phone or email.

Gardening, watching the antics of the birds, in particular the starlings and sparrows, research into my family history, together with the mundane tasks of every day occupy most of my time. The big event of my year, a train journey to the Somme Battlefields in April, was cancelled owing to the travel ban. My great uncle Robert was killed during the Battle of the Somme in September, 1916. He was 22 years old and the youngest of six children. His death is commemorated by an inscription on the Memorial to the Missing at Thiepval. None of the family has ever been to see the Memorial, and, having looked at his picture, read the only surviving letter in his own hand and remembered what my grandparents said about him, I felt that it was my duty to go there before advancing age prevents me from doing so. Hopefully, I shall be able to set out on this journey when it is safe to travel.

J.Lane.

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### **April 2020 – Thoughts from within my head!**

An addition to the family, all should be full of cheer,  
But this is April, 2020, unpredictable times – oh dear,  
We are all here in lock-down, ALL stuck inside  
And the baby cried.....and the baby cried.

The toddler, who has just started to walk,  
Can't understand why its parents shout when they talk,  
We are all here in lock-down, ALL stuck inside  
And the baby cried.....and the baby cried.

The older children feel like screaming, so they do,  
With the parents' nerves in shreds, they yell too!  
We are all.....

The teenager, full of hormones – no fault of their own  
Feels confused, bewildered and very alone,  
We are all.....

The student nurses, barely in their third year  
Being sent to the front-line, full of anxiety and fear,  
We are all.....

The wife, knowing that all isn't well  
Feels guilty for shouting at her husband, "Just go to hell!"  
We are all.....

Grand and Great Grandparents – some old and lonely, begin to fret,  
When WILL they see their family, and who will take Tiddles to the Vet?  
We are all here in lock-down, ALL stuck inside

And the baby cried, and the baby cried.

There's new vocabulary in our language, 'self-isolation' and 'lock-down',  
With many of the shops closed in our town,  
When out for one's exercise, a bike ride or walk  
If you meet anyone, you're not allowed near to talk.

'Social distancing' dictates you have to be two metres apart  
So you keep looking to left and right even before you start.  
It's like the Good Samaritan in reverse, only it's good  
To cross to the other side as you're told that you should.

However, wonderful things are happening each and every day,  
And people are behaving in a very different way,  
They are kinder to each other, be it stranger or friend  
And always willing for that helping hand to lend  
To go shopping, or fetch someone's medication,  
And to many, many tasks show love and dedication.

Lots of people are turning to the Church, their faith to revive  
And in Irthlingborough, the Church comes to them, live!  
Numbers go up and up as comfort they seek  
And Rector John is doing a marvellous job 'online' three times a week.

Folk are stopping and listening all day long  
To that wonderful, uplifting cheerful bird song  
As they feed their babies whilst feathering each nest  
'cos nature calmly carries on, it doesn't have a rest.

We've started clapping for the NHS every Thursday night,  
And we are asked to stay in, then this corona virus just might  
Lessen its spread, and perhaps one day  
We can all live again in a more normal way.

So, when all this is over, I hope all of us will find  
That we have emerged into a new world that is predominantly kind,  
And we will love one another and appreciate all that we have  
From our friends and family.....to the indoor lav!

Meg & Roy York

## REVIEWS

### **The Great Blow: Examinations and Informations relating to the Great Blow in Norwich 1648**

Edited by Andrew Hopper, Jean Agnew, and Emily Wilbur Alley; Norfolk Record Society, 2018

The terrible explosion in Beirut occurred some time after I volunteered to review this book, but it inevitably had me thinking of parallels. Norwich also suffered a sudden and unexpected explosion in the middle of the city, the damage was severe and there were fatalities. Both communities were also living under the shadow of recent civil war. At the time of writing, the cause of Beirut's tragedy seems to be 'cock up' rather than conspiracy. But Norwich's 'Great Blow' was the accidental outcome of direct action. This action had its roots in a popular 'tavern-based' royalist sentiment.

For those unfamiliar with the 'Great Blow', it occurred on April 24<sup>th</sup> 1648, when rioting in the streets of Norwich resulted in the triggering of the largest explosion in seventeenth-century England. Rioters had entered the Committee House to take the arms therein, and accidentally set off the powder stores, resulting in an explosion that was 'heard throughout the county as timbers, tiles, plaster and human remains scattered the vicinity for miles around'. Estimates of the number of deaths ranged between 80 and 200. The book contains a lengthy introduction that gives an account of the tensions leading up to the event, as well as its aftermath, it also provides transcriptions of some surviving letters giving various accounts of The Great Blow, as well as brief biographies of some of the notable residents of Norwich at this time.. The meat of the book, however, is the transcription of the 'examinations' and the 'informations' taken in the wake of the explosion.

These examinations and informations follow some kind of narrative structure, with the statement of an informer often being followed by the examination of the person they have informed on. Those accused often tell a very similar story: they were innocently going about their business, when they were attracted by a commotion and went to see what was going on (often via one or more of Norwich's many taverns). Sometimes they would discover a weapon or a buff coat along the way and would take it into safe keeping, intending to return it. They were then wrongly taken by the troopers, either after the explosion or the next morning.

The real significance of these accounts, however, is that they sometimes highlight a sentiment that has often been deemed unrecoverable: how disaffected supporters of the King from the popular ranks might have expressed themselves. This is particularly valuable in revealing such feeling in a city like

Norwich, usually viewed as a bastion of parliamentary support. The events that effectively lit the fuse of the great blow was the attempt to take the royalist-leaning mayor, Utting, to London to answer to parliament for some of his actions. This allowed all types of tensions and conflicts (not least the financial burden caused by the recent conflict) to rise to the surface and resulted in the taking of arms from the houses of two leading parliamentarians, before the fateful invasion of the committee house. Among the evidence given against the participants are reports of anti-parliamentarian sentiment, such as Margaret Clerk saying 'it would doe hir good will to kill a rundhead', or John Wilson reporting being in an alehouse where 'Mr Spurgyn a mercer' was extolling the company that 'they were all for the kinge & that they would not lett the Mayor goe out'. The trial of the participants took place the following December. Of the 108 people tried only eight were hanged, others faced a range of lesser penalties.

As with the work of many records societies, this book gives readers the opportunity to enjoy material from local archives ready-transcribed and from the comfort of their own home. In this case it also has the benefit of giving insight into a little-known but significant event occurring in what was, at that time, England's largest provincial city.

**Mandy de Belin**

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### **Landscapes of England by W G Hoskins**

2 x DVDs published by Simply Media; Total run time 350 mins. Colour Cat. no. 188028 Price  
£13.49

These 2 DVDs contain two series of programmes first broadcast on BBC Two in 1976, with the intention of providing a visual accompaniment to Hoskins' well known groundbreaking book, '*The Making of the English Landscape*', which was about to be republished at about that time. In addition, (and making a purchase worthwhile in its own right), there is a recording of the preceding *Horizon* programme of 1972, which forms a comprehensive and stand-alone prequel to the two subsequent series. In both the programme and the individual broadcasts, Hoskins' discerning eye ranges throughout the English countryside, exploring and explaining in his inimitable style the varying picturesque landscapes. It is, as you would expect, a gentle *tour de force*, as he lifts the veil covering the past, revealing the landscapes where the feet of countless generations have trod.



This short, stout, little man, wearing the collar and tie of his particular generation, leads us thoughtfully down the byways of local history, one track forming the boundary of an ancient estate, another a driftway, until one feels almost absorbed into these timeless scenes of the countryside that he so passionately loved and understood so well. Everything he could see seemed to have something to say about man's struggle to survive and if possible, improve his environment. From the siting of farms and hamlets on soils with suitable drainage and adequate sources of water, amidst the surrounding boulder clay, to the painful carving out of land from the pervading woodland to ensure adequate subsistence. For sure, modern scholarship may have since shone a more accurate light on the interpretation of these scenes but the Hoskins account remains The King James version of how it was and to which we are called to return again and again to hear his comfortable way of telling the story, so that as the video concludes, we are moved to say, 'Play it again, Sam!'.

All right, the pictorial quality is not up to today's technical standards and the presentation is a little slow but the whole experience is none the worse for that. Indeed it is all the more evocative in its way and incidentally, perhaps more in step with the measured manner in which we are currently obliged to spend our lives whilst attempting to cope with the pandemic.

To sum up, these two DVDs provide a masterful introduction to the study of landscape history and the '*Horizon*' programme at least should form a compulsory part of the inauguration for future MA students. As a retrospect, it has been a delight – do rush to buy your own copy!

**Noel Tornbohm**

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**Susan Kilby, *Peasant Perspectives on the Medieval Landscape: A Study of Three Communities* (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2020).**

Susan Kilby's book throws shafts of light onto the mindset of medieval peasants. Setting aside the social elite, she shows us what they saw in the landscape around them. Her study focuses on three communities with contrasting peasant hierarchies and farming resources, Elton, Castor and Lakenheath in the East Midlands and East Anglia, between Domesday Book and the Black Death. She draws upon a vast array of sources including documents, material culture, place-names and family names, and the landscape itself, and draws upon a wide variety of approaches.

Field names, imbued with layers of meaning and revealing simple environmental information, were bestowed upon the landscape by resident peasants. There is evidence of different naming strategies

in different communities. Lords would promote their aristocratic spaces with practical and financial considerations and the intention of keeping peasants firmly in their place on the soil. Some peasants, in turn, might treat seigneurial land as if it were common land, disregarding paths sanctioned by the lord and creating alternative routeways. On the other hand, peasants higher up the social scale could attempt to emulate some of the ways in which lords set themselves apart. In some settlements, the arrangement of peasant dwellings followed their different status groups, many peasants creating their own private space. Documents contain many peasant bynames, and topographical names can build up a mental picture of the village topography and the location of peasant messuages. In bestowing family names on the landscape freemen in Castor associated themselves with overt statements of ownership. The book reveals both differing attitudes between free and unfree peasants and collective rural mentalities. She explores names as the means by which locally important history, folklore and legends were embedded within the landscape itself.

This book reminds us that the landscape is a historical document, from which peasant perspectives can be recovered. It uncovers in forensic detail the mentalities of some lower orders of people who were fundamental to the economy and structure of medieval society. It picks out human responses and reactions to a hierarchical society which we might even recognise in ourselves.

**Phil Batman**

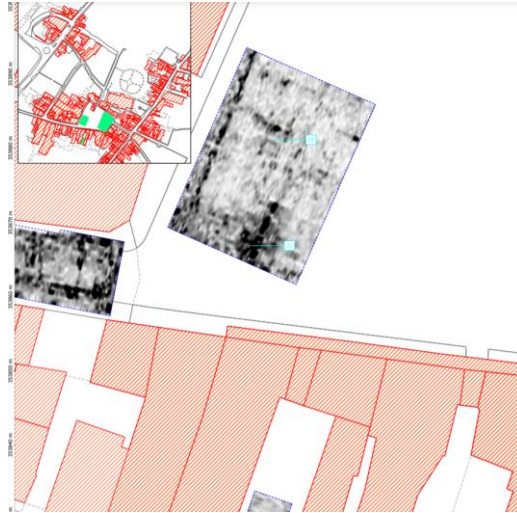
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## **HIDDEN HERITAGE PROJECT, NEWARK ON TRENT**

During 2013 a partial ground penetrating radar survey was conducted of the Market Place in Newark, as the District Council were to install several stanchions to support a new Christmas Light installation. The car parks and market manager, Ian Harrison wondered if the survey might show evidence of the tunnels that local legends stated ran between the church, castle, and friary. Ian suggested to me that a local history project could investigate whether the stories of the tunnels were true or not. A group of like-minded historians, museum and architectural professionals volunteered for the project and the Newark Hidden Heritage group was formed.

In 2015 the group was awarded Heritage Lottery funding to conduct a further GPR survey of areas of the town centre, survey individual cellars and record underground features of interest and create a website to showcase the results of the research. The group received various reports from local people and will record these oral histories and create a trail based on these reports and our findings.

Although the GPR survey produced no evidence of tunnels in various parts of the town centre, some interesting features were founded. These included a possibility that the graveyard of the Church of St Mary Magdalene once extended westwards outside of the existing curtilage on Church Street and a suggestion that the western edge of the Market Place once extended 12M further into the market area and was in line with the extant buildings towards the north of the market place.



*GPR Market Place West showing potential earlier line of western edge – feature 21 (Copyright Tigergeo)*

The contacts who reported the presence of tunnels were convinced that tunnels existed, with some reporting that their relatives had been on tours of the tunnels during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The discovery of two connections between different buildings supports a proposed theory that more of the cellars in the town were previously connected and that this might explain the tour reports. Newark is renowned for its Georgian architecture, but beneath this façade several properties have evidence of former stone cellars foundations. Covid-19 has caused delays for the project with archaeologists on furlough, and the closure of non-essential businesses resulting in delay of professional surveys and laser scanning.

**Anne Coyne**

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## AN OBITUARY: SIR JOHN HAROLD PLUMB 1911-2001

### A Distinguished Leicester historian

At the Leicester University graduation ceremony the J H Plumb History Prize is awarded to the single subject history student awarded a first class degree. The prize was endowed by Plumb who was one of Leicester's most distinguished alumni. In 2019, his friend and pupil Neil McKendrick, another distinguished Leicester born historian, published a personal memoir of his mentor subtitled *'The Hidden Life of a Great Historian'*. Plumb died in 2001 at the age of 90 a '...fascinating and controversial individual...' who '...did so much to change the nature and direction of travel of popular academic history...'



Plumb was a complex, marmite character. He always published under the bi-line J. H. Plumb, but to friends and pupils he was 'Jack'. He had an irrepressible vitality, became wealthy and he delighted in the good things in life. He was a small plump man with a distinctive round head and a penetrating gaze behind a fashionable pair of round-rimmed spectacles. Not for him the casual dress of the 'cool' academic but a crisply tailored Saville Row suit, a Jermyn Street striped shirt and bow tie, and occasionally a trademark wide-brimmed Fedora.

His origins were humble. He was from a working family of boot-makers born and brought up in a terrace off Narborough Road. His father and grandfather were both clickers in the industry, his father working at the Leicester Co-operative Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Society. This gave Jack Plumb a radical bent and his first published work was *Fifty Years of Equity Shoemaking: A History of the Leicester Co-operative Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Society Limited*, privately printed in 1936 when he was 25. It was Jack Plumb championing the workers and condemning the capitalists.

Plumb began work on English political history in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, completing a PhD thesis on the House of Commons in the reign of William III, producing an article and his polemic on his father's factory. But he struggled to make a mark as a somewhat gauche provincial young man. Then, a PhD was not the ticket of importance to making a mark that it has become. He reputedly spent much of his early years in Cambridge drinking Worthington E and Greene King in downmarket pubs, notably in Christ's local, the Red Lion. Over a pint he would critique the Cambridge historical establishment and openly proclaim his atheism and radical politics.

In 1954 he was asked to contribute to the Leicestershire Victoria County History and wrote the section *Political History, 1530-1885*, still regarded as a model for others writing in the VCH. Other than his short history on Equity Shoemaking, this is his only sustained piece of scholarship on his home county, although he regularly mined its history for examples for his books.

He went onto write what he and others regarded as his most important work, *The Growth of Political Stability in England 1675-1725*, based on his Ford Lectures of 1965. In this work he sought to address the serious political problem of how the transition from civil war England of the 1600s to the settled political world of the 1700s was achieved. It was a tract for the times because it explicitly addressed a contemporary issue facing the UK of Harold McMillan and Harold Wilson of the complex relations between inertia and change. As Plumb saw it stability did not just happen, rather it was the outcome of economic and social forces that were realised and made actual by

In the last 25 years of his life Plumb was much less productive in original scholarship and major publications but he initiated projects that went beyond the confines of 18<sup>th</sup> century politics and people. Some were boldly conceived. In the late 1960s he launched *The History of Human Society* as general editor where scholars would write on major themes of historical change and development. Volumes appeared on *Prehistoric Societies*, *The Romans*, *The Dutch Seaborne Empire*, *The Spanish Seaborne Empire*, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire*, *Pioneer America* and *Imperial China*. Other volumes were planned including one he intended to write on the British Seaborne Empire between

1600 and 1800. But it never appeared. He continued to publish essays and book reviews on a whole range of subjects collected together in 3 volumes published between 1970 and 1989.

His popular histories made his name, sold in their tens of thousands and made him a lot of money. Once established he began to cultivate an influence beyond the world of 18<sup>th</sup> century scholarship, often rubbing up people the wrong way. He always saw as important bringing history to the general public through strong narratives, exciting personalities and quirky facts. He believed that if history were written by academics only for academics it would atrophy into an arid and narrow scholasticism. For Plumb, history was either a public craft or nothing. And it should be an applied discipline informing contemporary decisions. In his collection of essays *In the Light of History*, he wrote ‘... *I feel it is an historian’s duty not only to pursue his own historical researches but also attempt to lay bare to the largest possible public what may be the historical roots of some of our own problems.*’ This approach and philosophy also chimed with his personal craving to be rewarded and recognised. Fame and fortune as well as enlightenment were important drivers for this provincial young man of modest background from Leicester.

A sure sign Plumb was a prominent public figure was the invitation to be a guest on *Desert Island Discs*. He adopted a slightly affected tone in his ‘life story’ and chose music from the great 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century composers and the jazz of Duke Ellington and Sidney Bechet. His choice of book was Voltaire’s correspondence again a characteristic choice as Voltaire advocated civil liberties, was a biting satirist and a critic of intolerance and religious dogma. Plomley consented and then as an aside Plumb told him they ran to 118 volumes. As his luxury he initially requested a case of Chateau Latour 1961, but then negotiated that up to a dozen cases - Voltaire was a long read. His friend, Neil McKendrick remarked on this piece of chutzpah that Plumb showed himself to be ‘...*a characteristically smart negotiator and a characteristically self-indulgent one...*’ A Knighthood came in 1982, but no seat in the House of Lords. He was on Harold Wilson's infamous resignation honours list for a peerage dubbed by the press Lady Falkender’s ‘Lavender List’, but was dropped in the furore which followed its "leaking" to the press.

Towards the end of his life, the Balzacian Plumb gave way to the Dostoyevskian persona of someone frequently overtaken by doubt, loneliness, envy and disappointment. He had divested himself of many of the good things in his life; his new elite friends proved fickle and he retreated to his rooms in Christ’s. When visiting him you could not predict whether you would be warmly welcomed or subject to the sharp tip of his tongue. The last time I saw him his main question was “Are you making

money, Stewart?’ When he died he was buried close to his former cottage without any friends or mourners present, in a simple shroud and with a modest headstone bearing the words ‘J. H. Plumb - Historian - 1911-2001’. But his life as a scholar was celebrated with a seminar and a fine memorial dinner at Christ’s.

### ***Stewart Fergusson***

*“Jack Plumb was born in Leicester and was one of the early graduates of what was University College Leicester; he developed a popular approach to academic history; he believed history was an illumination of the human condition and had to be promoted beyond the academy; he extolled and promoted an approach to history that combined the different but connected disciplines of demography, sociology, economics and political science; and, all in all he was an interesting man. A broad group of historians such as the Friends is exactly the sought of network he would have championed!”*



## **LEICESTERSHIRE VCH NEWS**

We have been very fortunate in the timing of this ‘year of two halves’. Lockdown setbacks and delays have been minor, but we feel for colleagues and students for whom it may have caused serious problems.

January 2020 saw the long-delayed completion of the Charnwood Roots project databank, with final entries uploaded, the search function improved and the data gathered by volunteers and staff made freely accessible to the public. We are very grateful to Teri Forey from the University’s IT Services for her work. Over 6,500 entries, mostly from documentary sources relating to many aspects of the histories of the 35 towns and villages in the project area can now be searched by any combination of place, topic and/or keyword. You can find the databank at [charnwoodroots.org](http://charnwoodroots.org). The information it contains can be used by anyone in any project, all we ask is that Charnwood Roots and Leicestershire VCH are acknowledged in any published work or exhibition.

By the time you read this, our paperback history of Ibstock should have been published. The final draft text was with our London office before lockdown, and proof reading and indexing have been completed, ‘working from home’. Unfortunately, the public launch has had to be delayed, but we hope to hold an event in Ibstock in 2021. To whet appetites, and because we were unable to lead the guided walk around the village we had planned for July 2020, we have created an online tour of

Ibstock's nonconformist churches, which can be found at [https://leicestershirehistory.co.uk/?page\\_id=3852](https://leicestershirehistory.co.uk/?page_id=3852)

Our next paperback history, on the parish of Lutterworth, is proceeding almost as planned, as most of the research had been completed by March. Writing up is underway.

With the help of PhD student Paige Emerick, we started a new volunteer project in Loughborough in September 2019 looking at public health improvements in the town in the 19th century. The topic was chosen by a focus group of Loughborough residents and those interested in Loughborough history. We planned an exhibition in July and August 2020, marking the 150th anniversary of the introduction of piped water to the town. That has been deferred for 12 months, and we shall now mark the 151st anniversary in July 2021.

A project to research the history of Loughborough's market in the medieval period was due to start in April 2020, but was derailed by the closure of archive offices. This was planned to feed into a major celebration of the 800th anniversary of the town's market charter in 2021, involving the borough council, the town's several museums, local studies library and arts groups as well as ourselves. We hope we will soon be able to collect and analyse the information contained in a range of documentary sources, and that the events planned for 2021 to mark this significant anniversary will be able to take place. The research will in due course form part of our planned 'Red Book' history of Loughborough (as will the public health research). This will be the first published VCH history to build on the Charnwood Roots research.

We were also due to start work in April 2020 with residents of Coston and Garthorpe, in north-east Leicestershire, on a community history project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which will enable the parish to replace the roof of Coston church, stolen by lead thieves. Community meetings and public events have had to be postponed, but our fingers are crossed for the first public event before the end of 2020.

***Pam Fisher***

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## AN APOTHECARY'S TALE

In April 1685 Henry Lomas, an apothecary of Tideswell, Derbyshire, died leaving behind a property of five rooms and a shop located in the central market area of the township, where it was well placed



to draw in trade from surrounding settlements. Henry's will and twelve page inventory provide an illuminating picture of the material world of a rural apothecary in seventeenth century Derbyshire. Contemporary visitors may have dismissed the location as isolated, bleak and populated by 'a rude boorish kind of people' but this document suggests more connection to the wider world and to 'modern' medical thought than those commentators may have suspected.

In one respect Henry Lomas' shop differed from the city apothecaries in that it sold an extensive array of other goods as well as medical items. Displaying sound economic sense, Henry catered for the rural buyer, who had a limited choice of supply. He sold gunpowder, shot, whale oil, hobnails, hops, indigo and logwood, soap and starch. Sugar, treacle, dried fruit, almonds, brandy and numerous exotic spices were available as were liquorice balls, macaroons and comfits. Haberdashery items and stockings sat beside paper and inkhorns and dozens of combs; and, since apothecaries were also licensed to sell tobacco, 34 gross of tobacco pipes and 120 lb of tobacco were in stock.

The section of the shop devoted to the apothecary's practice, however, differed little from its London equivalent and was set out to impress the customer (whether gentry or labourer) with Henry's status, specialist knowledge and range of remedies. Shop counters prominently displayed 'the Apothecaries Armes' alongside scales and brass weights, mortars and pestles, a marble pill slab, measures and funnels. Rows of shelving behind the counters were filled with two gross of yellow 'Galley potts', eleven dozen pill pots, eight dozen glass vials, nests of drawers and two cases of instruments for surgery. Published research suggests that the majority of apothecaries' inventories lack specifics and contain only groupings of medicinal items by type such as oils, pills, syrups or simples. Henry's appraisers, however, were resolute in producing 'A Bil drawne of ye potionary stofe, every particular, what it weigheth ...' and in so doing provided the medical historian with a valuable, detailed account of 319 different stock items. That list demonstrates that this apothecary was abreast of current medical theory, purchasing his supplies from London merchants and creating remedies more akin to the ideas of Culpeper than to Galen's propositions regarding the balancing of humours. The greater part of the 'potionary stofe' was herbal in nature and included simples, compound syrups and oils, lozenges, pills, plasters and unguents, all mixed to create remedies for specific ailments. There were several 'magical' ingredients with origins in medieval medicine such as pearls, bezoer stone and stag's heart bone but none of the more repugnant (to modern sensibilities) items allegedly used in ignorant country medicine. Additionally, some of the newly popular chemical ingredients such as mercury, antimony and paraclesian featured in the inventory but, since they were as likely to kill as cure, it is perhaps fortunate that they were few. Their presence does, however, reinforce the

conclusion that a rural apothecary was connected to new ideas and wider networks than sometimes presumed.

**Jennie Gardiner**

*“The path of my research into the life of a Peak District hill farm in the seventeenth century is rarely straight. I get drawn along side tracks by some fascinating document. Hence progress is slow but interesting. This article derives from one such meandering and, hopefully, might prove useful to a researcher of the rural market for medicines. If any reader of this brief introduction to Henry Lomas’ shop wishes to visit it in more detail, the original will and inventory can be found in the Staffordshire Record Office, Diocese of Lichfield wills collection (P/C/11).”*

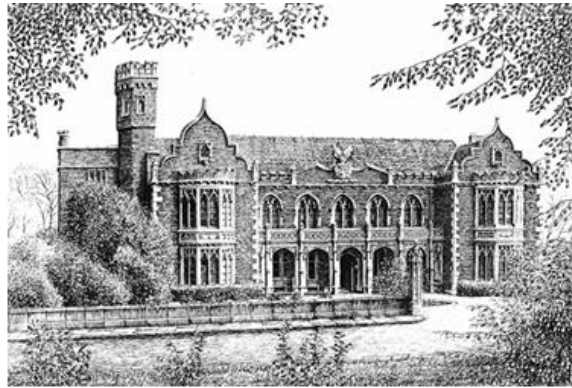
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## **SURVIVING THE PANDEMIC: SPALDING GENTLEMEN’S SOCIETY**

There are numerous small local museums, archives and history or archaeology societies throughout the country. They play a vital role in research and in maintaining public interest in the subject. One such organisation is Spalding Gentlemen’s Society (SGS) that has been in existence since the early eighteenth century. Like all similar societies it is facing major challenges as a result of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. The museum and archive have been closed for all but essential collection monitoring and conservation since March 2020. All membership events (including a major symposium on the Anglo-Saxon Fenlands planned for April) and museum open days have had to be cancelled. Fortunately, SGS is still in a reasonably robust position but many similar groups faced with no visitors and sharply declining incomes face potential collapse and permanent closure. In this short article I will tell you a little about the history of SGS and how it is seeking to adapt to the changing world in which we are living.

SGS was founded in 1710 by Maurice Johnson, a wealthy Spalding lawyer educated at Eton and the Inns of Court in London. There he had been exposed to the ‘coffeehouse’ culture as well as the new scientific and antiquarian societies including the Antiquarian Society of London (now the Society of Antiquaries) re-established by his friend and fellow Fenman, Dr William Stukeley. He was keen to replicate these learned institutions in his hometown and hence SGS was formed with the aim of establishing ‘a Society of Gentlemen for the supporting of mutual benevolence and their improvement in the liberal sciences and polite learning’. The first meetings of the Society were held in Mr Younger’s coffeehouse in Spalding before finding more permanent premises. Unlike the heated

atmosphere of the coffeehouses the intent of SGS was harmony and in the original constitution it states that to ‘prevent talking Politicks or any Dispute which may occasion Quarrells No News Paper, Book or Letter or other paper whatsoever shall be read if any Member opposeth it’.



*Ayscoughfee Hall, Spalding – home of Maurice Johnson (courtesy of SGS)*

The Society initially had two categories of membership; those that lived locally and could attend the weekly meetings and those ‘extra-regular’ members who lived too far away to attend all the meetings. Although they could not attend the weekly meetings they were required to correspond with the Society providing information on ‘any part of Learning Knowledge Arts Sciences which may to them seem Useful, New, Uncommon, Curious or Entertaining’. In addition to the 380 regular or corresponding members in the first 60 years from around the world there were also numerous honorary members including Sir Isaac Newton, Alexander Pope and Joseph Banks. With a requirement that all members should donate books to the value of £1 per annum the Society soon built up a substantial library along with a collection of artifacts and scientific instruments.



*SGS Museum – Broad Street, Spalding (Build 1910)*

In the nineteenth century the Society went into a sharp decline and by 1889 the membership was so small that consideration was given to permanently closing the Society. It is difficult to determine the cause of the decline but certainly the improvements in national communications (the rail network, postal service and newspapers) making access to larger institutions easier must have contributed. Similar societies in Peterborough and Stamford were also closing at this time. However, in 1910 the decision was made to re-found SGS and, thanks to a donation from Edward Gentle, to move into a new purpose-built museum in Broad Street, Spalding. The Society steadily recovered during the twentieth century and now has in excess of 300 members offering a wide range of services from the museum.

The Society faced many challenges as it moved into the new millennium; how to grow the membership, how to make the collections more accessible to the public as well as researchers and academics and how to make the museum building fit-for-purpose to meet modern demands. Then in March of this year we, like the rest of the world, were hit by the pandemic which effectively stopped all face-to-face activities. With a relatively elderly membership it was necessary to be particularly careful to safeguard their welfare. SGS is relatively fortunate in having a diverse membership with people coming from a wide range of professional backgrounds including emergency planning. It was able to establish a Pandemic Working Group and to put in place an appropriate response plan in line with the government's guideline. A recovery plan was developed that enabled the progressive safe

reopening of the museum. Currently a number of pre-booked visits by members, researchers and volunteers is permitted although the museum is still closed to the public.

With the cancellation of all internal and external events including ‘coffeehouses’, lectures, seminars and public open days (these are unlikely to resume until into 2021) the focus has been on providing new approaches to accessing the Society’s services. On a mundane level the administration of the Society and all management meetings are now taking place online. The SGS website ([www.sgsoc.org](http://www.sgsoc.org)) has been revamped with more information being made available to members and the public. A particularly successful element has been the ‘Musings of the Museum’ with a series of articles focussing on the archive and the collections. This has been accompanied by increased use of social media (Facebook and Twitter) to communicate and to show that the Society is still active. In September the series of inhouse lectures or ‘coffeehouses’ will be relaunched online and if successful will be expanded over the winter. A ‘virtual’ networking event will also be held pulling together local museums and history groups to share experience and learning during the pandemic.

These activities have been enabled by the recent and rapid expansion in available online platforms that facilitate the holding of online meetings and events. In truth they have existed for many years but it has been the universal nature of the crisis that brought them to the fore. They are relatively low-cost, reliable and do not require specialist IT skills to operate effectively. New approaches are being developed that help organisations such as SGS to manage the consequences of the pandemic but they are also assisting with the longer terms issues of accessibility and engagement. When we look back and analyse our experiences of the crisis we will probably see that it has accelerated our response to pre-existing problems. The organisations that survive the emergency may well emerge stronger.

*Michael Gilbert*

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## **NAPOLEONIC PRISONERS-OF-WAR**

During the Napoleonic Wars (1793 – 1815) the French refused to exchange prisoners-of-war. Returning captured soldiers and sailors had previously been common practice. The British were willing. After the capture of three royal navy ships in 1803, Admiral Lord Nelson wrote to the commander of the French fleet:

*There are many French prisoners both at Malta and Gibraltar, therefore as it cannot be the wish of us officers to detain those prisoners who can be exchanged I therefore offer you sir to send immediately as many men as you may send to me.*

His request was refused. The French argued they could not rely on those released not returning to active combat duty. But what to do with prisoners while war continued? Ordinary rank and file soldiers and sailors were held in captivity on rotting prison hulks, in medieval castles, and in the first purpose-built prisoner-of-war camps in Britain, at Norman Cross near Peterborough, followed by Dartmoor. Overcrowding, inadequate sanitation and meagre rations made for grim conditions. Many prisoners filled their time making souvenirs from scraps of bone and pieces of straw to sell for a little extra cash. Plenty of examples survive. Officers, on the other hand, enjoyed parole, billeted in private houses in one of 50 designated parole towns up and down the country, in return for their word of honour to stick to the rules. In summary: Abide by the laws of the realm; Not to correspond directly or indirectly with France; Not to walk or ride more than a mile from town and to keep to the public highway; To be in their lodgings by 5pm in winter and 8pm in summer; Not to try to escape.

Failure to comply with these conditions meant imprisonment. Within these restrictions, prisoners were free to go out and to socialise. They were paid an allowance of 1/6d per day. Many supplemented this by making goods to sell, or giving French lessons. Some were joined by their wives and families, and in a few cases their servants.



*Outside the parole town of Tavistock, what became known as the 'Honour Oak', marks the one-mile limit allowed to parolees billeted in the town.*

The places chosen to receive prisoners were mostly small market towns. In the midlands: Leek; Ashbourne; Chesterfield; Ashby-de-la-Zouch; Bridgnorth; Whitchurch; Oswestry; along with the larger town of Northampton, and the city of Lichfield, all hosted parolees. Murals discovered during demolition of a building in Bird Street, Lichfield in 1960 were attributed to French prisoners. French officers billeted in Ashby-de-la-Zouch formed two Freemason's Lodges. Prisoners in Leek also established a masonic lodge, meeting at the *Red Lion* in the market place. A memorial to those who died during their stay in Leek was unveiled in 1996 in St Edward's Churchyard. The recipe for Ashbourne's famous gingerbread may have originated with a French cook billeted in the town with his master.



*A row of gravestones at St John's Church, Alresford, commemorates four French officers and the wife of another.*

The treatment of prisoners along essentially class lines is interesting given that while officers in the British army were almost exclusively 'gentlemen', drawn from the upper echelons of society, Napoleon's army, formed in post-revolutionary France, was more egalitarian and merit-based.

The parole towns played host to around 4,000 captured French officers in total. Most parolees kept their word of honour. In Leek, of 346 prisoners-of-war only 41 attempted escape, of whom six were recaptured; proportions that reflect the national picture. Not all returned to France when war ended. Many settled into the communities in which they stayed. Several marriages to English girls are recorded. In Ashbourne, four Whitaker sisters, daughters of the landlord of the now lost *Cock Inn*, Dig Street, all married French parolees: Hannah in 1808; Mary in 1810; Elizabeth and Margaret in 1812. *C'est la vie*.

*Derbyshire Record Office holds the records of John Langford, the agent responsible for looking after French prisoners-of-war in Ashbourne: catalogue reference D302Z/W1.*

*The Caird Library at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, has a substantial archive on this subject. The catalogue reference of Lord Nelson's letter quoted above is NMM CRK/15/8.*

**Richard Stone**

## **FRIENDS PUBLICATIONS**

**Paula Aucott**

### **Publications**

P. Aucott & H. Southall (2019) 'Locating Past Places in Britain: Creating and Evaluating the GB1900 Gazetteer'. *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing*, 13, 1-2, pp 69-94.

**Phil Batman**

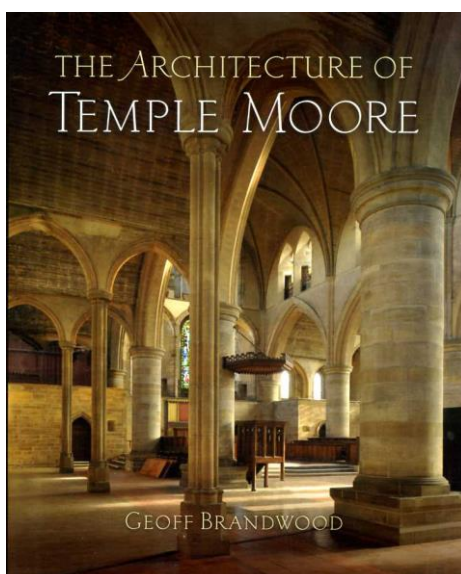
### **Publications**

P. Batman, 'The plight of Irish potato famine migrants in Victorian Walmgate: a study of immigrants in Long Close Lane and Hope Street', *York Historian*, 36 (2019), pp. 39-54.

P. Batman, 'The trajectories of railway kinship families in Victorian York', in D. Turner (ed.), *Transport and its Place in History: Making the Connections* (London, 2020), pp. 169-190.

**Geoff Brandwood**

### **Publications**





'Rescue of a Paddington gem: G.E. Street's church of St Mary Magdalene', *The Victorian*, 60 (2019), pp. 26-7.

*The Architecture of Temple Moore*, (Donington, Shaun Tyas, 2019).

## **Presentations**

'The Changing Face of the Pub: 1960–2020',

[www.sahgb.org.uk/news-and-features/the-changing-face-of-the-pub-19602020](http://www.sahgb.org.uk/news-and-features/the-changing-face-of-the-pub-19602020)

'Variations on a Theme: Regional Differences in Our Pubs':

[www.sahgb.org.uk/news-and-features/variations-on-a-theme-regional-differences-in-our-pubs](http://www.sahgb.org.uk/news-and-features/variations-on-a-theme-regional-differences-in-our-pubs)

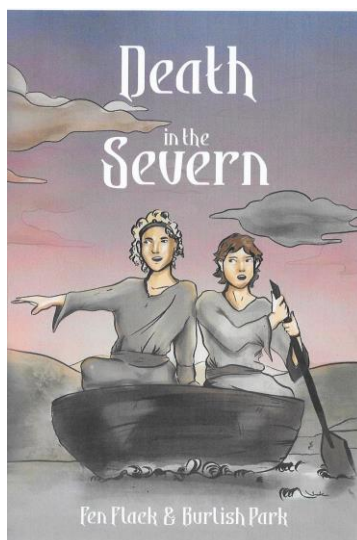
'The Pub Unwrapped and the Golden Age of Pub-building':

<https://www.crowdcast.io/e/lb653h92/register>

## **Heather Flack**

My latest book is the result of a challenging project which saw 56 Year 5 pupils contributing to the storyline of a novel set in 1014 in my local area. It's called "Death in the Severn" and the co-authors are Fen Flack (that's me!) and Burlish Park (the name of the school).

"The Anglo-Saxon folk at Wribbenhall in North Worcestershire are horrified to find the fish in the river are dying. Can Matthew and his new friend Osgot solve the mystery? Or will there be more deaths before a solution emerges?"



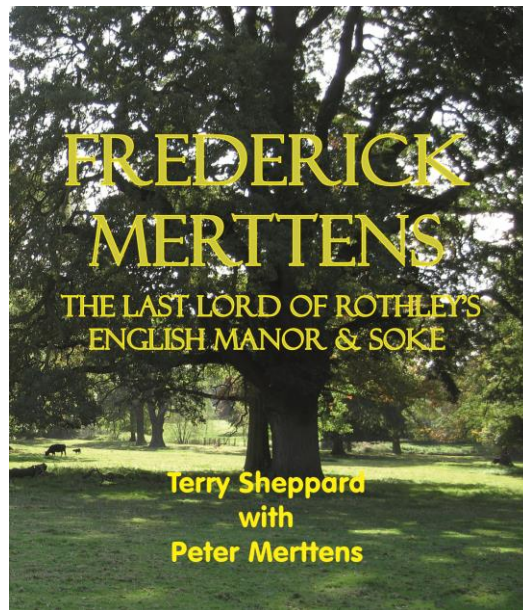
## **Marion Hardy**

### **Publications**

'The importance of Midsummer Day 1700', *The Local Historian*, Vol. 49, 4 October 2019, pp. 317-329.

Also a community project being undertaken in Devon, under the auspices of the Friends of Devon Archives. This is based on John Norden's survey of the Devon Crown Lands of 1613, which provides detailed descriptions of eight Devon manors (Bovey Tracey, Ashburton, Bradninch, Buckfastleigh, Dunkeswell, Exeter Castle, Heathfield in Aveton Gifford and Ottery St Mary).

## **Terry Sheppard**



## **Janet Tierney**



Sir Thomas and Lady Ada Heath in court dress, c.1920; from 'The Heath family of Barnetby le Wold, Lincolnshire', *Lincolnshire Past & Present* (2019).

## **Martin Watkinson**

### **Publications**

Martin Watkinson, 'Enclosure and the cottager: the "cottage system" in north Lincolnshire', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, 51 (2016, but published 2019), pp. 121-40.

Martin Watkinson, Review of *Communities in Contrast: Doncaster and its rural hinterland, c.1830–1870* (University of Hertfordshire Press, Hatfield, 2019) by Sarah Holland, in *Landscape History*, 40 (2019), pp. 143-56.

## **Annual General Meeting and Accounts**

### **Chairman's Report – 21st November 2019**

I am pleased to present my report for 2018-19. Again, it has been a very satisfactory year in regard to activities. We have held three major events, The Spring Study Weekend, Hoskins Day and The Autumn Visit.

First off the blocks was our weekend, which this year was at Norwich, the venue instigated and ably organised by Michael Gilbert. So the 26th April saw us descend upon our headquarters, The Maidshead Hotel, situated in 'Tombland', adjacent to the cathedral. Most of the delegates elected to stay in this excellent hotel but alternative accommodation was conveniently available. Norwich proved to be fascinating, boasting more churches than any other city in the country. As full reports of this and our other events appear in this year's Newsletter, I will not dilate further, save to say that a good time appeared to be had by all and it proved to be a thoroughly worthwhile occasion.

Next, on 16th June, came Hoskins Day and I was delighted to invite Prof. Stephen Rippon of Exeter University, who gave a paper entitled 'Kingdom Civitas and County: The Evolution of Territorial Identity in the English Landscape'. We were provided with a fascinating insight into settlement trends and patterns in the early Medieval period and in particular, the contrasts between Anglo-Saxons and the British.

Our third event was the Autumn Visit to Newark and the Civil War Centre, both of which were eye-openers for those of us who had not previously visited, the town with its many coaching inns and the

Centre with its revealing displays. Thanks are especially due to Anne Coyne for her organisation and informed contributions.

With the reduction in MA student numbers, we have had only a modest call upon our funds. The future is, of course, always uncertain but as the Centre embraces distance and digital learning, the Friends will no doubt find that there will be different ways in which they may be of assistance to students, perhaps providing them with facilities for study weekends and social experiences. I am aware that my successor, Dr Michael Gilbert is keen to bring new ideas to our approach and in handing over the reins to him, am confident that he will provide just the sort of leadership that is required.

In signing- off at the end of my five year term, I should like to pay tribute to all the members of our Committee, without whose talents, hard work and commitment I could not possibly have managed. I would also like to thank and welcome Paul Shipman as our Independent Examiner of Accounts. It's not quite goodbye, as before - or whilst - I slide into my dotage, I have been asked to remain for a year or two in an advisory capacity.

Finally, may I thank you, our members, for your continuing support.

Noel Tornbohm

### **Treasurer's Report**

A summary of the Friends' accounts for the last year are shown overleaf. The current total assets of the Friends stand at £30,618.80 an increase of £937.79 over the starting balance.

Income over the last year is significantly up on the previous year, though this is mainly explained by the Norwich Study Weekend, which saw a corresponding increase in our expenditure. Whilst the Study Weekends and Day Visits do not seek to make a profit, both did so (our target is that they should not lose money); please note that the expenditure for the Newark Day Visit did not reach the bank in time for this year's accounts.

It is hoped that 2019/20 will see a Spotlight (or similar) Conference, and that this will make money for the charity.

Financially, Hoskins Day this year was not successful. With no book stall there was a major reduction in income, and the fact that our speaker travelled up from Exeter meant that our expenses were higher

than usual. That said, the Hoskins lecture is not about making money, and I am sure that those attending found it a really enlightening afternoon.

Our investments have dropped slightly in value over the year, but they continue to bring in a modest income.

Our financial position remains sound, and we can meet any financial obligations for the coming year. Whilst we are not in control of requests made for student support, we do decide which applications are accepted, and the amounts given. In view of our lack of contractual commitments, we do not have a reserves policy at the present time.

I am grateful to our Independent Examiner, Paul Shipman, for going through the accounts on our behalf.

Robert Mee

Friends of the Centre for English Local History					
(Registered Charity no.1073528)					
Receipts and Payments Account for the year to 30 September 2019					
			2019	2018	
<u>Receipts</u>					
	Subscriptions and donations		£2,382.00	£2,084.00	
	Day Visit		£525.00	£195.00	
	Book Sales		£67.45	£129.00	
	Study Weekend		£3,000.00	£0.00	
	Conference Income		£0.00	£708.90	
	Dividends/Interest (C&C, CAF)		£483.94	£437.54	
	Hoskins Day		£118.00	£228.60	
	<u>Total Receipts</u>		<u>£6,576.39</u>	<u>£3,783.04</u>	
<u>Payments</u>					
	Student Support & Harold Fox Award		£2,000.00	£1,590.00	
	Day Visits costs		£50.00	£115.00	
	Study Weekend costs		£2,647.00	£0.00	
	Hoskins Day		£180.54	£49.52	
	Newsletter		£389.32	£436.22	
	Conference Expenditure		£0.00	£89.94	
	Student Amenities		£0.00	£23.99	
	Administrative Costs		£199.58	£232.63	
	AGM Expenses		£39.50	£81.69	
	<u>Total Payments</u>		<u>£5,505.94</u>	<u>£2,618.99</u>	
<u>Excess of income over expenditure</u>			<u>£1,070.45</u>	<u>£1,164.05</u>	
Opening Funds at 1st October 2018			£27,246.96	£26,082.91	
Deficit/surplus			£1,070.45	£1,164.05	
<u>Closing Funds at 30th September 2019</u>			<u>£28,317.41</u>	<u>£27,246.96</u>	
<u>Comprising</u>					
<u>Bank Balances</u>	Cash		£0.00	£1.00	
	CAF Bank - Gold Account		£2,348.32	£2,073.14	
	Natwest Bank		£3,579.03	£2,991.52	
	Cambridge & Counties savings		£13,931.11	£13,722.35	
			£19,858.46	£18,788.01	
<u>Investment Assets at cost</u>					
	FP CAF UK Equity Fund B Income		£4,278.61	£4,278.61	
	FP CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income		£4,180.34	£4,180.34	
			<u>£28,317.41</u>	<u>£27,246.96</u>	
<u>Market value of investments</u>					
	FP CAF UK Equity Fund B Income		£6,434.82	£6,845.87	
	FP CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income		£4,323.52	£4,045.13	
			<u>£10,758.34</u>	<u>£10,891.00</u>	
Total assets (including current investment value)			<u>£30,616.80</u>	<u>£29,679.01</u>	
Robert M Mee (Treasurer)					
2 November 2019					

# *STUDENTS*

## **MA DISSERTATIONS**

### **Shaping Worfield: Lordly Avarice, Neighbourhood Watch or Wider Forces**

#### **Social Change in Rural Shropshire 1440-1660**

**Jo Brookes**

This study aims to explore what drove social change in a Shropshire village at the beginning of the early modern period. The fifteenth to seventeenth centuries were a time of great social upheaval, the end of feudalism, religious turmoil and the development of the middling sort. Many theories have been put forward, from Wrightson and Levine's study of Terling, which suggested that social control was primarily driven by the rise of Puritanism. McIntosh more recently suggested that there was a long history of social control dating back to the Wars of the Roses and of course, the feudal system by its nature controlled the lives of inhabitants. All of these suggest conscious efforts to shape a community. Three questions drove the study. Firstly, what issues were of concern to the lord of the manor and Worfield's inhabitants, as evidenced by the activities of the manorial court and parish officers. Secondly, who were the parish and manorial officers and were they drawn from across the community or confined to a small pool of candidates. Thirdly, what other factors may have driven changes in the community. The research showed that unaffected by Puritanism, Worfield seems to have evolved ways of doing things and tolerating actions and individuals in a way that reflected local custom and long history and responded slowly to external events and pressures. Its operation was subtly different from Wrightson and Levine's Terling, and there is little real evidence of McIntosh's longstanding social control. Rather, it shows the existence of an active, engaged manorial court. In spirit, if not geographically, it seems closest to Healey's Dilston, with the manor and parish bodies regulating behaviour, managing agriculture, caring for its own poor and negotiating the choppy waters of community.

### **'The Wool, the Lamb and the Flock', a Study of Newark on Trent, Nottinghamshire during the Fourteenth Century**

**Anne Coyne**

At the end of the fifteenth century and into the early sixteenth, the elite of Newark were wealthy merchants who also founded chantries and other pious institutions. This thesis will address the gap

in the record for the fourteenth century to understand the economy, the elites and whether they followed this twin dichotomy of wealth and religion. The study also considers whether Newark was a wool *pays*, as mentioned in documents from the Calais staple and assesses its hinterland through connectivity and human agency. The impact of the mortality events, the Great Famine and Black Death, are also investigated.

In the absence of rentals or other surveys the feet of fines were examined, revealing a general decline over the century, however a temporary peak followed the plague outbreak. The fines revealed that the poorer burgesses had to sell property during the famine period and that the wealthy benefited. The people were identified as wool merchants and drapers through the official records of the kings in the CCR, CPR and CFR, supplemented by customs and exchequer records. The merchants also founded chantries, were members of religious guilds and were responsible for the recovery after the plague.

### **Apprenticeship in Leicestershire in the mid-nineteenth century**

**Karen L. Donegani**

This aim of this study was to quantify, characterise and map the distribution of apprentices in England and Wales in the mid-nineteenth century using census data and to explore themes emerging from the national statistics in a county study.

The principal source for this study was the Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM), a new resource which provided coded, standardised and complete data for individuals described as apprentices in the “Relationship to Head of Household” columns of the Census Enumerator Books for the 1851 and 1861 national censuses. This data was analysed and validated, with additional checks and supporting research carried out for a county study of Leicestershire.

Over 41,000 apprentices were identified by this means in the 1851 census returns, with the highest proportion of apprentices in the population in the rural counties of the north, the north and east midlands, and Devon. As the majority of these apprentices resided with their employers, this suggests the survival of a customary form of apprenticeship. A sample study of those apprenticed in the Melton Mowbray area demonstrated that most were able to find employment in their apprenticed occupation. However, a new, potentially disruptive role, the resident assistant, was evident in some households, particularly in urban, retail establishments. The distances for pre- and post-apprenticeship migrations



were compared and this showed a growing trend for taking up apprenticeships closer to home, with the average migration distance to London falling to 80 kilometres.

The study demonstrates that the availability of census data in a standardised digital format provides historians and other researchers with a resource that makes it feasible to quantify and characterise types of individuals at a national and county level. Recommendations for further research relating to this study are provided.

## **The Experience of a Working-Class Woman: Leicester in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century**

**Penelope Immins**

The infrastructure of Leicester's move from a Victorian town into an early Edwardian city incorporates the progressive improvements undertaken by the Municipal Authority. The major issues of health, sanitation and housing were being addressed and had significantly improved the lives of the working-class population by 1914. Focusing on the sanitary health of the town in two primary sources of 1860 and 1872, I will highlight endemic issues that undermined the lives of a portion of working-class throughout this period. Having determined the fundamental issues relating to health I will specifically tackle matters relevant to a working-class woman's life. Discussing the debates of the period in regard to health and high infant mortality, I will evaluate why the government, health authorities and religious organisations, would apportion blame upon women for the cause. The physicality of a women's health, including the justification and options open for birth control, pregnancy and childbirth, will highlight specific problems a woman could face. Through the work of religious and non-religious organisations I will detail how the physical support for working-class families assisted the progress in health care reform. Considering the work of the Unitarian Mission and the Ragged School Mission in their capacity to support families, I will evaluate how Victorian values were imposed within education. Changes came in the early twentieth century, which created better housing and improving lifestyle, but they were not without their limitations. Through the role of women in the 1920s and 1930s council estate, I will detail how the strata of working-class and lower working-class was maintained by the house allocation policy of the Municipal Authority.

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## **PhD THESES**

### **A comparison of kinship family survival in York and Swaledale in the nineteenth century**

**Philip Batman**

Kinship networks were fundamental in importance to family life in both the urban and rural settings in nineteenth-century England. They could also be crucial in facilitating the process of migration. This thesis explores the ways in which kinship families over the nineteenth century responded to the stimulus to migrate. Kinship families are defined as several households in a community headed by people with the same surname who were related by lineage or marriage. Groups of people are quantified by a simple numerical index (surname index), then tracked across historical time using decennial census data, baptismal parish registers and memorial inscriptions. The surname index is an innovative powerful demographic tool for analysing, measuring and comparing sectors of the population within and between different communities and across time. People induced to migrate could follow the path of others who had gone before. The index in this study has been used to apply a measure to such chain migration of people with the same surname moving into York and out of Swaledale in the Northern Pennines.

Migrant families came into York from mid-century to work on the railways or in flight from Ireland at the time of the Irish potato famine, and out of rural Swaledale during collapse of the lead-mining industry. Marked rural-urban differences are found in these migrations. Railway kinship families formed a new community which grew for the remainder of the century. Irish families arrived en masse and concentrated in an impoverished slum district of York. Relatives often chose to live in close proximity. Holding of land was key to survival for Swaledale families. Predominantly large kinship families migrated out of Swaledale to other mining areas including North America.

The thesis furthers the debate about migration and kinship by showing that the impetus to migrate could affect kinship families in different ways from non-kinship families, and that complementary quantifiable chain migrations of related kin gathered pace into an urban and out of a rural setting during the nineteenth century.

# *STAFF*

## *PUBLICATIONS and PRESENTATIONS*

**Prof Christopher Dyer (emeritus)**

### **Publications**

‘The economy’, in I. Johnson (ed.), *Geoffrey Chaucer in context* (Cambridge, 2019), pp.346-54.

‘People on the move in Chipping Campden and district 1200-1540’, *Signpost. The Journal of Chipping Campden History Society*, 11(2019), pp. 9-15.

‘R.F. Hartley’s survey work in Leicestershire, 1979-2018’, *Medieval Settlement Research*, 34 (2019), pp.88-9.

‘A medieval village in a Cotswold landscape : Pinbury in Duntisbourne Rous’, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 137 (2019), pp.191-213.

‘Vernacular Architecture studies and the historian’, *Vernacular Architecture*, 50 (2019) pp. 4-5.

‘A comment on rural tenants and their buildings in the later middle ages’, *Vernacular Architecture*, 50 (2019) pp. 53-6..

‘Peasants and poultry in England, 1250-1540’, *Quaternary International*, 543 (2020) pp. 113-18.

### **Book reviews**

H. Morgan, *Chambers and Beds in Late Medieval England*, in *English Historical Review*, 134 (2019), pp. 434-5.

M. Ormrod et al., *Immigrant England 1300-1550*, in *Medieval Archaeology*, 63 (2019), p. 471.

A. Craven and B. Hartland, *Cheltenham before the Spa*, in *Local Historian*, 50 (2020)

## **Presentations**

‘Houghton: a hamlet in a land of villages: the life and death of a medieval settlement’, New discoveries in the Cambridge region, Medieval Settlement Research Group Spring Conference, Cambridge, March 2019

‘New approaches to Worcestershire peasants, 1200-1540’, Worcestershire Archaeological Society, Worcester, April 2019

‘Popular perceptions of agricultural landscapes in the middle ages’, British Agricultural History Society Spring Conference, Nottingham, April 2019

‘The Moor Medieval project: summing up’, Moor Medieval Conference, Bovey Tracey, Devon, June 2019.

‘Experiencing serfdom: the peasants’ perspective, 1258-1349’, Thirteenth Anglo-American Seminar on the Medieval Economy and Society, Stanbrook Abbey, Worcestershire, July 2019

‘Romsley society in the middle ages’, Bromsgrove Society Summer School, July 2019.

‘Welford and Weston 500 years ago: the village, its people and the land’, Welford and Weston Local History Society, September 2019

‘The diet of the poor in medieval England’, Pobreza, Consumo y Cultura Material (siglos IX- XV), Casa de Velasquez, Madrid, October, 2019.

‘Contrasting communities: two Warwickshire villages coping with adversity, 1280-1580’, University of Leicester Centre for English Local History Seminar Series, November 2019.

‘The revolution in constructing peasant buildings in Britain, 900-1300’, Paesaggio Pietrificato (Conference on the transition to building in stone in Europe), Arezzo, February, 2020.

## **Prof Andrew Hopper**

### **Publications**

‘Conflict, Welfare and Memory during and after the English Civil Wars, 1642-1710’

[www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk](http://www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk)

## **Papers Presented**

'The Human Costs of the British Civil Wars', Annual Lecture for the British Association of Local History - 6 June 2020, postponed until 2021.

'The Wounded of Naseby', Naseby Exhibition Launch, Daventry Museum, 7 February 2020

'The Politics of Military Welfare in Civil-War Yorkshire', Mobilizing Resources for War Conference, All Souls College, Oxford, 10 December 2019

'The Human Costs of the British Civil Wars', History of War Seminar, All Souls College, Oxford, 20 November 2019

'War Victims and their Stories: The Human Costs of Civil War in Worcestershire', Annual Lecture of the Worcestershire Historical Society, 12 October 2019

## **TV Appearance**

TV appearance on documentary presented by Lisa Hilton, entitled 'Charles I: Killing a King', BBC4, Darlow Smithson Productions, 17 December 2019.

Appointed Chairman of editorial board of *Midland History* journal, November 2019.

## **Prof Kevin Schürer**

### **Publications**

Jaadla, H., Reid, A., Garrett, E., Schürer, K. and Day, J., 'Revisiting the fertility transition in England and Wales: The role of social class and migration', *Demography* (2020) doi:10.1007/s13524-020-00895-3

Reid, A., Jaadla, H., Garrett, E. and Schürer, K., 'Adapting the Own Children Method to allow comparison of fertility between populations with different marriage regimes', *Population Studies*, 74:2 (2020), pp.197-218. doi:10.1080/00324728.2019.1630563

### **Presentations**

K. Schürer, 'How far will some people go to marry? Courtship and distance in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century', Local Population Studies Society Conference, Paths to Marriage: Courtship in England and Wales, c.1700-c.1945, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2019, Oxford.

## **Prof Keith Snell (emeritus)**

Co-editor:

*Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture*, 29:2 (October, 2019).

*Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture*, 30:1 (April, 2020).

## **Dr Richard Jones**

### **Publications**

**R. Jones**, ‘The Viking diaspora: historical genetics and the perpetuation of national historiographical traditions’, in P. Bauduin and E. d’Angelo (eds), *L’Historiographie des Mondes Normands: XVIIe-XXIe Siècle: Construction, Influence, Évolution* (Stampa: Tipografia Villanova - Grottaminarda AV, 2020), pp. 295-311.

**R. Jones**, ‘Vers une compréhension du fumier et de la fumure médiévale: quelques enseignements d’Angleterre’, in M. Conesa and N. Poirier (eds), *Fumiers! Ordures! Gestion et Usage des Déchets dans les Campagnes de l’Occident Médiéval et Moderne*, Flaran 38 (Toulouse: Presse Universitaires du Midi, 2020), pp. 17-34.

B. Pears, A.G. Brown, P. Toms, J. Wood, D. Sanderson and **R. Jones**, ‘A sub-centennial-scale OSL chronostratigraphy and Late-Holocene flood history from a temperate river confluence’, *Geology*, 48.8 (2020), pp. 819-825 <https://doi.org/10.1130/g47079.1>

B. Pears, A.G. Brown, J. Carroll, P. Toms, J. Wood and **R. Jones**, ‘Early medieval place-names and riverine flood histories: a new approach and new chronostratigraphic records for three English rivers’, *European Journal of Archaeology* 23.3 (2020), pp. 381-405 <https://doi.org/10.1017/ear.2019.72>

**R. Jones** and S. Kilby, ‘Mitigating riverine flood risk in medieval England’, in P. Brown *et al.* (eds), *Waiting for the End of the World: Perceptions of Disaster and Risk in Medieval Europe*, Society of Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series (2020), pp. 165-182.

## **Dr Ismini Pells**

### **Publications**

I. Pells, *Philip Skippon and the British Civil Wars: the ‘Christian Centurion’* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020).

## **Presentations**

‘Children, violence and trauma in the British Civil Wars’, British History in the 17th Century Seminar, Institute of Historical Research, 24 October 2019.

Ismini Pells, 'Civil War Petitions', Friday Insights lecture series, National Army Museum, 25 October 2019.

Ismini Pells, 'Wounded, Widows & Orphans: Civil War Petitions', Friends of the Cromwell Museum Autumn Lecture Series, Huntingdon Town Hall, 20 November 2019.

Ismini Pells, 'Civil War Petitions: Wounded Soldiers, War Widows and the Human Costs of War', Senior History Society, Oundle School, 14 January 2020.

## **Dr Angela Muir**

### **Publications**

‘Murder in Cardigan: Sex Work, Social Reputation and Women’s Agency in Eighteenth-Century Wales’, *History Workshop Online* (7 October, 2019) < <https://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/9875-2/> >

‘Lives in Crime: The Social and Cultural History of Wales in the Court of Great Sessions’, *National Library of Wales Blog* (10 January, 2020) < <https://blog.library.wales/court-of-great-sessions/> >

*Deviant Maternity: Illegitimacy in Wales c. 1680-1800* (Routledge, 2020)

‘Midwifery and Maternity Care for Single Mothers in Eighteenth-Century Wales’, *Social History of Medicine*, 33, no. 2 (2020), pp. 394–416.

### **Presentations**

I gave papers related to research of records relating to the murder of a former sex worker and brothel owner in Cardigan at Swansea University in February 2020, and the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies in Oxford in January 2020. I was also invited to write a blog post for the National Library of Wales in January, in which I discussed the rich detail that can be found in the Court of Great Sessions Gaol Files, and how these records are an excellent but under-utilised source of information about the ‘everyday’ in Wales prior to the 1830s.

## ***Honorary Visiting Fellows***

### **Dr Graham Jones**

#### **Publications**

‘Guthlac in the Landscape’ (pp. 353-84) in *Guthlac: Crowland’s Saint*, Proceedings of the ‘Guthlac 1300’ conference held at the University of London, 2014, edited by Jane Roberts and Alan Thacker.

‘Shaping the religious landscape: Persistent patterns of devotional behaviour’ (pp. 265-77) in *Walking with Saints: Protection, Devotion and Civic Identity. The Role of the Landscape. Proceedings of the International Conference on Intangible Heritage, Ronse, 24-26 May 2018*, edited by Eric Devos, Anne-Sophie Meurice, and Anne-Françoise Morel.

#### **Presentations**

‘Sunburst, starlight and moonglow: Helena’s iconography and narrative in the context of divine cosmology’, at Würzburg University.

### **Dr Susan Kilby**

#### **Publications**

S. Kilby, *Peasant Perspectives on the Medieval Landscape: a Study of Three Communities* (Hatfield, 2020).

R. Jones and S. Kilby, 'Mitigating riverine flood risk in medieval England', in C. Gerrard, P. Forlin and P. J. Brown (eds), *Waiting for the End of the World? New Perspectives on Natural Disasters in Medieval Europe* (London, 2020).

#### **Presentations**

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them: the Romanesque Capitals of St Kyneburgha's Church and the Local Landscape, St Kyneburgha Building Preservation Trust, September 2020.

### **Dr Gijs Rommelse**

#### **Publications**

Monograph:



*Zeevarenden achter de tralies. De krijgsgevangenen van de grote zeeoorlogen, 1652-1674* (Uitgeverij Verloren; Hilversum 2020)

Edited volume:

*War, trade and the state. Anglo-Dutch conflict, 1652-1689* (The Boydell Press; Woodbridge 2020) (together with David Ormrod)

Articles in edited volumes:

'The Dutch Republic: in the shadow of a glorious past', in: AnnaSarah Hammar, Jakob Seerup and Evan Wilson (eds.), *Navy officers in the eighteenth century: an international perspective* (Palgrave: London 2019), 99-126.

'Introduction: Anglo-Dutch conflict in the North Sea and beyond', in: David Ormrod and Gijs Rommelse (eds.), *War, trade and the state. Anglo-Dutch conflict, 1652-1689* (The Boydell Press; Woodbridge 2020), 3-33. (with David Ormrod)

'The seventeenth century Anglo-Dutch Wars in a European context', in: David Ormrod and Gijs Rommelse (eds.), *War, trade and the state. Anglo-Dutch conflict, 1652-1689* (The Boydell Press; Woodbridge 2020), 37-57. (with Roger Downing)

Peer-reviewed articles in journals:

'Dutch and English conceptions of the sea, the self and the other, 1600-1784', in: *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis* 39 (1) (2020), 48-64.

'Dutch naval decline and British sea-power identity in the eighteenth century', in: *Mariner's Mirror* 106 (2) (2020), 146-161.

Non-reviewed articles:

'A polar bear taunting lions. Dutch images of Swedish expansionism, 1656-1660', in: *Forum Navale: Sjöhistoriska Samfundet* 76 (2020), 78-93.

'Zelfbewuste stedelingen en beteuigde absolutisten', in: *Kleio* 61 (5) (2020), forthcoming.

'Defending the flag of a torpid empire. The VOC in Bengal, 1759-1763', in: *International Journal of Maritime History* 32 (3) (2020), forthcoming.

## **Dr Andrew Watkins**

Editor of two issues of *Warwickshire History*, the journal of the Warwickshire Local History Society.

### **Presentations**

Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, February 6th 2020: 'Lutterworth in the later middle ages - a successful small market town'.

## **Dr Pam Fisher**

### **Publications**

Book:

*Victoria History of Leicestershire: Ibstock* (Institute of History Research, 2020), ISBN 978 1 912702 4 66, ix + 142 pp.

Articles:

‘Making their Voices Heard: Lutterworth’s Nonconformists, St Mary’s Steeple and a Burial Controversy’, *Transactions Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 94 (2020), 22pp.

‘Ibstock, 1831–1931: The Growth of a Mining Community’, *Leicestershire Historian*, vol. 56 (2020), pp. 26–31.

‘Ibstock’s Public Baths’, *Ibstock Community Voice*, March 2020, p. 33

‘Ibstock’s Isolation Hospitals’, *Ibstock Community Voice*, April 2020, p. 26; June 2020, p. 20

Book Review:

Lynne Dyer, *Secret Loughborough* (Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2019), in *Leicestershire Historian*, vol. 56 (2020)

### **Presentations**

‘A man more sinned against than sinning? Reverend Henry Meriton and the Beautification of Lutterworth church’ Local History Seminar, University of Nottingham, 12 Oct 2019

‘Cleanliness is next to Godliness: Archdeacon Fearon and the public health of Loughborough, 1848–1870’, Loughborough Local History Café, Charnwood Museum, 6 December 2019

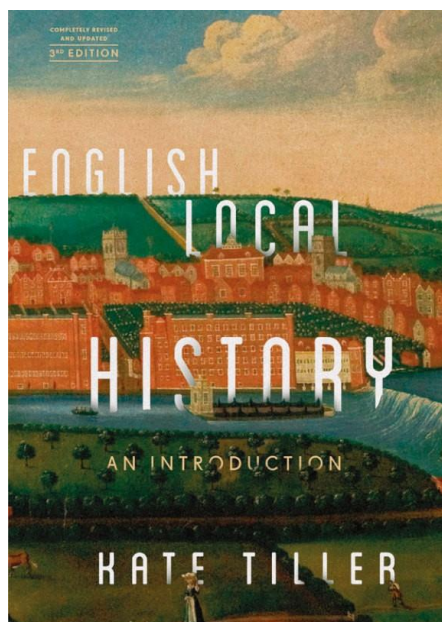
## **Dr Michael Gilbert**

### **Publications**

M. Gilbert, ‘Medieval Spalding and Wisbech’, *Spalding Gentlemen’s Society Occasional Papers, New Series Volume 1* (2020).

M. Gilbert and A. Ketley, *Report on Archaeological Excavations, West Drove Moated Site* (2020).

## **Dr Kate Tiller**



<b>Officer</b>	<b>Current Holder</b>	<b>Holder Since</b>
Chairman	Michael Gilbert	2019
Secretary	Andrew Wager	2016
Treasurer	Robert Mee	2016
Membership Secretary	Robert Mee	2016
Editor of the Newsletter	Phil Batman	2017
Programme Secretary		
IT Coordinator	John Parker	
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Committee	Anne Coyne	Social Media
Committee	Noel Tornbohm	
Committee		
Student Representative	Jeremy Lodge	
Student Representative		
Centre Representative	Kevin Schurer	

Any correspondence for the Friends of English Local History may be addressed to:  
[committee@englishlocalhistory.org](mailto:committee@englishlocalhistory.org)

#### **REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1073528**

##### **Friends of the Centre for English Local History - Public Benefit Statement**

Our objectives are to provide financial and other support to the Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester, and to its students, and to support the study of local history more generally.

Membership of the Friends is open to anyone with an interest in local history – no qualifications are needed, and there is no need to have been a student of the Centre for English Local History, or of the University of Leicester. Members receive a number of benefits. These include an invitation to local history seminars and an annual lecture, which are free of charge, and free use of the research library at the Centre. The Friends of the Centre for English Local History also organises a programme of study days, weekends, conferences and outings, which are open to members and non-members alike. The annual lecture is also open to non-members, upon payment of a small entrance fee. These events aim to increase people's knowledge about local history.

The Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester is widely respected because it helped to found local history as an academic discipline, and because it continues to be a source of high quality research and fresh ideas. It remains unique because it is devoted to the study of local history everywhere in England and Wales. The Friends of the Centre for English Local History provides bursaries and financial support to MA and PhD students who wish to pursue courses or research within the Centre, including payment of, or towards, course fees, the cost of field courses and research-related travel expenses. This helps students in financial need from any part of the world and all walks of life to pursue their interest in English and Welsh local history at the highest level.

The Friends of the Centre for English Local History also assists the Centre by providing volumes for its library, which students and members of the Friends may use for their research, and by assisting both financially and with practical help in the organisation of academic conferences, which further the spread of knowledge and are open to everyone with an interest in the subject. A small publication programme also makes high quality research available to anyone.