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Newsletter

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Welcome to this year's Newsletter. Life begins to return to normal as the **Centre for Regional and Local History** settles into its new home, and we cover some of the first events held there.

Photo: the editor interviews Mrs Mallowan opposite Wallingford Museum

A HAPPIER YEAR

EDITORIAL

This has been a year of settling in. The Centre settling into its new home and beginning to hold live events there (lots of news and reports within), and me settling into my role as Newsletter editor.

I am particularly happy to report that the Centre have relaunched their seminar series. With the new audio-visual equipment available it is now possible to hold a hybrid event. I attended the first in the series online and found that it was an entirely satisfactory experience.

The job of Newsletter editor seems to involve a choice of writing material yourself, or 'herding cats' to get copy from other sources. As ever, I have tried to adopt the 'middle way' and hope that I have got the balance more-or-less right.

In writing up events and reviewing books I've been able to identify certain recurring themes this year. This edition contains a review of Peter Borsay's book 'The Invention of the English Landscape' and a report on the symposium held in his honor. The theme of his book is the invention of the landscape as a tourist resource, and newsletter examples of this crop up in diverse places, such as advice to walkers using the railway to access attractive rural Nottinghamshire (see page 52) and the construction of a nineteenth-century promenade around the castle grounds at Wallingford (see page 42). Another theme is the continuing relevance of the work of W. G. Hoskins. The Borsay book and both of our Hoskins Day lecturers made reference to the works of Hoskins and how they have informed and affected their own research.

In other news, the Friends haven't changed their name or logo (yet). Though walking past Marc Fitch House in the summer, I found it to be a sad and neglected site. If buildings have feelings, it must be missing us desperately.



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Chair's Report

In the last report I described 2021/22 as a difficult time as we dealt with the loss of Marc Fitch House, the challenges facing the Centre and the consequences of the Covid pandemic. I think I would describe this year as both positive and optimistic with much to celebrate. Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects is that the

Friends have seen a growth in membership. Although we have worked at providing more events and activities for members I believe it reflects the strong support that exists for the Centre and for the work of the Friends. Our members want to see research into and the teaching of local history at Leicester continue.

We have been able to carry on with our support for the Centre in the development of their new base on the main campus in the Attenborough Building. It is a pleasant environment for the researcher with access to the Centre's collections as well as newly installed audio-visual equipment. In the coming year it is intended to make increased use of the facility for seminars, lectures and other events. I would encourage members who want to work on the campus to make use of Room 101 as an alternative to the library. I would also like to thank Karen Donegani and Mary Bryceland again for all their continuing work in support of Centre staff.

Another major success has been the Friends website and thanks in particular to John Parker in developing and running the site. If you visit the website you will not only see details of future events and Friends activities but more academic information is being made available, such as the details of dissertations and theses of past students of the Centre.

We have worked with staff from the Centre and the School to provide placement opportunities for students in the many museums, archives and societies our members are involved in. This year an MA student and an undergraduate from the School had placements with the SGS Museum in Spalding, Lincolnshire. They were able to work on the society's 'original collection' of books and manuscripts from the early eighteenth century as well as researching artifacts from the museum. We intend to build on the success of the placement programme this year and if you feel that any of the organisations you are involved with would benefit from a placement then please get in touch.

In the post-covid world and with the loss of Marc Fitch House returning to face-to-face events has been challenging but this year we have held the Hoskin's Day lecture in the Attenborough Building in July and a study day in Wallingford in October organised by Anne Coyne. This has been supplemented by a number of online talks and the Local History Quiz Night (thanks to Richard Jones for organising and being the quizmaster). With the availability of Room 101 and the new AV equipment we plan to hold more in-person activities to complement the Centre's programme of lectures.

With the recent challenges that the Centre has faced the support of the Friends has become

increasingly important and with it have come opportunities. We can help with the delivery of the aims of the Centre as well as providing new services and activities for the members. Although these are potentially exciting times success will depend on people to develop and deliver new ideas. We need members to assist with organising events and to work with your committee to build the Friends. If you would like to be involved you would be very welcome, please contact myself or anybody on the committee to discuss how you could participate.

Michael Gilbert



HOSKINS DAY

ATTENBOROUGH BUILDING, LEICESTER, JULY 1

This year saw Hoskins Day return to a campus location, with post-event refreshments being provided in the new home of the centre in the Attenborough Building. It is our practice now to offer a chance to the centre's PhD students to provide a 'warm up' act to the main Hoskins Lecture and, coincidentally, both of the day's presentations were concerned with looking at Hoskins's earlier work in different regions and seeing how they stood up to modern re-examination.

PAUL SHAW The Scandinavian Settlement of Leicestershire (and elsewhere)

*Paul is at the start of his fifth year as a part-time doctoral student at the Centre. After a previous career in Medicine and inspired by reading the **Making of the English Landscape**, he became a born-again landscape historian, completing an MA at the Centre in 2018 before taking on his current doctoral project.*

Paul's starting place was a paper published by Hoskins in 1935 in which he combined documentary sources with placename and landscape evidence to reach conclusions about the early history of Leicestershire. Paul's aim was to evaluate the continued relevance of Hoskins's work 88 years later and to do this he was concentrating on places in the East Midlands that either bore the name 'Normanton', or had a name that belonged to the famous 'Grimston hybrid' category.

Paul's wider research on the Scandinavian origins of settlement of Leicestershire has

sought to develop insights into farming and settlement based on the concept of 'farming choice', that being the type of agriculture that was pursued (broadly divided into arable and pastoral). There has been an implicit, but unstated, assumption in studies of this period that there was a chain of causality linking cultural identity (in this case Scandinavian vs English), with farming choice and with the 'terroir' of the land being farmed.



The Scandinavians had a propensity to prefer cattle and dairy, with the English preferring arable, and particularly wheat as a cash crop. English and Scandinavian farmers were equally likely to raise sheep. Different farming practise required different land quality, but how much choice was there as to what land to occupy? Would a successful Viking warrior have more choice as to the location of his settlement?

Paul concentrated on two main areas as the centre of these studies, one centred on Melton

Mowbray and taking in around 200 settlements, and one centred on Newark, taking in around 100 settlements.

Starting with the 'Normantons', Paul reminded us of Hoskins belief that 'Normanton' derived from the word 'Northmen'. So what was the significance of the ten settlements in the East Midlands study zone whose names included 'Normanton'? (some still extant and some now deserted). Paul detects some commonality in the location of these settlements as all seem to be located on the landscape of heathland, moorland, wolds, or hills: all locations much more suited to pastoral rather than arable farming. Further evidence was derived from the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which showed an incidence of Viking finds being found near to the Normantons. In the late 1990s, Northamptonshire Archaeology excavated the site of Witchley Heath, near to Normanton in Rutland. Here they found a settlement that dated from the late ninth to the eleventh century (when it became deserted). Subsequent isotope analysis showed the residents originated from the North of Scandinavia. The conclusion was that the Normantons confirmed the association of site choices and cultural farming practices. The Normantons were associated with Viking communities who sought sites suited to pastoral rather than arable farming.

The paper then moved on to consider the 'Grimston hybrids': settlement names that combined a first element of a Scandinavian personal name, with the ending of an old English 'tun'. The study area contained fourteen settlements with such names. Three of these he classifies as being small, probably later, settlements associated with arable farming. They have no ancient parish status, no pre-Viking archaeology, and share a common church dedication to St Lawrence.

Ten of the settlements had excellent sites, early origins, and were places of some significance. For example, South Croxton in Leicestershire had two manors. Hoskins postulated that such settlements were Anglo-Saxon in origin and later taken over by Vikings. Four of these ten Grimston Hybrids have archaeological evidence that supports this argument. Three have high status church crosses: monuments from the early eleventh century that express Scandinavian culture.

Paul then went on to describe some ideas of his own, which he described as 'kite flying'. He suggested that Normanby settlements were Scandinavian speaking settlements, while Normantons were English-speaking settlements, whose distribution, furthermore, resembled that of the Grimston Hybrids. From this he further speculated that this indicated that in the mid to late tenth century the English were winning back Scandinavian settlements in the East Midlands. Looking further, Paul went on to speculate that the bi-focal settlements such as South Croxton represented two settlements that had existed side by side for at least 100 years: one pre-Viking and one post-Viking. He further observed that many of these bifocal communities were separated by water. Some were also bifocal religious communities, having two separate parishes, such as Elston in Nottinghamshire.

In conclusion, Paul believed that Hoskins's earlier works in this area stood the test of time in some, but not all, of his arguments. The common view of the relationship between English and Scandinavian settlements was that they never mixed. This was replaced by the view of developing Anglo-Scandinavian settlements. But by using his eclectic sources, Paul would pull back a bit from that, suggesting that while English and Scandinavian settlements coexisted they may have in fact lived, and farmed, quite separately.

PROFESSOR SAM TURNER

'By 1350....nearly every line had been drawn' – New Light on Devon's Landscape History, 70 years after Hoskins's *Devon*

*The Hoskins Lecture itself was delivered by by **Professor Sam Turner** who is Co-Director of the Newcastle University Centre for Landscape and a Professor of Archaeology at Newcastle University where his research focusses on historic landscapes since the Roman period.*



The aim of Professor Turner's paper was to shed new light on the history of Devon's landscape - and particularly on its fieldscapes - some seventy years after Hoskins's original research. Hoskins published his work 'Devon' in 1954, a year before the seminal 'Making of the English Landscape'. A rereading of the book caused Professor Turner to think that many of the questions that were raised were still highly topical, and in some cases had not really moved on since they were first posed. He also observed that Hoskins's approach was very different to how the work would be done nowadays.

An evocative aerial photograph showed a patchwork of fields to the North-West of

Exeter. When were the bones of this landscape laid down and who by? Was it really true that 'by 1350, nearly every line was drawn' as had been asserted by Hoskins? Professor Turner started his consideration of this landscape with the traditional division into large Saxon villages, and hundreds of small hamlets and small farmsteads (that may have been Celtic in origin). These settlement types had been held to have very different field systems. The Saxon villages had large open fields farmed communally, while the small settlements had small fields dedicated to pastoral husbandry.

Some of Hoskins's ideas about these differing landscapes were rooted in nineteenth-century ideas about races of people and genetic inheritance and its role in shaping both the way people looked and the way they behaved. These were views of a different age to ours, with a different mindset.

Work had been done on the Devon landscape between the time of W.G. Hoskins and the present day. One notable contributor was the Centre for English Local History's Harold Fox. Harold concentrated on the fieldscapes of Devon from his PhD thesis onwards. He explored the documentary evidence for the construction of strip fields in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and also explored the classification of Saxon versus Celtic fields. When Harold presented his findings that the small Celtic fields of West Cornwall were, in fact, communally farmed he was booed by his Cornish audience, as he had injured their conception of the independent character of their distant forbears.

Hoskins did not think that Dartmoor was farmed until the later medieval period, with

piecemeal enclosures being made from the wastes. The historical evidence presents some problems with confirming this. There are very few documentary sources from before the twelfth century, the chronology of place names was uncertain, and it is hard to relate what evidence there is to precise spots in the landscape. Modern lidar images of farms on the edge of Dartmoor clearly showed the divisions of fields into communally farmed strips. Ros Faith (who was present at this lecture) had argued that these were early medieval, Anglo-Saxon features. Could there have been Anglo-Saxons settling on the edge of Dartmoor?

Despite these and other scholars pursuing the study of the Devon fieldscape, not much had really moved on since Hoskins. Due to the limitation imposed by the available evidence there had been an inability to pin down the chronology of the county's fieldscape features, or how different regions may have been developed and enclosed at different times. There were many archaeological challenges, as well as historic ones. A lack of datable finds, a lack of excavated settlements, especially from the early medieval period, and an inability to date landscape features. It was possible to construct a relative chronology, but not to securely date developments.

One thing that had moved on since Hoskins's day, however, was scientific methodology, and Professor Turner introduced us to one such method that was being used to cast new light on the field divisions. Hoskins had had much to say about the large earthen banks topped with hedges that separated Devon's ancient fields, providing shelter and security for livestock, and assigned an early construction date for them (back to the era of Celtic and Saxon farms). A technique known as 'optimally stimulated luminescence' (OSL) has the ability to discover dating information on these features. The technique relies on the fact that

certain minerals (including the ubiquitous quartz) trap radiation when they are buried and then release it when they are exposed. If you measure the radiation, you can calculate how long the sample has been buried for. The technique as used by archaeologists uses portable equipment employed in the field to create profiles of the relative ages of the samples. Precise dating work is done away from the site in laboratory conditions, and then related back to the chronology of the field samples to give a complete dating profile. OSL is particularly suited to looking at earthworks, and so provides a method for addressing the problem of dating Devon's field boundaries.

One of the first places that the technique was used was Bosigran, near Zennor, in Cornwall. Here a number of contrasting field types had been identified and some were thought to ancient in origin. The aim was to date the massive earth bank field dividers to see if their chronology supported this interpretation. The project revealed that the boundaries had bronze age origins, with iron age additions on top. The banks then stayed the same size and shape until to 5th to 6th centuries when they started to grow substantially in the early medieval period.

As can be imagined, the OSL process is not cheap and funding for the Devon project surprisingly has come from the French government (as it was carried out in collaboration with a French university). The project concentrated on the South Hams area, particularly looking at coaxial field boundaries in selected farms. As with the Cornish project, it was found that the banks started small and then grew quite considerably but the absolute dates gave the Devon boundaries much later origins. Dunwell Farm's boundaries had mid-twelfth century origins. Highlands Farm had some boundaries with eighth century origins, but the rest dated from the eleventh or twelfth centuries. No

boundaries were found with bronze age origins: all dated from the tenth to the twelfth centuries with the one eighth century exception. There was a cautionary note that some earlier examples might have been missed because of the concentration on coaxial fields.

Another project was carried out in Roadford in West Devon. There had been archaeological surveys there before construction of the reservoir and a hedge survey concentrating on species, but neither had yielded any conclusive dating evidence, so the question was posed whether OSL could give more conclusive answers. The project concentrated on finding and dating the ends of field boundaries. The

conclusions were that field boundary banks were initially built in the seventh and eighth centuries and grew to their current size in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There were several early medieval hedgebanks and some slight evidence for some even earlier features, such as a possible iron age hollow way.

Professor Turner also concluded that Hoskins had been largely right in his work on the Devon fieldscape. But now new technology gave researchers opportunities to explore regionality and new chronologies.

Mandy de Belin



Aerial view of the South Hams district

Centre Report

Dr Angela Muir, Centre Director



Greetings once again, Friends!

It's with great pleasure I write to you all again with an update on the Centre for Regional and Local History. We have yet again had an eventful year,

and fortunately, this has involved far more ups than downs. Through all of this, we have benefited and celebrated the support of the Friends, who are central to our identity and story.

Last year I wrote about how the Centre had undergone a formal review whereby we were required to reapply for research centre status, the result of which meant we were granted 'development' status. This means that, despite our long history and rich legacy, we needed to prove our merit as a research-intensive centre to be granted full, 'accredited' status. One of the key points raised is that we lacked 'critical mass', meaning our numbers were too small. To address this, Richard and I have actively recruited several new colleagues from across the University of Leicester to join to the Centre, whose research interests and expertise expand our remit in new and exciting ways. Our focus is still very much on the 'Leicester Approach', but our geographic and chronological scope are much wider. Our new members are:

Dr James Bothwell, Lecturer in Later Medieval English History (HYPIR)

James teaches Later Medieval English History at the University of Leicester. Alongside other

areas of research (esp. the nobility and monarchy), he is interested in charity and giving in Leicestershire (1200-1500), and the role of the Midlands in the Revolt of 1381.

Professor John Coffey, Professor of History (HYPIR)

John's research focuses on religion, politics and ideas in the Protestant Atlantic world, c. 1600-1850. His current research examines religious activism and British abolitionism, which has included analysis of the 1832 Demerara Slave Rebellion. He is editing a scholarly edition of the diaries of William Wilberforce.

Dr Simon Dixon, Head of Archives and Special Collections (Library and Learning Services)

Simon is a social and religious historian whose research has spanned the mid-17th to the early 20th century. He is researching the business, sporting and literary interests of Thomas Hatton, whose topographical collection provides the foundation of the Library's nationally significant local history holdings.

Professor Corinne Fowler, Professor of Colonialism and Heritage (Museum Studies)

Corinne is Professor of Colonialism and Heritage. She specialises in colonial history, decolonisation and the British countryside's relationship to Empire. Her most recent book is *Green Unpleasant Land: Creative Responses to Rural England's Colonial Connections* (Peepal Tree Press, 2020). Her forthcoming book is *Our Island Stories: Country Walks Through Colonial Britain* (Penguin Allen Lane, 2023).

Dr Zoe Groves, Lecturer in Modern Global, Colonial and Postcolonial History (HYPIR)

Zoe is a social and cultural historian of nineteenth and twentieth-century Southern Africa with a focus on migration, cities and popular culture. She is interested in local and regional identities, transnational and Pan-African movements, and cultural practices. Zoe's book *Malawian Migration to Zimbabwe, c.1900-1965: Tracing Machona* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2020. Her current

research explores dance histories in Malawi and the wider central-southern African region during the colonial and post-independence eras.

Dr Sarah Inskip, UKRI Future Leaders Fellow (Archaeology)

Sarah is an Osteoarchaeologist in the School of Archaeology and Ancient History. Her research focuses on revealing the impact of tobacco on the health of Western Europeans from 1600-1900. Dr Inskip integrates skeletal evidence obtained from archaeological human skeletal remains with historical and modern health narratives. By utilising modern research techniques she is able to reveal new insights into archaeological questions. Her research interests also include human biology and genetics, with a strong interest in the history and evolution of Hansen's Disease – also known as leprosy - and other infectious diseases.

Dr Zoe Knox, Associate Professor of Modern Russian History (HYPIR)

Zoe's research focuses on religious tolerance and intolerance in the modern world, in Russia and beyond. She is researching the pioneering work of Keston College, a rights organisation founded in Kent in 1969 in order to collect, analyse, and publicise material on religious persecution under communist regimes.

Professor George Lewis, Professor of American History (HYPIR)

George has a long association with the interdisciplinary Centre for American Studies. Much of his research focuses on civil rights and ideologies of white supremacy, which has seen him work closely with Journey to Justice. As part of Journey to Justice's travelling exhibition, he has worked to anchor global stories of social justice in the local community, which has seen him establish collaborations with local researchers, community groups and schools.

Dr Rosemary Shirley, Associate Professor of Art Museum and Gallery Studies (Museum Studies)

Rosemary's research centres on the intersection of art and rural places. This is explored in her book: *Rural Modernity, Everyday Life and Visual Culture* and in her work as a curator. Recent curatorial projects include the critical landscape exhibition 'Creating the Countryside at Compton Verney, and Everywhere: Life in a Littered World' an exhibition exploring artistic responses to litter and pollution.

Dr Deborah Toner, Associate Professor of History (HYPIR)

Deborah is a social and cultural historian of alcohol and food in the Americas, especially in relation to ideas of race, ethnicity, gender, identity and nationhood. She is researching the historical development and operation of racial stereotypes about alcohol use in Mexico and the United States, and the global history of medical and psychiatric frameworks for understanding alcohol use disorders. As a member of the Centre for Regional and Local History, she is interested in exploring how particular foods and drinks can act as markers of regional and local identities, how those symbolic associations are formed and contested, and the power dynamics involved in those processes. To get a taste of this approach, you can listen to an episode of the 'Pass the Chipotle' podcast, in which she talks about pulque – an alcoholic drink from central Mexico – as emblematic of local, regional and national identities at different times.

Professor Mark Williams, Professor of Palaeobiology (Geography)

Mark teaches and researches the history of life on Earth. Having spent much of his career examining very deep-time fossil records, from millions of years ago, much of his current focus is on biosphere change in the Anthropocene. This extends to an interest in the long-term resilience of woodland, with a special focus on Leicestershire.

Over the coming year, many of our new members will be presenting and participating in our seminar series, holding workshops and events, and undertaking research that will help support the Centre's aims and hopefully earn us 'accredited' status when we are reviewed again in 2024.

At long last, the summer of 2023 saw the installation of our AV system in the Centre library (Attenborough 101). This means we are fully up and running for hybrid seminars, and as a result, we have relaunched our seminar series. Because we have so many new members, and because we have been given so little money, we have decided to focus this year's series on the work of our colleagues and students. We rarely have an opportunity to hear about what each other is working on, so this promises to be an engaging and exciting series. We will be providing coffee and tea for all of these seminars to tempt and welcome everyone back after such a long hiatus. We are especially keen to welcome back the Friends, who made our seminars so vibrant before our move.

Late last year we were informed of two posthumous gifts made to the Centre. The first was a generous offer of the library of our alumnus Elias Kuperferman, who unfortunately passed away far too soon at the age of 57 in December 2022. Elias completed his MPhil, 'The Role of Windsor Castle during the English Civil Wars, 1642–1650' in the Centre in 2019 under the supervision of Andy Hopper and John Coffey. We were extremely sad to hear about Elias's passing, and grateful to his family for offering his extensive library to us. However, in order to accept such a large bequest, we would have needed considerably more room in our library spaces. So, after much deliberation with his family, the decision was made to leave his collection of over 1,000 volumes to the Local Studies Librarian of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, where much of his research was based.

The second bequest we have received was made through the estate of a donor who wished to remain anonymous. I can tell you that this person studied with the Centre in the past and left a

considerable amount to us. These funds will be used to support a range of activities, including the work of Pam Fisher and the VCH, and three MA studentships (more information to follow).

Despite these achievements and positive developments, there have been a few challenges. The most significant is that, despite History's excellent result in the last REF (2nd overall!), we have been granted no research funds from the University. This is true for our Centre, and the School and College in general. This year, colleagues have no research budgets, and only the Centres without established endowments were awarded funds. Although there is no way to turn this negative into a positive, we have decided to use some of the growth in our existing endowments to help support the activities of colleagues whose research aligns with the Centre's aims, which we can then claim for our own when we re-apply for 'accredited' status. Those who received support from us will be expected to present at future seminars, so hopefully you will all be able to hear more about the new work we are supporting in the future.

Our plans for the coming year include hosting a range of research events and workshops, recruiting additional PhD and MA students, and carrying on with our own research. Hopefully, this time next year, I will be writing to you about our newly-secured 'accredited' status!

All that remains left to say is that we continue to be extremely grateful to the support and commitment of the Friends. I would like to extend an invitation to each of you to our seminar series (which are in person and online), and to get in touch with me if there are any activities we can support. It is people who make a research centre vibrant, and for years, the Friends have been a central part of our identity and vitality. We hope you join us in helping to breathe life into the walls of our research spaces.

HELLO to The Resource Centre



Over the past year the seminar room, Room 101, has hosted a wide variety of events in addition to providing a dedicated teaching space for the Centre. For Hoskins Day, the Friends prepared a display of materials to support the theme of our key speaker, with various editions of Hoskins' books on Devon, early guidebooks to Devon towns and a wide variety of maps of Devon on display. We also pulled out of the Centre's archives a selection of black and white prints of the photographs Hoskins selected to illustrate *The making of the English landscape*.

In the summer term, Richard Jones hosted an excellent and well-attended exhibition of his own landscape photographs and at the start of the autumn term, the room hosted a reception for the joint Centre for Urban History/Centre for Regional and Local History celebration of the publication of Peter Borsay and Rosemary Sweet's *The invention of the English landscape c.1700-1939*.

The room is also used for meetings of local history groups – if you wish to use the room for your group, please contact Angela Muir or Richard Jones.

The Centre Library on the 8th floor of the Attenborough Tower has become a quiet study area with stunning views of Victoria Park and the city. Friends are welcome to use the room subject to prior arrangement.

We would like to remind Friends that there is guidance on how to access and use the libraries on the Friends Website <https://www.englishlocalhistory.org/wp/library-2/>. If you do not have access to email or the Internet, please contact us using the details shown below.

Behind the scenes, the Friends spent time over the summer holidays unpacking some of the library material stored in boxes in storerooms since the relocation from Marc Fitch House. The collection of MA English Local History dissertations and the parish histories (pamphlets) collection are now held in offices on the 8th floor. Work is now underway to tidy up our storerooms to cater for the move of the remaining library material from offsite stores to the Attenborough Tower.

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Karen Doneganí & Mary Bryceland



centre library



room 101



(store) room with a view



Views of England and Wales

Dr Alister Sutherland talks about the value and importance of the Centre's new resource

Views of England and Wales is the latest collection to be added to University of Leicester Special Collections Online. It is the culmination of a project to digitise over 2,000 prints, paintings, drawings, and photographs belonging to the Centre for Regional and Local History. For many years, this extensive collection sat in a big wooden chest of drawers at Marc Fitch House, walked past every day, its contents unknown to most and rarely viewed. After many months of work, it is now fully accessible online and searchable. In this article, we will look at why this collection is important and valuable to staff, students, and the public alike.

The breadth of the collection is impressive so there is sure to be something of interest in it for nearly everyone. Almost every historic English county is represented, with the exception of Rutland and Staffordshire, although coverage between counties does vary considerably. And while nearly 2,000 of the items relate to England, the Welsh historic counties are represented by a number of prints too, most of which depict places in Monmouthshire, with one print each for Caernarfonshire, Flintshire, Merionethshire, and Pembrokeshire. For anyone looking to illustrate their work with

prints, there is a good chance you will find something here to use.

Views of England and Wales is also an excellent visual record of buildings, landscapes, and places that have changed or disappeared since the prints, or the artwork they were based on, were created. Most of the prints and artworks in the collection were originally published

between 1770 and 1850 during the Industrial Revolution. Both during and since this period, the world around us has experienced great change and development.

With *Views of England and Wales*, you are able to see how places and

buildings might have looked as far back as two hundred and fifty years ago or more.

While many old prints and pieces of art can tell us what places or buildings once looked like, it is worth bearing in mind that not all will accurately depict their subject. This brings us to another reason for the value of *Views of England and Wales*: it is an extensive resource for how artists and engravers represented their subjects, and a window onto changing representations of English and Welsh landscapes, compositional choices, artistic



tropes, and creative licence, as well as a resource for studying art movements such as Romanticism. As a result, they can also provide insight into contemporary social mores, fashions, concepts of national identity, and much more.

Something that will also be of interest to users of *Views of England and Wales* is the large number of connections between the different individuals and groups involved in the process of creating the final print. From those who created the original drawing or painting, to those who made the engraving or etching from it, to those who were responsible for publishing and printing it, there is a wealth of networks to be explored here. There are also numerous prints in the collection that were made under the patronage of social elites, which could be used to investigate networks of patronage in the printing trade.

It probably comes as no surprise that the vast majority of the artists, engravers, and publishers to be found on prints in *Views of England and Wales* are male. However, there is also a small, but very significant group of female artists, engravers, and publishers whose involvement in printmaking is all too often overlooked. In addition, some of the standalone drawings and paintings were also produced by women, so this collection is an important resource for their participation in art, engraving, publishing,

and printmaking, some of whom are little known, if at all.

Users of *Views of England and Wales* will find that a range of techniques were used to make the prints in the collection, including woodcut, engraving, etching, and lithography, plus some

of their variants like aquatint.

The collection's large size, combined with the fact that many of the prints have a publication date, means that it provides a useful record with which to trace or study the evolution of printing

techniques during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Views of England and Wales is an important new resource that offers varied insights into the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, through the mediums of printing, painting, drawing, and photography. It will be valuable to those

with interests in themes such as local history, social history, cultural history, travel, topography, art, architecture, printing, engraving, etching, fortification, archaeology, ecclesiastical history, antiquarianism, natural history, garden design, engineering, maps, religion, heraldry, and fashion, and more.

We hope that you enjoy viewing and using this brilliant new resource!

<https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll16>





Karen Donegani tells us what she got up to from the 22nd September to 1st October 2023, on Facebook and on YouTube.

Promising over 130 recorded talks over ten days, this well-publicised event required an impressive level of commitment from those hoping to complete the course. I suspect many people, like me, managed to watch a selection of the talks by dropping in on selected days and playing catch-up at the weekend. The talks were published on YouTube (with links from Facebook) and some attracted over 700 views. The Facebook Group attracted 1,800 members and buzzed with activity at all hours as participants from the UK and other international time zones got up early or stayed up late to participate in the event live. I do not know how many Friends joined in but some Friends and HYPIR staff were actively involved as speakers.

The aim of the event organisers (the Society of Genealogists, the Society of One-Place Studies, Genealogy Studies, and the British Association for Local History) was to encourage family historians and others to “delve into local history.” With a strong focus on Place, the talks covered historical sources, research techniques, tools, and ways of sharing research findings. Participants were encouraged to start with small, even micro, local history projects which could be expanded later, rather than diving in at the deep end with a town or county study. A free, downloadable Workbook was provided to promote a structured approach to identifying, planning, researching, analysing, and maintaining a local history study.

The recorded talks (typically 10 minutes long) were released on the hour from 08:00 to 20:00 BST each day for ten days. Each day started with a Task Talk which outlined the theme of the talks for the day such as Photos and Maps, People and Occupation, and Law and Place Names. The Task Talk also discussed the tasks for the day for those who opted to work their way through the Workbook.

Billed as “A Unique Challenge Event,” All About That Place was publicised to its target audience via several social media platforms and via the event organisers and sponsors’ websites and mailings. The Sponsors (Family Tree, The Genealogist, The Historic Towns Trust, Name & Place, Pharos Tutors, University of Strathclyde, The Halstead Trust, WeAre.xyz, National Library of Scotland, FACHRS) were actively involved and delivered recorded talks on their services and products without an aggressive sales pitch.

The talks covered a wide range of sources and historical periods with a strong focus on the British Isles, though one day featured talks from other countries. They offered pragmatic and clear advice on using sources such as estate records, solicitors’ records, seventeenth-century equity court records, farm survey records, church court records, military records, 1910 Valuation Survey maps, Historic Towns Trust maps, photographs and post cards, drone footage, theses, oral histories, geological maps and lots of muddy-boots field trips (!). I very much appreciated the update on how to get the best out of the newly-digitised 1910 Valuation Survey maps and Tithe Maps now available as GIS layers/data on www.thegenealogist.co.uk

One clear message to participants was to start small, with a micro study of a building, road, hamlet or event, advice which was well-received by the members of the Facebook Group, many of whom selected and registered their One Place Study during the event.

For those who engaged in the process of the event, it provided more than the mass-

publication of interesting short talks. Talks, demonstrations and sound advice from experienced practitioners and suppliers were of interest to those seeking to expand or

update their knowledge. The outcomes may vary in depth and quality but will add to the corpus of histories of Place available for wider, more comparative studies.



UNIVERSITY OF
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CENTRE FOR
REGIONAL & LOCAL
HISTORY

Centre for Regional and Local History Autumn 2023 Seminar Series

All seminars take place in Attenborough 101 unless otherwise noted

12 October 12:30-1:30pm

**'Transatlantic slavery, landownership and enclosure in
England, 1738-1836'**

Prof. Corinne Fowler

26 October 2-4pm

'Black lives in British archives'

Gaverne Bennett and Chloe Phillips

16 November 2-4pm

**'Tommy "what a life" Hatton: boxing promoter, bibliophile and founder of
Leicester's local history collection'**

Dr Simon Dixon

This event will be held in the Digital Culture Studio, David Wilson Library

30 November 2-4pm

'Wives, sociability and separation in 19th-century England'

Denise Greany and Judy Somekh

14 December 2-4pm

**'Local histories of religious minorities: perspectives from 18th-century Wales
and late 20th-century England'**

Dr Zoe Knox and Dr Angela Muir

To celebrate the re-launch of our seminar series, and the opening of our new research space, all presenters this semester are University of Leicester colleagues, postgraduate research students or alumni.

Please email angela.muir@le.ac.uk with any queries.

Staff and associates have been busy as ever with papers, presentations, and other undertakings:

Dr Angela Muir

Articles:

‘Romantic Pursuits? Courtship and consent in Georgian Wales,’ *Family and Community History*, 46:2 (2023), 137-153.

‘Material Encounters: Alternative Uses of Tobacco Pipes in England and Wales,’ c. 1600-1900’, *Historical Research* (co-authored with Sarah Inskip), 96:272 (2023), 156-173.

Chapters:

‘Sex Work and Economies of Makeshift in Eighteenth-Century Wales,’ in B. Jenkins, P. O’Leary, and S. Ward (eds), *Gender in Modern Welsh History* (University of Wales Press, 2023)

‘Welsh Society in the Eighteenth Century,’ in M. Johnes, L. Miskell, and R. Thomas (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Welsh History* (forthcoming)

Conferences:

2023	‘Voices from the margins: Locating women in the Welsh Court of Great Sessions’	Economic History Society Conference, University of Warwick.
2022	‘Mapping place and identity in early modern and industrialising Wales’	Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland autumn conference, University of Leicester

Public Engagement:

‘The historical representation of women in eighteenth century Wales’ British Association for Local History, History Matters podcast, series 3, episode 3 (2023)

‘Researchers discover 18th-century clay tobacco pipes were used as weapons and surgical tools’, *The Conversation* (25 April 2023)

‘The Hidden History of Sex Work in Wales’, public lecture, National Library of Wales (November 2022)

‘Wine and Crimes’ wine tasting and historical true crime events in partnership with Vin Van Cymru (3 held to-date).

Professor Chris Dyer (Emeritus)*Books (edited):*

Changing Approaches to Local History: Warwickshire History and its Historians (Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2022)

Articles and chapters:

'Introduction', 'Rural Warwickshire in the middle ages: society and landscape', 'Conclusion', in C.Dyer (ed), *Changing Approaches to Local History: Warwickshire History and its Historians* (Woodbridge, 2022), pp. 1-10, 95-116, 285-97.

'L'alimentation des pauvres dans l'Angleterre médiévale', in P. Benito, S. Carocci and L. Feller (eds), *Économies de la Pauvreté au Moyen Âge* (Madrid, 2023), pp. 383-97.

'Partnership among peasants: rural England, 1270-1520', *Continuity and Change*, 37 (2022), pp. 291-312.

'Burton Dassett: its origins and development', in N. Palmer and J. Parkhouse, *Burton Dassett Southend, Warwickshire. A Medieval Market Village* (Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph, 44, 2023), pp.14-21.

'Murder in a landscape: the significance of the death of Henry Flackett in the Staffordshire Moorlands in 1515', *Midland History*, 48 (2023), pp.3-20.

'Peasant consumption in late medieval England: food and drink served at funerals', *Agricultural History Review*, 71 pt 1 (2023), pp. 1-20.

Book Reviews:

D. Shotliff and D. Ingham, *Stratton, Biggleswade: 1,300 years of Village Life in Eastern Bedfordshire*, in *Medieval Settlement Research*, 37 (2022), pp. 74-5.

S. Miles and S. Brookes, *Peasant Perceptions of Landscape*, in *Medieval Archaeology*, 66 (2022), pp. 520-1.

J. Hemingway, *Medieval Birmingham. People and places, 1070-1553*, in *Midland History*, 48 (2023), pp. 114-15.

P. Stabel, *The Fabric of the City. A Social History of Cloth Manufacture in Medieval Ypres*, in *Medieval Archaeology*, 67 pt 1 (2023), pp. 241-2.

Presentations:

'Pre-industrial industry: new light on the medieval west midlands Nuneaton branch of the Historical Association Sept. 2022

'Welford and Weston 1300-1550: coping through hard times', Welford and Weston Local History Society Sept. 2022

'Why Gloucestershire peasants mattered', Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (online) Nov 2022

'Why medieval peasants matter (with reference to Oxfordshire)', Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society (online) Jan 2023

Society for Medieval Archaeology Virtual Event: Conversation with Dawn Hadley about *Peasants Making History* Jan 2023

'Medieval peasants', Podcast for BBC History Magazine Feb 2023

'Three villages under the Edge: Aston, Norton and Weston and their connections with Campden', Chipping Campden History Society April 2023

'What does medieval pottery tell us about social and economic history?' Anglo-American Seminar on the Medieval Economy and Society, Dartington Hall, July 2023

Professor Keith Snell (Emeritus)

Keith is mainly concentrating on painting and drawing now, largely in Leicestershire, Rutland, and mid and coastal Wales, and there should be a landscape art website up soon (which we will advertise on the Friends website when it is available).

Keith is working with University of Leicester Health Sciences Department on loneliness and the elderly. He is also engaged with a Californian film company on a film about French peasant life. Keith's childhood autobiography, provisionally entitled *Skiing on Crocodiles: an African Childhood* has been accepted by a number of publishers (who are being considered), and he is now writing its Cambridge sequel.

Yvonne Cresswell (Visiting Fellow)

Media:

Filmed interview for history documentary *Churchill's Forgotten War* (re: Second World Civilian Internment), June 2023 (in production)

Interview for German radio for history documentary on civilian internment on the Isle of Man during the Second World War, September 2023 (in production)

Publications:

Book Review for Simon Parkin's *The Island of Extraordinary Captives: A True Story of an Artist, a Spy, and a Wartime Scandal* (2022), *Isle of Man Studies: Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History & Antiquarian Society*, Vol. XVIII 2023

Book Review for Robert Kelly's *Manx Myths, Mysteries & Miscellanies* (2023), *Folk Life: Journal of Ethnological Studies* (forthcoming publication)

Guided Walks:

Living with the Wire: Tour of Onchan Civilian Internment Camp (2), Isle of Man Heritage Open Days, Onchan, Isle of Man, 1st October 2022

Methodist Chapels of Port St Mary, Isle of Man Heritage Open Days, Onchan, Isle of Man, 2nd October 2022

Tour of Sefton Internment Camp, Onchan Internment Camp & Mooragh Camp (Ramsey), Isle of Man, 15th October 2022 (academic private tour)

Tour of Isle of Man's First World War Internment Camps, Isle of Man, 1st August 2023 (academic private tour)

Living with the Wire: Tour of Onchan Civilian Internment Camp, Isle of Man Heritage Open Days, Onchan, Isle of Man, 29th September 2023

Living with the Wire: Tour of Hutchinson Civilian Internment Camp, Isle of Man Heritage Open Days, Douglas, Isle of Man, 29th September 2023

Living with the Wire: Tour of Rushen Civilian Internment Camp, Isle of Man Heritage Open Days, Port Erin, Isle of Man, 30th September 2023

Talks (In-Person)

May Eve to Hollantide (Manx Folklore), Isle Of Man Federation WI, St John's, Isle of Man, 22nd October 2022

Archibald Knox: Man behind the art, Ballaugh Heritage Trust, Isle of Man, 8th November 2022

Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment on the Isle of Man during the First World War, Lonan Mens Fellowship, Baldrine, 21st November 2022

Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment in the Isle of Man during Two World Wars, 'Introduction to the Isle of Man' module/ BA (Hons) History & Heritage, University College Isle of Man, 10th February 2023

Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment on the Isle of Man during the Second World War & Onchan Camp, Friends of Onchan Heritage, Onchan, Isle of Man, 22nd February 2023

Manx Art & Design: Manx National Art Collection, 'Introduction to the Isle of Man' module/ BA (Hons) History & Heritage, University College Isle of Man, 24th March 2023

Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment on the Isle of Man during the First World War, Kirk Michael Heritage Trust, Kirk Michael, Isle of Man, 24th April 2023

Manx Folklore, Parkfield WI, Douglas, Isle of Man, 11th May 2023

Manx Folklore in Art, Arbory WI, Colby, Isle of Man, 8th June 2023

My Favourite Bits of the National Art Collection, Harbourside WI, Ramsey, Isle of Man, 15th June 2023

Manx Folklore: Not just Witches & Fairies, Laxey Miner Birds WI, Laxey, Isle of Man, 5th September 2023

Manx Folklore: Not just Witches & Fairies, Port Soderick WI, Port Soderick Isle of Man, 14th September 2023

Talks (Online)

Living with the Wire: Civilian Internment on the Isle of Man during the First World War, Leicester Vaughan College, 13th October 2022

Hidden Tudor Buildings

This year has seen me involved with investigations of two 'hidden' Tudor buildings. The first is Thornby Hall in Northamptonshire, which was the subject of our one and only 'Friends online' event in March. The Hall has been represented as being late 17th century, but I have been researching its origins and have discovered a Tudor, or maybe even older, building at the core of what is actually a relatively modern building.

The second is the Tudor Lodge at Hursley Park in Hampshire. This is much more hidden, having been demolished in the eighteenth century. As a volunteer digger I have been involved with a series of archaeological excavations revealing the buried remains of the lodge under the South Lawn of the current Hursley House.

Mandy de Belin

When you approach Thornby Hall from the car park you walk into a courtyard flanked by two gatehouses and are presented with the frontage of a magnificent Jacobean Mansion built from local Northamptonshire Ironstone. But you are being deceived. What you are looking at was mostly built in the 1920s, part of an extensive remodelling of the house undertaken by Captain Arnold Wills, grandson of HO Wills of tobacco company fame. You only need to look at the lead downpipes, embossed with the Wills's initials and arms and the date '1925', to discover this.

There is a much older core to the building, however, and if you consult the heritage websites you'll be told that the original building is late seventeenth century in origin. But this is deceptive too. My research has revealed the building to be at least 100 years older than that, and possibly even older still.

Using a variety of documents, including extensive plans of the 1920s 'makeover', it is possible to trace the 'footprint' of the house from its current state back to its earliest days. To see some of this story in the physical fabric, you must turn the house around, for one of the major alterations that Captain Wills made was to turn the front of the house into the back of the house. To stand and view the old 'front' door it is clear that the oldest part is a rectangular 'hall shape' with the addition of a

small extension and large window making an 'L'. Two side ranges were then added to form a more traditional Tudor or Stuart footprint. In the late nineteenth century, the process began of adding servants' quarters and service rooms to the main building, this reaching its greatest extent in the 1920s (with a large octagonal dining room added in the 1980s when the Hall accommodated a school).

For the longest time in its documented history (from 1617 to 1863), the house belonged to the Weltden family. For much of this period, Thornby was a small and insignificant settlement, and the Weltden family were very minor gentry. But the Hall, and the village, achieved much more distinction towards the end of the nineteenth century, when it became a favoured area of the highly fashionable Pytchley Hunt, and attracted the attention of a succession of wealthy businessmen (and even royalty in between the wars in the twentieth century).

The known history of the Hall starts with the Dissolution. Much of the land of Thornby had been historically granted to religious houses. Sulby Abbey (Premonstratensian) and Pipewell Abbey (Cistercian) owned half the acreage of the township. The Knights of St John of Jerusalem and Delapré Abbey also had smaller holdings in Thornby.

The site of Thornby Hall was originally a grange farm of Sulby Abbey. At dissolution it comprised an orchard and a garden, three small closes, and some 5.25 virgates of land in the open fields. At that time it was leased to Simon and Celia Bellingham. From the initial alienation, the grange can be traced through three generations of the Pell family; one part of considerable holdings that they had in this part of Northamptonshire. There is a small gap in the historical sources before it reappears in the hands of Nicholas Burberry, from whence it was sold to William Weltden in 1617, this time with an explicitly listed 'capital messuage'. William evidently much improved the house and lands (evidenced by a court case brought by the rector of Thornby bemoaning



that he was being deprived of greater tithes that should have come to him as a result). William had incurred some considerable debt by the time of his death in 1630, although whether this was due to building works or expenses incurred by the enclosure of the open fields in the 1620s (or both) is a matter of speculation. In any case, it seems probable that the two side ranges were added by William

Weltden in this period. This formed the bulk of the house until the great extensions were made in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

There is a date stone on a small extension to the north range reading '1665' and another date stone of '1694' on the door lintel to the oldest part of the building, but I believe that this stone commemorates the addition of a Weltden coat of Arms above the door, to which the family were awarded the right in the 1680s Visitation of Northamptonshire. These date stones likely account for the late seventeenth-century origin ascribed to the Hall by some of the heritage websites. The core of the building is evidently much older (both from appearance and documentation), but the intriguing question is how much older?

I have considered two possibilities: firstly, was it built by the Pell family in the mid sixteenth-century? Or secondly, was it actually a grange house built by Sulby Abbey, which would seem to push its origins back to at least the fifteenth century?

The inquisition postmortem of the middle Pell, John, lists his land holdings in Thornby. These largely coincide with the holdings originally listed in the license of alienation of dissolved lands. It includes the 'site of the grange', together with a garden, an orchard, three small closes, and five and a quarter virgates of land, then in the occupation of Henry Dunkley. One new holding is a 'capital messuage' together with an orchard, a garden, and one virgate of land. It seems that either John or his father, Thomas Pell, did build a new house on some of the dissolved land, but that is listed separately from the grange. William Weltden bought the grange land in 1617 together with 'a capital messuage', two gardens, two orchards and eight virgates of land. Could this be a combined holding of the grange and the house that the Pells built? If

this is the case, we can date the core of the building to the mid-sixteenth century.

An alternate explanation is that the Pells built the house now known as the 'Old Manor House' (close by what is now the Thornby Hall driveway) and that this was their 'capital messuage'. Between their shedding their Thornby lands and the Weltden purchase, the house was somehow separated from its land, which was attached to the adjacent grange land (hence the Weltden purchase including two gardens and two orchards). This house seems to have come into the hands of the Weltdens in the later seventeenth century, and for a time they owned both the old manor house and the hall. The 1671 Hearth tax has the Weltdens paying for seven hearths

Pipewell Abbey were granted originally from the deserted Chilcot lands, so there is a geographical association with that grange which could explain the name.

Meanwhile the eighteenth and nineteenth century Weltdens (and the husbands of their female heirs) referred to their home in legal documents and correspondence as 'Thornby Grange'. It does not appear as 'Thornby Hall' until the 1841 census. This site is also some distance from the centre of the village, although to the east not the west. The isolation was more pronounced when the house faced the other way (looking away from the village) and the old drive opened some way down the Naseby road. The 1911 sales particulars for the Hall lists the large and evidently aged window



(presumably for the Hall) and separately for a building with two hearths (which could be the Old Manor House).

This leaves the way open for the core of Thornby Hall being an original grange building. The picture is rather muddled by the fact that there is another 'Thornby Grange' in the parish, around half a mile to the west of the settlement and occupying the land of the deserted village of Chilcot. After enclosure this was a 250-acre farm owned by the absentee Stydolf family. At one point this family held the advowson of Thornby (but not the manor) and owned non-monastic land in the village (dating from before the dissolution). This farm was called 'Thornby Grange', and 'Thornby Lodge' at various points in its history, but there was no large, prestigious house there until the twentieth century. The grange lands of

in the 'L-shaped' portion of house as dating from the reign of Henry VII. This could be estate agent hyperbole but could be derived from memories of the Weltden family who had been in occupation for so long and must have known some of the previous history of the house. The monastic association continued with a rather florid tale in the Tatler that told of the Pender family laying the ghost of a monk to rest when they uncovered a bricked-up body while extending the cellars.

No cartulary survives for Sulby Abbey. There are a number of documents held by the British Library, but these have (so far) made no mention of a grange house at Thornby (work with these documents is ongoing). The building also awaits the attention of a buildings archaeologist who may be able to date the structure more accurately (although the oldest

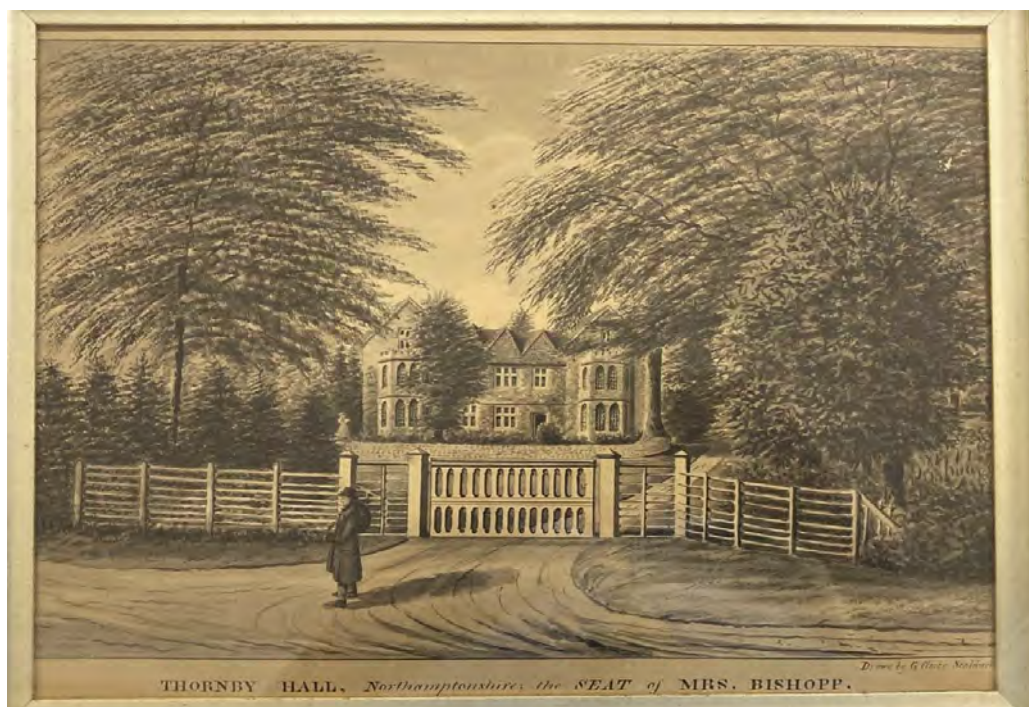
parts of the building were reroofed in the 1880s, so no original roof timbers survive).

Whatever the final outcome of the research, however, it is clear that the core of the building is older than originally believed.

Thornby Hall is now a Buddhist Meditation Centre. It is open to the public every day from 11 am – 4 pm. It has a lovely café and equally lovely grounds, which you are free to walk around. <https://meditateinnorthants.com>



The oldest part of Thornby Hall



The same view circa 1850

Hidden Tudor Buildings #2

Hursley Park

Hursley Park, just south of Winchester, has in its time fulfilled just about every possible incarnation of a 'park'. It was first associated with Merdon Castle as a deer park of the Bishops of Winchester. It was then the landscape park of a big house before becoming the home of the design office and one of the manufacturing sites of the Spitfire (after the extensive bombing of Southampton in the second world war). In 1958 the nascent computer giant, IBM, bought the site from Vickers. There it remains as development offices, still surrounded by several acres of grounds which are enjoyed by IBM employees and local residents alike. It has a cricket pitch and tennis courts and now resembles a modern amenity park as much as anything.

An eighteenth-century big house still lies at the centre of the site, surrounded by modern office blocks. Fortunate IBM employees attend meetings in the old ballroom. In a dry summer, however, very distinct parch marks become visible on the south lawn and it was obvious that this was the site of the original Tudor House built when the park first entered its residential phase. In 2021 the Winchester Archaeological Rescue Group (WARG), in conjunction with the University of Winchester, embarked on the first of a series of two-week digs to investigate what lay beneath the lawn.

The historical records reveal some details about earlier buildings in the park. Its origins lay with the castle built by Henry de Blois (Bishop of Winchester) sometime between 1129 and 1138. In the 13th century a deer park was established to the south of the castle, some 450 acres in size. In 1413 there is a record of a carpenter being paid to erect a lodge in the park. In 1441 the castle was mined for stone to be used in the Bishop's works elsewhere. Merdon manor was seized by Edward VI and granted to Sir Philip Hoby in 1552, Mary granted it back to the Bishop of Winchester,

before Elizabeth granted it back to William Hoby. The 'great lodge', whose ghostly shadow can be seen on the lawn, was built by one of these Hobys. The lodge and park passed through various hands, with manor, house and park being separated and reunited, before finally becoming the residence of Richard Cromwell after he acquired it through marriage. In 1718 Cromwell's daughters sold the estate to Sir William Heathcote. He found the lodge to be 'unrepairable' and demolished it and reused the materials to build the current Hursley House.

The 2021 excavation put in three trenches positioned according to evidence from the parch marks and from a geophys survey. Trench 1 revealed a stairwell and some cellars with vaulted ceilings. Trench 2 contained evidence of a western service wing with fireplaces and ovens. Trench 3 exposed the Northern wall, including a projecting portico (or possibly a bay window). The Tudor lodge was built from brick, but Trench 2 also revealed the remains of an earlier stone and flint wall which was taken to be evidence of a possible earlier medieval building that did not appear in the historical records. Conclusions from that year's work included the discovery that the original Tudor house had been greatly extended at some point, probably in the seventeenth century.

The 2022 excavation placed one trench to investigate subsidence that had been discovered the previous year. It exposed the remains of a well that caused some consternation over safety issues. It had to be professionally capped to keep IBMers safe when wandering across the lawn at other times of the year. The other trenches revealed more of the structure of the house, with high status rooms identified in the east wing and more details added to the service wing in the west, including inner courtyards that contained masses of discarded oyster shells. Some more of the early flint and stone wall was discovered but the stratigraphy was no help in dating it and there was even some speculation

that it might have been a garden feature rather than an earlier building.

The standout feature of the 2023 excavations was the cellars in the western service wing. In contrast to the vaulted cellars in the east wing these were evidently working rooms with light being admitted through stone mullioned windows, the bottom sills of which remained. (These reflected the structure of the service rooms in the eighteenth-century house just opposite, which formed a lower ground floor with light admitted from windows half below ground level). The excavated cellar was nicknamed the 'swimming pool', which it resembled in size and depth, even having a slightly sloping floor that formed a 'deep end'. An anomaly in the brickwork of the north wall aligned with the shift from the windowed cellars of the north and west to the vaulted cellar in the east. This, combined with the larger scale of the east wing, suggests that the entire east wing was a later extension, curiously making the 'earlier' building much closer to the C16th illustration of the Lodge.

This year's work also revealed some more of the flint and stone wall, and that led to renewed speculation that this was, in fact, the remains of an earlier building. Also of interest was a mysterious clay and chalk lined feature just outside the south-west corner of the Tudor lodge.

The closure of the 2023 trenches in June and the restoration of the lawn officially marked the end of the three-year project. Some nagging questions remained, however, and so September saw a 'mini-excavation' on the south lawn to attempt to answer these. The latest news is that the end of the stone wall has been located and appears to be part of a long hall that predates the lodge. The stone has no clear top level, which may be the result of site levelling in the 1720s. It could be the footings of the fifteenth century wooden building known about from the records, but it still might be something else. The clay and chalk lined feature is assumed to be some form of water container; the use of chalk suggesting the desire to keep the water clear. Its proximity to what has been identified as the kitchen and laundry area of the lodge would tend to confirm this interpretation.

You are free to walk round the grounds at Hursley Park but cannot enter Hursley House itself. There is a nice, independent, café in the stableyard. Merdon Castle has recently been the subject of a project to stabilize its remains (see

<https://www.hampshirechronicle.co.uk/news/23821446.securinq-work-remains-merdon-castle-completed/>). Unfortunately, there is no public access to the castle site.



The Hursley Dig

Parchmarks on the south lawn



The present Hursley House looks on

The vaulted cellar emerges



The 'swimming pool' cellar

St Mary's Church, Weeford

Richard Stone shares the details of a Staffordshire church

The material of St Mary's Church, Weeford in Staffordshire is of strikingly contrasting treatments. A chancel added in 1876 is built of randomly coursed rock-cut stone, a natural look inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement fashionable at the time. The rest of the neat neo-Gothic building is smooth-faced ashlar sandstone. A west bay topped by a square tower and octagonal 'pepperpot' bell turret dates from the 1840s. Strip away those features and imagine a small central spire and we have the building completed in 1802, a simple aisleless nave with small transepts, designed by James Wyatt (1746 – 1813). After six years studying in Italy, Wyatt returned to England and soon established a national reputation as an architect. Before beginning work on St Mary's, he had not long completed an extensive seven-year restoration of Lichfield Cathedral. He was also Surveyor of the Fabric at Westminster Abbey, and as Surveyor General and Comptroller of the Works, in charge of the royal estate. What was the attraction of a small church project to the leading architect of his day?

Weeford was his boyhood home. Wyatt was born at Blackbrook Farm, barely half-a-mile from the church. St Mary's was funded by local donations limiting design possibilities, but it was a project invested with personal interest. Wyatt himself paid for some of the interior furnishings and ornamentation.

Among the stained glass is a window purchased by Sir Robert Lawley of Canwell Hall near Shenstone and presented to St Mary's in 1803. According to an accompanying notice it was '...torn by sacrilegious hands from the private chapel of the Duke of Orleans'. Louis

Philippe II, Duke of Orleans and cousin of Louis XVI, was perhaps an unlikely but nevertheless active supporter of the French Revolution, changing his name to Philippe Égalité and that of his Paris residence, the Palais-Royal on the Rue Saint-Honoré, to Palais-Égalité, opening the gardens to the public. However, after his son was found guilty of treason he was viewed with suspicion, arrested, and eventually faced the guillotine in 1793. The stained glass dates from around 1600. Its chequered history probably accounts for a slight jigsaw quality. In places, missing pieces appear have been made

up by fragments from other windows. It shows the Condemnation of Jesus and was probably the first in a series depicting the Stations of the Cross.

A small but growing population in early-19th century Weeford was declining by mid-century and is now down to around 200. St Mary's had seating for 315. Galleries in each of the transepts once contained private pews for the Swinfen Family of Swinfen Hall (designed by James Wyatt's father

Benjamin and now a hotel) and the Manley Family of Manley Hall, also known as Thickbroom Hall (designed by Thomas Trubshaw of Little Haywood, demolished in 1905 apart from stables and a service wing). Both galleries were removed following a successful faculty application [SRO D4351/2/1] at the same time as the chancel was built in 1878.

Long-serving incumbent, Reverend Robert Cowpland also looked after St Bartholomew's Church in the neighbouring parish of Hints, holding services on alternate Sundays. On 30



March 1851 when a Census of Religion was taken, he reported a slightly below average morning congregation at St Mary's of 145 plus 35 Sunday School children [National Archives HO 129/377/3].



St Mary's replaced an earlier church on the same site. Parish registers begin in 1562 [Staffordshire Record Office D4351/1]. Domesday Book records five canons at Lichfield Cathedral, members of the chapter supported by income, known as prebends, from Weeford along with the nearby villages of Freeford, Handsacre, Longdon and Statfold. Although the Domesday survey makes no mention of a priest or a church at Weeford in 1086, the existence of a prebend strongly implies their presence. The five canons have ploughs, suggesting they also worked the land alongside members of the peasantry. A weather-worn scratch dial on a stone now incorporated in a wall beside the entrance to the churchyard is further evidence of an early church on the site.

Our earliest documentary source for the place-name is Domesday Book, where it is recorded as *Weforde*. The first element is Old English and widely accepted to derive from Anglian *wēoh* or *wīh* meaning an idol or a pagan shrine. It is a formulation found elsewhere, for example Weoley (Worcestershire), Weedon (Buckinghamshire), and possibly Wyfordby, (Leicestershire), one which takes us back to the late-seventh century. In *Weforde*, 'ford by the heathen shrine', there is a clue that the site of St Mary's, occupying a rise of land alongside what is now Dog Lane close to where the road crosses Black Brook, a tributary via Bourn Brook of the River Tame, may have been the site of a pagan temple. Christian reconsecration of existing religious sites was standard practice, recommended and encouraged by Pope Gregory the Great in the early missionary days of conversion.

Notes: *St Mary's is in a fairly isolated position and is not normally open.*

Canwell Hall became a children's hospital for Birmingham City Council in the mid-1950s and was demolished in 1972.

James Wyatt is buried in the south transept at Westminster Abbey.

Reference and further reading:

<http://www.ourvillagechurch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/St-Marys-history-leaflet-.pdf>

Bewdley's Ancient Trackways

Heather Flack shares details of her most recent research

Where were the really early trackways in the area where I live? This was a question raised by a talk to Bewdley Civic Society by a local naturalist.

She shared her passion for drovers' roads and ancient routeways in various parts of the country, but said nothing about Bewdley. So

we teamed up to find those that came through or had once existed in our locality.

Rosemary Winnall is not a historian, so my MA from Leicester was invaluable. I remembered Richard Jones had said old roads rarely had T junctions; if a trackway meets another at a right angle, then it is likely it continued on the other side. I bore that in mind – among other important aspects learned through the landscape course.

Old maps can be helpful, but sometimes show the map makers' imagination rather than giving a true picture. Maps, however, are crucial and an old road is often preserved as a footpath.

During my degree, I had discovered G. R. Grundy's article from 1935 on ancient trackways in Worcestershire. He had three clear routes along ridgeways in the Bewdley area. More recently, an archaeological student had told me of a 1963 article by Lily Chitty on the Clun-Clee ridgeway, a major route from Wales which came to Bewdley. Rosemary and I began by walking all these routes and seeing how they fitted into the landscape. We soon learned that Titterstone Clee with its distinctive summit shape was a major landmark and guide – on a clear day!

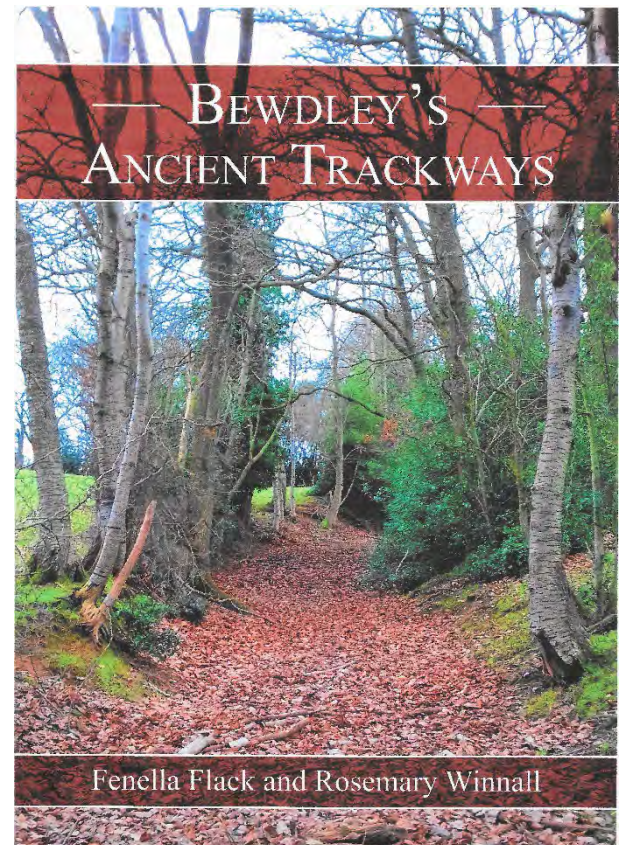
As well as ridgeways, we looked for holloways, those pathways worn deep into the land. We have several examples of these, but it isn't always clear how they fit into the pattern of trackways. Some seem to go nowhere and some may be only tushing ditches, created by horses pulling tree trunks out of the forest.

The end result of our research and walking is a book "Bewdley's Ancient Trackways", which describes ten routes on each side of the River Severn. Some are now busy roads, some are inaccessible, but there are many which can be walked, so we have included maps and instructions. I have already published "Walking Bewdley's History", "Walking Stourport's History", and "Walking Kidderminster's History", spiral-bound small books which fit

into the pocket, so I used the same format for this new book. It costs £7.50 and is selling well, engaging locals and tourists in the landscape of an area of north Worcestershire.

Why don't you hunt for the ancient trackways where you live? If you want to pick my brains further, then contact me on hm.flack@btinternet.com.

Heather Flack (aka Fenella Flack)



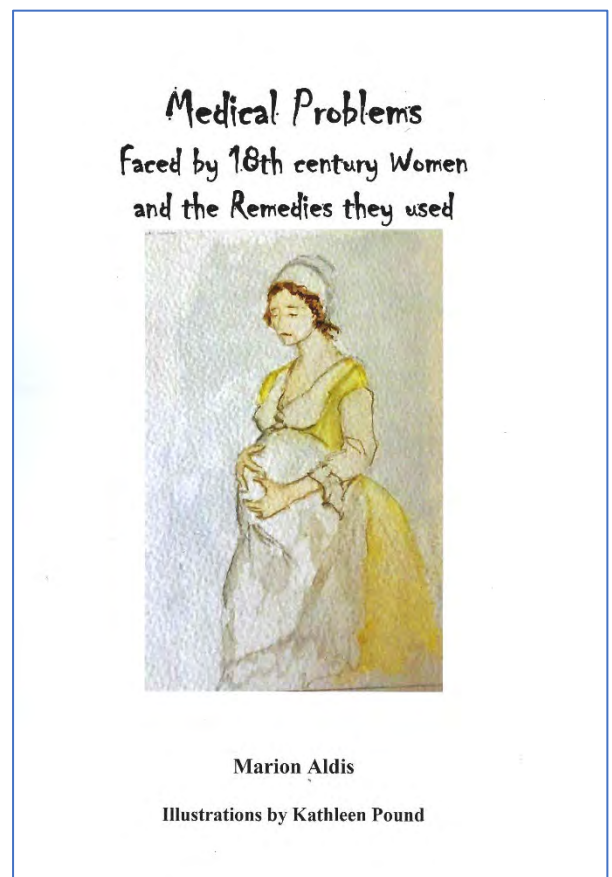
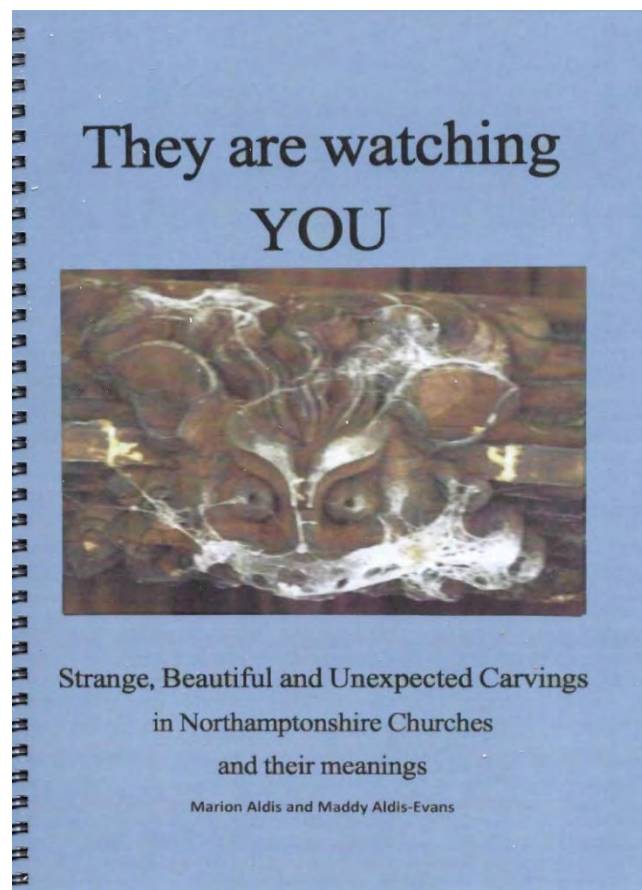
New Northamptonshire Publications

Marion Aldis has been busy in Northamptonshire

I have self-published two books this year. One is a complete survey of all the remaining medieval carvings in Northampton and Northamptonshire churches, and their meanings. My daughter took all the photos for me. It was a long but totally engrossing project.

The other one is based on one small book, written in 1710, within the hundreds and hundreds of recipes collected by the Ladies of Great Oakley Manor from the late 15th century to the 19th century and now in The Northampton County Record Office. This book is *Medical problems faced by Women in the 18th century* and is fully illustrated by a local artist.

Both can be bought from me for £15 each, which includes postage and packing. If you would like more information, or to buy one, please contact me at my email address: marionaldis@yahoo.com



Friends news

Highlights of what Friends have been up to in the past year.

Phil Batman

Presentations 2022:

'The exodus of lead miners from Victorian Swaledale', presented to Bedale Archaeology & History Society on 3 May 2022.

'The exodus of Victorian lead miners from Swaledale to the cotton mills of Burnley', presented to Lancashire Family history & Heraldry Society on 29 September 2022.

'Nancy Heap: Life and Times of a Mill Orphan', presented to Queen Street Mill Museum, Burnley on 1 October 2022.

Presentations 2023:

'Collapse of the lead mines in Victorian Swaledale: Where did the miners go?', presented to Forest of Galtres Historical Society, Easingwold on 23 March 2023.

'The exodus of Victorian lead miners from Swaledale to the cotton mills of Burnley,' presented to Pinner Rotary Club on 6 April 2023.

'The exodus of Victorian lead miners from Swaledale to the cotton mills of Lancashire', presented to Preston Branch of the Lancashire Family History Society on 27 September 2023.

'Emigrating to Burnley from Swaledale', presented to Burnley Historical Society on 11 October 2023.

Sylvia Pinches

Publications:

Sylvia is now editor of the *Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society*. The first volume under her editorship is:

Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society, 2022, 110pp.

Presentations:

'Anglesey Almshouses: National context and local characteristics', presented to Anglesey Antiquarians on 19 May 2023.

Richard Stone

Book reviews:

Hugh Roberts and Charles Cator, *Industry and Ingenuity: the partnership of William Ince and John Mayhew*, in *The Historian* 156 (Winter 2022/23) p.4.

Philip Nanney Williams, *Adams: Britain's oldest potting dynasty*, in *The Historian* 156 (Winter 2022/23) p.39.

Presentations:

'Leisure in Edwardian England' 25 January 2023, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Burton-on-Trent.

Friends news

'Art and Culture in Edwardian England' 1 March 2023, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Burton-on-Trent.

'The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Book of Kells', 23 March 2023, West Midlands Arts Society, Lichfield.

'Poverty, Philanthropy and Social Reform in Edwardian England' 29 March 2023, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Burton-on-Trent.

'The Edwardians' 22 and 23 April 2023, Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden

'Spectator Sports and Seaside Holidays in Edwardian England' 10 May 2023, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Burton-on-Trent.

'The Shadow of War in Edwardian England' 7 June 2023, Burton and South Derbyshire College, Burton-on-Trent.

'Medieval Medicine', 14 August 2023, Missenden Abbey, Great Missenden.

'Discovering Domesday Book', 6 September 2023, Mid-Trent and Mercia Branch of the Historical Association, Burton-on-Trent.

Marion R Hardy

Project contributions:

Friends of Devon Archives---Norden project. This "translated" the handwriting and Latin, in parts, of the 1615 document compiled by Norden to provide an inventory of Duchy lands in Devon. It gives the names of all the tenants, their lands, cottages etc. with field names, areas and values of holdings; the arrangements (with some comments regarding the ones not followed!) and wording of a charter where applicable. Unfortunately, the only map is of Exeter castle. The full information is available now online or in print.

A minor contribution assisting with information on some of the many Devon parishes that are now a part of a research 'tool' that has gone live online very recently. It provides a catalogue of all churchwardens' accounts across the counties of England available up to 1850. It can be found at <http://warwick.ac.uk/cwad>.

Publications:

Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, Vol 64 Part 2 summer 2023: 'Ministers for Newfoundland and Labrador: the Yorkshire connection'.

Information appeal:

If anyone happens to have information relating to one Joseph Laurence, of East Keswick, West Yorkshire, or concerning Methodism and education in the second half of the nineteenth century, I should be pleased to learn of it. J Laurence reputedly selected and sent some sixty ministers to Newfoundland from 1870 up to the time of his death in 1886, for at least some of whom he personally provided further education before they went out as missionaries.

He ran a fee-paying school, but much of his work for would- be missionaries seems to have been *gratis*, with no accounts kept. The social profiles of those who went are of interest and how the gaps in education were overcome, by Laurence, perhaps locally through the church or at one of the Methodist colleges. I'm awaiting some student rolls, in the hope of matching some of the names with those of the local preachers/probationer ministers who are known to have gone out to Newfoundland during these years.

Jeremy Lodge

A Rural Railway and its Neighbours: The Midland Railway – Nottingham to Newark Line, (www.nottinghambooks.co.uk, 2023) - reviewed on page 51.

Stewart Fergusson

Publications:

'Local Magistracy and the Rule of the Major Generals: Robert Beake Coventry's Godly Mayor 1655-6', *Midland History*. Published online, 29th May 2023 and will appear in the next paper edition of the journal, Issue 2, volume 48, 2023.

Juliet Bailey

'Exploring changes in gamekeeper numbers in England (1851–1921)' *Rural History* (2023), pp. 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956793323000018>



News from the

Victoria County History

A year of operating with very limited funds has been brought to a close with the receipt of excellent news, more of which later.

The year began with a launch of our Lutterworth history, our first paperback for one of the county's main market towns. It was researched and written by Dr Pam Fisher and Dr Andrew Watkins with the assistance of many people, including a local volunteer group, undergraduate volunteers and Centre alumni and Friend Dr John Goodacre. We were joined for the launch at the Greyhound Inn on Market Place by the Lord Lieutenant of the county (Mike Kapur OBE), the Chairman of the County Council (Dr Kevin Feltham), Professor Henrietta O'Connor (then Pro Vice Chancellor and Head of the College of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities) and the mayor of Lutterworth (Cllr Bill Zilberts). Professor O'Connor highlighted how the VCH project brings together academic historians and local people, and in this case enabled undergraduate students to gain experience in using primary sources and communicating original historical research to the public through poster displays.

Sales of the Lutterworth book have gone well, and each copy bought directly from ourselves provides funds that support VCH research in other Leicestershire parishes.

During the year Pam Fisher also delivered talks on Lutterworth's history to Evington History Society and Market Harborough Historical Society.

The year concluded with a 'Celebration of Local History' in the Palace Community Centre in Ibstock, where we marked the 2020



Professor Henrietta O'Connor addresses guests at Lutterworth

publication of our history of that village, as COVID lockdowns had prevented a launch at that time. Displays by ourselves, Ibstock Historical Society, local archaeologists, railway enthusiasts, one of the village's churches and Leicestershire Museums attracted over 100 people, with speakers including

David Wilson, CBE DL, who kindly sponsored our book, and the High Sheriff of Leicestershire, Henrietta Chubb, who spoke warmly of her knowledge of VCH work in north-east Leicestershire, and specifically at Coston.

Between those two events we attended the Local History fair at Beaumanor Hall in March, organised by Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, and were pleased to join with the English Place-Name Society and the

Centre for Regional and Local History in April, following the completion of the eight-volume survey of Leicestershire's place-names, at a conference at the University entitled 'Leicestershire's Names, Places, and History'. In June we were present with other heritage organisations from the city and county at the launch on campus of the University's Heritage Hub.

New research continues to focus on Loughborough, where our medium-term aim is to produce a 'red book' history of 180,000 words. This will be preceded by two paperbacks, covering aspects of the town's history since 1750, with sales of these hopefully helping to finance the larger book. Limited current funding resulted in a reduction in Dr Pam Fisher's contract to one day per week from January 2023, and with the activities above and more routine administrative tasks absorbing much of that time, it has not been possible to run a volunteer group in the town. Instead, the focus has been on working with individuals and beginning to collect information from 'out of county' archives.

Pam Fisher was very pleased to be invited to meet older members of a community group at Geeta Bhawan, a Hindu Temple and Community Centre, and learn of their mixed experiences of arriving in Loughborough from the Punjab from the 1960s. Research trips have been made to Lambeth Palace Library, the National Archives at Kew and archive offices in Lincoln and Nottingham, as well as regular visits to Wigston and Loughborough. We also now have access to several oral history video recordings on a range of subjects, and a large collection of old photographs of the town.

Our membership of Loughborough Heritage Forum has provided many other contacts, and we have been pleased to contribute information relevant to the current research of other forum members, for example in connection with the history of Loughborough's 'Old Rectory', a building that is believed to date

from the late 13th century. An article on Mary Tate, who donated substantial sums towards Loughborough's schools, churches and hospital, has also been contributed to the 'Lynne About Loughborough' website, and can be found at:

<https://lynneaboutloughborough.blogspot.com/2023/08/>

The 2023 Leicestershire VCH Newsletter, containing more detail on the above is now available to download or read at:

<https://leicestershirehistory.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/LVCHT-Newsletter-2023.pdf>.

Please email me if you would like to be added to our mailing list to receive the Leicestershire VCH Newsletter each year.

And the excellent news mentioned at the start? The University has received a substantial bequest and has agreed that some of this will benefit the Centre for Regional and Local History. In the last few days we have learned that the Centre has very kindly agreed that part of this will be made available to Leicestershire VCH Trust over 18 months to advance our Loughborough research and publishing plans. Faster progress will now be possible, and we look forward to updating the Friends next year on how we are using these funds.

Pam Fisher



Loughborough Old Rectory

Book Launch - Symposium in Honour of Peter Borsay

Friday 29th September

*This event was held at the Centre's new Attenborough Building home, ostensibly to launch the book **The Invention of the English Landscape c1700 – 1939** (reviewed on page 48) but was also a way of commemorating the life and career of Peter Borsay, who died in 2020. There were around thirty people attending in person, with more joining online.*

The event was introduced by Professor Rosemary Sweet, Director of the Centre for Urban History. It is to Roey that we owe the existence of the book, as she was responsible for bringing the manuscript to its published form. Roey began by reflecting on the arc of Peter's work, combining urban history with the history of leisure, both informed by a lifelong love of walking, music, and English literature. She then moved onto the practicalities of finishing the book. Faced with a collection of Word documents that comprised some 170,000 words, Roey's main task was to cut this down to the 130,000 words required by the publisher, Bloomsbury. After that came footnoting and selecting illustrations. The wordcount was reduced by cutting out an entire chapter (which might later appear as a journal article). Peter had added basic footnotes, but the completion of these involved some considerable detective work: working out exactly the book, the edition, and the page number being referred to.



The next speaker was Dr Katy Layton Jones from the Open University whose expertise on cultural history and green spaces had inevitably led to her collaborating with Peter. Katy cast *The Invention of the English Landscape* as bookending a period in the cultural and intellectual appreciation of the landscape. The work identified the early 1700s as the start of a period which had seen a change in the relationship of people and the land. But Katy suggested that she was detecting the beginning of another shift in this relationship. She saw in her students an enormous amount of reflection on what was now a troubled area. She found young people to be passionate about, and energized by, the landscape in a way that was just not reflected in the popular media.

Katy was particularly struck by the section of Peter's book that categorized landscape as being 'grey space' (the urban), 'green space' (the rural), and 'blue space' (water). She saw in these categories divisions which have informed our everyday interactions with the landscape. Katy hoped that in somehow delimiting the beginning and end of a particular way of looking at the landscape, the book might have a significant role in urging another generation forwards into developing new approaches to landscape.

The Centre's own Professor Keith Snell spoke next. He began by warmly congratulating Roey on her work bringing Peter's book to realization. He especially acknowledged the ability to complete a book in this way while resisting any temptation to interfere with the argument in any way. Keith pointed out that there is currently a massive interest in landscape history, and one that was by no means limited to the English landscape. Within this context, Keith was struck by the distinctiveness of the

book's approach. A poll revealed that only a minority of attendees had by then had a chance to read the book, so for their benefit Keith summarized the contents.

Keith posited a central argument of the book as identifying the role of the popular media (newspapers and guidebooks specifically) in doing the 'heavy lifting' of modelling and remodelling attitudes to the landscape. This observation, however, led on to a major critique of the work. Keith saw it as being overwhelmingly 'history from the top', concerned with the roles of the elite and middle classes in constructing a particular view, and consumption, of the English landscape. By concentrating on the works of figures like Ruskin, Betjeman, and Arthur Mee, Peter was portraying the landscape as an elite creation expounded by the middle class.

Keith came up with several suggestions of how one might alternatively construct a 'history from below', using sources such as diaries. He felt strongly that those who worked on the land themselves had ideas about its cultural significance, and that these ideas were missing from this book. In concentrating on an area of England that lay largely in the south and southeast, Keith felt that Peter was prioritising the landscape that the middle class liked to visit (although this was a preference that was subsequently also adopted by the working class).

Keith finished by acknowledging that these problems were widespread, and by no means confined to *The Invention of the English Landscape*. Keith felt it was time to bring back the economic, as well as the cultural, experience of the landscape into the narrative.

Unsurprisingly, Roey took the opportunity to respond to Keith's critique: her main point being that Peter was interested in a very particular articulation of the countryside. His interpretation was one that presented a influential image, and one that in a real sense

had affected the way in which the landscape has been protected and managed.

The next speaker was Professor Penelope Corfield, who gave an appreciation of Peter as a colleague. Her main point was that Peter was consistently 'himself' throughout his life. As a person he always displayed humour, was always kindly, but equally he was always determined about his views. Peter loved debate and argument and would have thoroughly enjoyed Keith's critique of the *The Invention of the English Landscape*.

Peter's intellectual landscape had an ideal combination of loving the minute details but also appreciating the big picture. He was not overawed by the complexities of history but was happy in the search for an overview. Peter's approach to urban history had been broad-based and eclectic, but he was always amenable to having his views shifted. Penny suggested that the work of Peter Clark and Paul Slack on the crisis of English towns in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been particularly influential on his viewpoint, his 'Urban Renaissance' represented a recovery from this crisis. Peter's work moved urban, cultural, and architectural history forwards and brought it altogether. He also moved urban history studies away from London-centricity and towards the provincial towns of England and Wales.

The final speaker was Professor Jan Hein Furnée, joining from the Netherlands via Teams (and subject to the kind of technical delays that we've all become accustomed to nowadays). Jan Hein had been collaborating with Peter on editing a series of volumes on the history of Leisure for Bloomsbury and was there to add yet more professional appreciation. What made Peter an outstanding scholar for Jan Hein was his search for continuities and similarities, rather than just concentrating on differences. This search enabled him to seek out new subjects for study and he was able to trace the

connecting path from the urban renaissance, through the rise of the spa towns and the history of leisure, to an appreciation of twentieth-century popular culture. With the *Invention of the English Landscape*, Peter's attention had shifted to the countryside (although the urban 'invention' still had an important role to play).

Jan Hein commented that although Peter was, in many ways, a very English and British historian, he worked in active collaboration with European colleagues. In his account of the culture of Bath, Peter drew heavily upon

European sources in his acknowledgement of the important role of continental influences. Peter argued, however, that the British elite digested these influences, remodelled them, and then re-exported them in their new form.

The Bloomsbury series on the history of leisure is now in press and will be available in 2024. Peter edited volume IV, contributing three chapters to the work, including the Introduction, and was able to finalise the work himself.

Mandy de Belin

MA Dissertations

2022-2023

Catherine Babicki

How getting a foot in the door gave women a leg up into local politics in Victorian England

Christine Jolliffe

'Eradicating the germs of pauperism': did apprenticeships enable pauper children to stay out of the workhouse in adulthood?

Dean Kidd

An investigation into the impact of the introduction of mechanised cotton spinning factories into two communities located in the Derwent Valley of Derbyshire during the period 1780 to 1821.

James Tower

Exploring Identity in Leicester Through Two 21st Century Case Studies.





Wallingford Study Day

This autumn's study day was held in the South Oxfordshire town of Wallingford. Hosted by the museum, we had an introductory talk from Judy Dewey, aided by Leicester University's own Professor Neil Christie. We had a morning walk around the town site, followed by an afternoon walk around the Castle site, both walks guided by Judy and Neil.

The Museum

Studying an aerial photograph, it is clear to see that Wallingford has more open green space at its centre than most comparably sized towns. Some of this is due to the extensive castle site, but much is also due to the modern parks lying either side of the museum, whose names 'the Kinecroft' and 'the Bullcroft' reveal their medieval origins. Wallingford is also remarkable for being surrounded by still existent Anglo-Saxon ramparts, which delimited a sizeable settlement. The survival of both the open spaces and the ramparts is due in large part to the failure of the town in the later middle ages.

The surviving open spaces made Wallingford an ideal area for the major archaeological project 'from Burgh to Borough', which involved the collaboration of Leicester, Oxford, and Exeter Universities, funded by the AHRC. The Project began with pilot fieldwork from 2002 to 2005, followed by more extensive work in 2008-2010. Since then, there have been around 100 test pits dug in open spaces and gardens within the ramparts, the findings of which are the subject of an imminent publication. The project was also able to publish and make available the findings of

earlier excavations of the 1930s and the 1970s. There was also an excavation by Northants Archaeology when Waitrose was built in the town centre. This exhumed bodies from the graves of what had been St Martins church, the burials dating from the late Anglo-Saxon period through to the 1400s. Wallingford museum itself has been heavily involved with these projects. The museum grew from the long-established and well-supported *Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society*, which needed physical premises to house and display the large number of artefacts emerging from the sheds and attics of the town's residents as well as the archaeological digs.



Aerial view of Wallingford

On to a description of the town itself. It has a rectangular shape with roads running north to south and east to west. It has always been a major river crossing of the river Thames, first a ford and

later a bridge. It had a castle of considerable national importance, becoming the seat of the heirs to the throne as well as playing significant roles in both the Anarchy and the first Civil War. The Bullcroft open space was the site of a priory, which was a cell of St Albans Abbey.

Wallingford was one of Alfred's Burghs, built on his instructions to provide defensive

positions against Viking incursions. The whole was surrounded on three sides by earthen ramparts and on the fourth by the Thames. The ditch formed by the excavation for the ramparts carried water, diverted into it from streams on the west side of the town. Although largely dry now, parts of the ditch still carry water, and more parts of it occasionally flood. Wallingford was one of a number of interconnected fortified settlements situated some forty miles apart (equivalent to a day's ride).

By the tenth century, the town was established and doing very well. Coins were minted there from 936 onwards. There also seems to have been some sort of royal site where the castle was subsequently built. Edward the Confessor held several properties in the town, and there is a record of their being 'fifteen acres where the housecarls lived' on what is now the castle meadow (housecarls being essentially bodyguards).

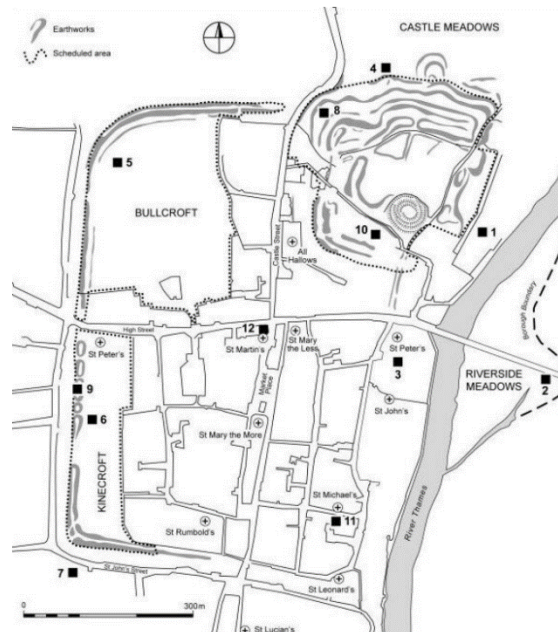
In the aftermath of the Battle of Hastings, William came to Wallingford in November 1066. Negotiations were held there with Archbishop Stigand, who submitted to William. William recognised the defensive significance of Wallingford and had a castle built. The castle was subsequently expanded and added to, finally having three

curtain walls with moats. A detailed model has been constructed showing the castle in its final stage of development based on a mixture of archaeological findings and documentary sources. The model is housed in the museum, and we were able to study it closely before departing for our subsequent 'walkabouts'.

During the Anarchy the castle was held by Matilda. It was besieged at least four times and Stephen built fortifications on the other side of the Thames (which themselves have been subject to archaeological investigations). The negotiations that ultimately ended the conflict were held at Wallingford, and the castle was important to Henry II, Richard, John, and Henry III. It was Henry III's brother Richard who took over the castle and built the additional curtain wall.

The castle was also important to Charles I in the first civil war. It defended the approaches to Oxford by both road and river, and several gun emplacements from that era have been discovered on the site. The castle was besieged by the Parliamentarians in 1646, being the last place in England to hold out and only surrendering on orders from the King. Realising the tremendous threat the castle still

potentially held, Oliver Cromwell ordered it to be slighted in 1652, and it was comprehensively destroyed. The worked



Excavation sites



Model of the castle

facing stones were reused, while the flint rubble was used to fill the moats, greatly flattening the castle landscape.

The national importance and royal connections of the castle inevitably had its effects on the town. The period between the tenth century to 1300 was the town's major period of affluence. But after this the town experienced decline. The extensive archaeological work was supplemented by documentary evidence in telling the town's story. There is much such evidence, dating back to the thirteenth century. It comprises mostly court records which largely survived because they were kept in the town chest. Excavations on the Kinecroft had found evidence of medieval buildings on the site. But these disappeared, showing that the town started to constrict rather than grow.

In searching for the reasons for this, one factor suggested was the granting of a charter to the town in 1155 by a grateful Henry II. This was doubtless beneficial to the population in giving them freedom to decide their own future, and to travel and trade within the kingdom without paying tolls. Wallingford was described as being very much a town of shopkeepers. But there was a reverse side to these benefits. The town had to raise money to pay for the fee farm, which was often a struggle. Also, they had no powerful patron who could help tide the town over in times of difficulties. The success of rival towns on the Thames such as Abingdon, Oxford, Henley, and Reading took trade away and led to Wallingford being bypassed. The 'usual culprit' of the Black Death also played its part. The extensive Domesday entry for Wallingford gave an estimated population of some two to two and a half thousand. A 1548 survey of properties and their rental worth gives a

population of around 500. The town population did not recover to Domesday levels until the nineteenth century.

The recovering town built some of its prosperity on the malting trade. Good surrounding farmland yielded bountiful barley crops and the river provided ready transport to the capital. The town was dominated by a large brewery near its centre for many years. Another industry that thrived in Wallingford was iron founding, although the raw materials of ore and coal had to be transported into the town. The town also left a lasting legal legacy as the home of Justice Blackstone, whose work of recording precedents in published books in the eighteenth century greatly streamlined the practice of English law.



View of the ramparts

The town's most famous recent resident was undoubtedly Agatha Christie. She favoured a low profile while living near the town, being known locally by her married name, Mrs Mallowan. Wallingford had been much in the news three weeks before our visit when a rather splendid statue of the

author was unveiled in the Kinecroft, just across the road from the museum, and this provided us with this year's 'cover star' for the Newsletter.

The Town Walk

The next part of our study day was the town tour of Wallingford. Guided by both Judy and Neil, we crossed the road and started in the Kinecroft. This open area gave us our first opportunity to study the town ramparts. Although now colonised by trees, they are a striking feature. It is notable how Victorian housing built on the far side of the ramparts respected both rampart and ditch.

We were also able to see where excavations had revealed medieval wooden houses on the Kinecroft, and how the road terminated by the 'Coach and Horses' once continued across the now open area.

Leaving the Kinecroft, we climbed up onto the ramparts to follow a tarmac path that ran along its top. This was a much higher surviving rampart and helped us appreciate the size and scale of these earthworks. We followed this path past a group of cottages, one of whose garden test pits had yielded some of the few Roman remains discovered in the town. The rampart then descended into a lane which we followed to what had previously been an industrial area of the town. We passed a building that used to be an iron works (opposite what was once an abattoir). The iron works were located next to the ditch, and once relied on the water carried in it. A fine weather vane featuring a plough atop this building spoke to the agricultural nature of the products of the Wallingford iron works.

The ditch was then channelled under a road and under a now-converted mill building. We followed a lane that led us to view a survivor of Wallingford's malting industry, now partly restored to provide private residences (with a fine Tudor house behind that we could only catch glimpses of due to a thick laurel hedge). This brought us down to St Leonard's Wharf, where material for both the malting and iron founding industry would have been loaded and unloaded, and our first glimpse of the Thames.

Cutting back towards the town, we stopped to appreciate the Anglo-Saxon stonework on St Lucian's church. We passed the site where St Michael's once stood and looked into the now redundant church, St Peter's. The original church had been destroyed during the civil war, and what stands now is an eighteenth-century replacement.

From here it was a short step on to bridge, and a glimpse of where the main gate to the castle had once been. It was then an even shorter step into the town centre where the group

dispersed to find lunch. Throughout our morning walk our guides had kept us well-informed about the archaeological investigations that had taken place, pointing out where trenches and test pits had been dug, and giving accounts of the finds in each.

The Castle Walk

The afternoon's expedition started in the Bullcroft, the large open space directly behind the museum that was the site of the priory. The site has been widely surveyed using geophysics, but the results proved hard to interpret. It seems that when the priory was demolished after its dissolution the rubble was spread across the site. This made it very hard to determine where walls and other features had been. The priory was dissolved by Wolsey in the 1520s (rather than by Cromwell in the 1530s) and he used the proceeds to found Christchurch College in Oxford. The priory supplied many Abbots of St Albans, including the renowned mathematician, astronomer, and horologist, Richard of Wallingford. Richard was the orphaned son of a blacksmith and had been taken in and educated by the priory, who sent him to Oxford.

From here our group proceeded towards the castle grounds, following a footpath taking us past the most precipitous of the remaining ramparts and ditch that we had yet encountered. We also passed the town cemetery and the site where the bodies from the Waitrose site had been reburied. We approached the castle grounds from the north. The remains of the curtain walls and moats are much reduced in height and depth, but it is easy to imagine how formidable they must once have been and why the Royalist forces had subsequently exploited these fortifications to site their gun emplacements and guard both the road and the river. It is also easy to see why Stephen found it impossible to capture the castle from Matilda and the parliamentary forces found it equally impossible in 1646. The latter event led to the destruction of the castle

in 1652, leaving just a few standing portions of wall. We had been issued with some handouts that included a plan of the castle and a photograph of the detailed model in the museum, and these proved very useful in helping us to interpret what we were looking at. We could also appreciate how the Norman builders of the castle had reused the existing Anglo-Saxon ramparts in their construction.

The later history of the castle site had it becoming the grounds to a mock-Jacobean mansion built in 1837 for John Kirby Hedges. Extensive landscaping was carried out including (in an echo of the Borsay book reviewed elsewhere in the Newsletter) a promenade along the line of the inner curtain wall to enable visitors to appreciate the splendours of the estate. Kirby Hedges was not so keen to have visitors use the right of way over what had been the cart track in the inner bailey as this would have led to all sorts of undesirables passing his front door. He diverted the route into a previous moat and built brick walls either side, creating a narrow route that was often waterlogged.

From the rough ground of the 'castle meadows' we passed into the more formal space of the 'castle gardens' (no dogs allowed!). Here we encountered the most complete standing remains of the castle, the ruins of the St Nicholas's College, which had recently been the recipient of a £36,000 grant to shore up and stabilize it (note the parallel with the works to preserve Merdon Castle, see page 28).

We were shown the site where the grand house once stood. This had been demolished in the early 1970s in preparation for the development of a number of angular concrete buildings. This development had been strongly and successfully opposed by the town. The refusal of planning was possibly the first instance of a development being blocked purely on heritage grounds. It also led to the castle grounds entering the protection of the

town and district councils. Admiring some of the specimen trees that were part of the Victorian landscaping, our tour now reached its end. We made our way back across the town to the museum for another, more informed, look at the castle model before dispersing to find our separate ways home.

Mandy de Belin



Friends descend - leaving the Castle Gardens



Friends on the Castle Meadows

In conversation with...

Professor Corinne Fowler

An interview with Professor Corinne Fowler, associate of the Centre for Regional and Local History, and next year's Hoskins Lecturer.

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

I was educated at Swanshurst Comprehensive in Birmingham, UK. My history teacher and his very animated account of the Fall of the Roman Empire definitely had an influence (he ran around spinning plates which started crashing all over the place) but I'm also conscious now of what was missing from my history education: detail about the basics of the British Empire: what was the Royal African Company? What was the East India Company? How did the transatlantic slavery system work? Where did the raw cotton come from which allowed our factory system to develop?

Did you always want to be a Historian?

Yes, though I was a secondary school teacher for some years, in Birmingham, a job I also loved.

What led you to your interest in colonial history?

One course on postcolonialism at university piqued my interest and I later discovered that the French side of my family were enslavers in Haiti and East India Company sailors.

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

The highlight was co-authoring the National Trust report on its country houses' connections to colonialism and transatlantic slavery in 2020. This was a peer-reviewed audit of published academic research from respected sources like the Legacies of British Slave-Ownership project at UCL. However, the low point was finding myself in the middle of a news story and receiving hate mail for a year, following inaccurate and inflammatory newspaper opinion pieces. The report came as a surprise to many people, but the Royal Historical Society and Museums Association stood by us, we won two awards for the report and – crucially – it was the right thing to do: before the report was published, country houses largely avoided talking about their colonial history (even when centrally relevant) because it was sensitive. It is important to tell the whole story, to acknowledge that history and to address it, not least because millions of colonized people were impacted by it as were, to a lesser extent, people who lived in rural Britain during the colonial period.

What would you ideally like to have been if not a historian?

Probably a park ranger.

Which historian do you most admire?

David Olusoga.

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

I love all of it.

Who do you most admire in other walks of life?

Martin Luther King understood that when you fight people, you only make them stronger, and that independence of mind and peaceful conduct is more powerful than hatred.

Do you have any other passions outside history?

Walking. I have just finished a book called *Our Island Stories: Country Walks Through Colonial Britain* (Penguin, 2024).



photo by Philip Sayer

Book Reviews

The Invention of the English Landscape c. 1700-1939

Peter Borsay with Rosemary Sweet (London, 2023)

Peter Borsay sadly died just as he finished this book in draft form. It was down to the heroic efforts of Roey Sweet from the Centre of Urban History that the work came to fruition and was published in August of this year.

In common with the two Hoskins Day papers, the starting point for this book is the work of W G Hoskins, in this case *The Making of the English Landscape*. While Hoskins viewed the landscape as an historical record in its own right, this work is concerned

with the ‘invention’ of the landscape; how it became a commodity to be consumed. The ‘making’ is spread over thousands of years, but the ‘invention’ largely occurred within the last two and a half centuries. In 1700 the landscape as a subject of ‘the tourist gaze’ barely existed, but by 1939 it had become a recreational space the enjoyment of which was an established feature of the life of all classes. The book concentrates on a specific area to make this argument, being largely concerned with a

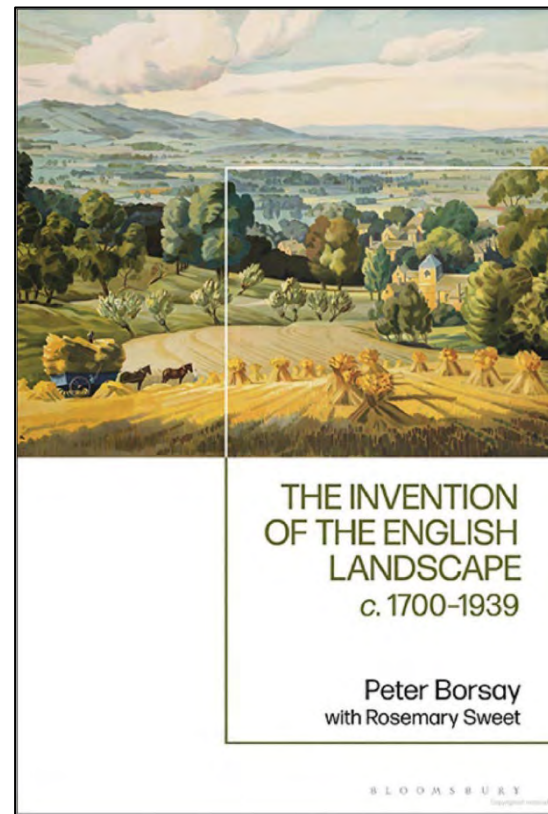
triangle of England delimited by London, Ludlow, and Lyme Regis.

Underpinning this transformation, this work argues, were major shifts in the economic and geographical environment. Rapid and heavy industrialization and urbanization, rising income, and accelerating cultural changes added together to turn the landscape into a marketable recreational product. These developments have their origins in the three great movements of the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism. This was not a simple progression, there were many contradictory and oppositional forces at work within these movements.

Borsay's narrative starts with the Early Modern period. This is characterized as an 'age of adventure', which inevitably affected attitudes. It was to the period that the beginning of the 'invention' of the landscape is traced, albeit it mainly concerning society's elite at this stage. The era that saw the beginning of the 'Grand Tour' of Europe also saw the beginning of the exploration of England for education and pleasure, as recorded in private diaries and in the works of authors such as Celia Fiennes and Daniel Defoe. It was also the period that saw a major re-evaluation of the relationship of man with nature, seeing the emergence of the studies of geology and geography, and the classification of flora and fauna, very largely by amateur observers. The long eighteenth century saw the injection of a more systematic approach.

The growing cultural interest in the landscape of Britain was underpinned by fundamental economic and social processes, which gathered pace between the sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Particular landscapes were, of course, always known to the people who lived and worked there, but they came to be an object of interest to a much wider group. There were tensions within these changes. If the Enlightenment tended to emphasise productive landscape and the way it could be improved, then Romanticism elevated nature

itself to a new level of significance and valued the more wild and frightening. Succeeding these movements were 'Victorianism' and 'Edwardianism', which Borsay describes as a 'temporal amalgam' of intellectual and aesthetic movements. This is the period when scientific exploration began to fundamentally change the perception of nature and landscape, as even the estimate of the age of the world itself came to be revised.



Throughout this time images of the landscape were produced on an ever-increasing scale, with landscape painting no longer viewed as an inferior form of art. Added to visual depictions was the written word, whether part of a popular, scholarly, or literary text. The accelerating production of the printing presses brought works that not only identified places to visit, but illustrated and valorised them. This book is particularly effective in tracing the development of the Guidebook in its many forms. These appeared increasingly from the late eighteenth century (although they were primarily concerned with transmitting knowledge rather than creating it). The 1840s saw the arrival of photography, which was to

have an increasing illustrative role. Maps also appeared in printed form and had significance both in what was shown and how it was represented. Maps of destinations such as London and Bath were produced that were explicitly aimed at tourists.

Borsay categorizes the landscape itself as being 'grey space', 'green space', or 'blue space'. The landscape under consideration is by no means confined to the rural, and the urban 'grey space' has a central role in this account. Early tourism tended to be centred on towns, especially spas and seaside resorts, and towns were regarded as the centres of the civilization. The image of London as the 'wonder city of the modern age' was strengthened in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. Medieval cathedral towns and historic county towns were later joined by undiscovered county towns as places that were recommended to visit. It was even the case that industrial plant in the large manufacturing cities could be seen as interesting places to visit.

The green space – the countryside – always had its share of mines, quarries, and even manufacturing, so its identity as a purely rural space was always in some ways an imagined one. As the period under examination progressed, however, there was some reversal of the position of town and country, with the natural environment beginning to be seen in some ways as more civilized than the town. This could be due in part to the increasing urbanization of the population and their consequent desire to experience something different in their leisure time.

Blue space was closely integrated with green space in the form of rivers and streams, but also needs to be considered itself as a force of nature. The great or picturesque rivers, the Thames, the Wye, the Severn, and the Avon were attractions in their own right, as were other watery features such as the Lake District, the Norfolk Broads, or the Somerset Levels. The therapeutic nature of water also came to

the fore, and Britain pioneered the notion of the seaside resort.

Borsay identifies three phases of change in the development of leisure. From the late seventeenth century, the 'commercialization of leisure' saw the placing of what had hitherto high-status pastimes into the marketplace. The late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century saw the acceleration of this process, with what was considered to be the 'old' and the 'natural' playing an increasingly important role. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the impact of large-scale industrialization and urbanization led to a quantitative and qualitative change in the nature of leisure for the generality of the population. Underpinning all three phases was the redistribution of wealth. With this, the development of domestic tourism would have been impossible.

The transport revolution was another important actor in the invention of the landscape. In the early days of the process, the horse was still the primary mode of transport. But this was undergoing something of a revolution with the invention of steel coach springs and the expansion of coaching routes around the country. These developments were themselves enhanced by the appearance of the Turnpike Trusts and the subsequent improvements to the quality of the roads. But more than anything else it was the establishment and the expansion of the railways that played the primary role in opening up recreational access to the natural and human landscape. The railways did not create tourism, but they accelerated it, and the progress was marked by the production of specialised railway guidebooks.

The roads, however, were never going to be totally eclipsed, and eventually the innovations of the bicycle and the motor vehicle (including buses and charabancs) would lead to its re-ascendancy. In the 1920s the small family car became available and was to increasingly lead to the democratization of private transport. The car opened up backwaters of English

countryside and led to the restoration of the fortunes of country towns that had previously been bypassed by the railways. The car itself would gain its own distinctive, and voluminous, guide literature.

Walking was a form of travel that had its own distinct history. The rise of walking for pleasure has been date to the Romantic era, but people had always walked, and formal walkways had been established in towns some time before. These were primarily aimed at giving opportunities for socialising and display, but

they also gave the chance to observe and appreciate the adjacent countryside.

This book contains much more material than has been summarized here, including an account of the development of attitudes to landscape after the second world war in the conclusion. It is thought provoking for any student of landscape history. For more critique of the work, see the account of the symposium held in Leicester to launch the book on page 39.

Mandy de Belin

A Rural Railway and its Neighbours: The Midland Railway – Nottingham to Newark Line

Jeremy Lodge, (www.nottinghambooks.co.uk, 2023)

The first volume in this pair, covering the railway between Newark and Lincoln, was reviewed in last year's Newsletter. In this companion work, the line between Nottingham and Newark is the subject.

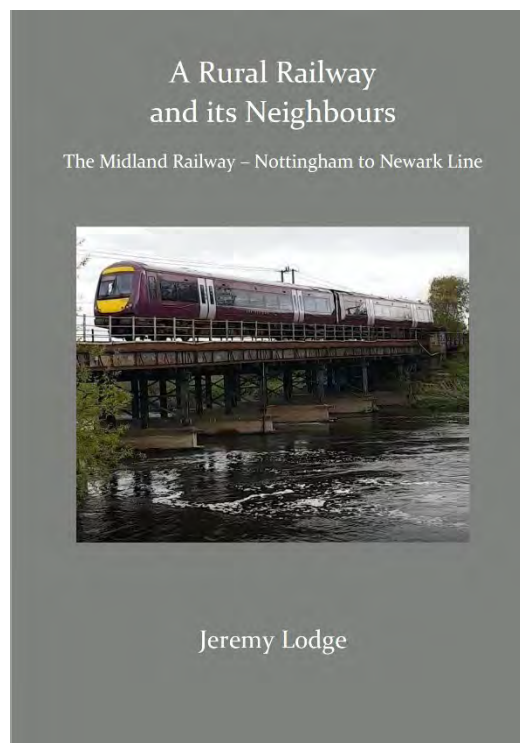
Nottingham first entered the railway age in 1839, with the opening of the line from Derby. The opening of a new line connecting Nottingham to Lincoln in 1846 saved the station from being a terminus. These were the two earliest railways in Nottinghamshire, but were soon to be joined by other lines.

The 33-mile route between Nottingham and Newark was fairly level, which promised easy and quick construction. The line was in fact opened before all the stations were built, and 'made do' with cheap and fast wooden bridges for

various crossings on the way. Even so there were delays in the construction, due to natural events such as flooding, and less natural ones such as sub-contractors absconding with payments and leaving behind uncompleted works and unpaid labourers.

The book reveals a surprising motive behind the building of the line: the desire to block the route of the Great North Railway's line to London. The attempt failed and what was to become the East Coast Main Line crossed the Nottingham to Lincoln line in Newark. There were other, probably more sound, reasons for building the line, though. Lincoln had corn, flour, and malt that required transport, and Newark itself was the centre for some industry.

The railway was also intended to serve the rural agriculture that lay between the urban



centres. Having achieved the agreement of parliament to the building of the line, two contracts were put up for tender (reflecting the two sections of the line that are the subjects of the two separate volumes, Nottingham to Newark and Newark to Lincoln). The line was opened on the 7th July 1846, amid scenes of much celebration.

Much of the book follows the journey from Nottingham to Newark as if on a train, identifying points of interest along the way. Some of these are the landscape, some the local industries, some the infrastructure of the railway itself. As with the previous volume, there are accounts of the many accidents that befell both railway staff and members of the public. Some were caused by poor maintenance, some by inattention, some by drunkenness. More than one was caused by people crossing the line, changing their mind, and being mown down by an engine as they turned around. There is a contrast between the way the Midland Railway cut corners, often adding to the cause of accidents, and the way in which they found alternative employment on the railway for their injured employees. The very many level crossings on that stretch of the line were sometimes manned by such survivors, or alternatively by the wives of other employees. A recurring theme is the multitude of delightful buildings provided for the crossing keepers and the way many have survived to this day.

Among the sights highlighted by the author when the train leaves Nottingham and heads out over what was then open countryside is Gedling Hall. By coincidence this is now a Buddhist Meditation Centre in the same tradition as Thornby Hall described elsewhere in this newsletter. In another piece of Newsletter synchronicity, this time with the preceding book review of the Borsay work, the book reproduces a 1926 recommendation for consuming this part of the Nottinghamshire countryside. The 'leafy lanes and rustic by-paths' could be accessed on 'leaving the train at Lowdham station'.

Other places to note include the large gravel works. The railway was laid largely in the Trent valley, and the geological development of the river deposited large amounts of gravel and sand. This was subsequently quarried using drag lines. The remains of several mammoths were unearthed in the pursuit of this industry, which gave rise to the logo of the company. The Hoveringham Gravel Company no longer exists, but has bequeathed a splendid mammoth sculpture, which was first located at Nottingham Trent University, but has now been relocated and can be viewed from the train when approaching Thurgarton station.

The line passed to the south of Southwell, close to Southwell Racecourse (then Rolleston racecourse). There was a line leading off to Southwell itself, operated by an engine that pulled in one direction and pushed in the other. A 'horse dock' was installed at nearby Rolleston station to facilitate the transportation of horses. I myself have ridden a horse across the line and back through some of the many level crossings when participating in a long-distance ride event run from Southwell racecourse. Luckily, I hadn't read about a nasty accident that killed a horse and rider at a crossing in 1957 when I had to ride across!

Another notable site previously serviced by this line was Staythorpe Power Station on the approach to Newark. Originally a coal-fired station it was a feature of 'megawatt valley' – a concentration of power stations served by railways connecting to the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire coalfields, and the river Trent to provide water for the cooling towers. The Staythorpe 'A' and 'B' coal-fired stations have now been replaced by gas-fired Staythorpe 'C', no longer relying on the railway to bring in its fuel. The line now crosses the Trent floodplain on a raised track before arriving in Newark-on-Trent, and marking the end of this particular book-based journey.

Mandy de Belin



2023 AGM

Minutes of last year's AGM and Treasurer's Report in advance of this year's AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Friends, held on Monday 14 November 2022 at 19:00pm by Zoom

1. Present:

Michael Gilbert, Mary Bryceland, Robert Mee, Karen Donegani, Mandy de Belin, Andrew Wager, John Goodacre, Sylvia Pinches, Freda Raphael, Ann Schmidt, John Parker, Phillip Ramsey, Deirdre Higgins, Elaine Brown, Yvonne Cresswell, Angela Muir, Keith Snell, Bill King, Pam Fisher, Ann Stones, John Brand, Graham Jones, Carole Perkin, Chris Dyer, Trixie Gadd, Heather Flack, Ralph Weedon, Phil Batman.

2. Apologies for absence:

Dorothy Halfhide, Delia Richards, Deborah Hayter, Dean Kidd, Celia Cotton, Ann Coyne, Margaret Hawkins, Sarah Cooley.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 16 November 2021:

The minutes were agreed without dissent.

4. Matters arising

None.

5. Chairman's Report

This had been circulated and a copy is attached. There had been a small increase in membership. Zoom talks had been well-received. In-person events resumed with Hoskins Day and a visit to Burnley. The committee will organise more events and online talks. An appeal was made for speakers from the Friends or their contacts.

6. Treasurer's Report, with the Annual Accounts and the Independent Examiner's Report

The Treasurer's report had been circulated and Karen Donegani reported that the draft accounts were available on the Friends' website. The financial position is strong with assets up 4.5%. The biggest increases were due to the receipt of 4 years' worth of Gift Aid, and an increase in subscribers. Membership was now back to pre-pandemic levels. Hoskins Day had been a substantial spend with the use of the Richard Third Centre as a "destination" venue. The Independent Examiner had been unable to send his signed report but had approved the accounts verbally.

There were no questions. Michael Gilbert thanked Karen for her work.

7. Adoption of the Treasurer's Report

Proposed by Robert Mee, seconded by Mandy de Belin. Approved without dissent.

8. Election of Officers and Committee:

The Secretary reported that the number of nominations received was such that no election was necessary. The following officers and committee members offered themselves for election and were proposed by Sylvia Pinches and seconded by Chris Dyer. The appointments were agreed without dissent.

Officer	Standing	Proposed	Seconded
Chairman	Michael Gilbert	Mary Bryceland	Karen Donegani
Secretary	Mary Bryceland	John Parker	Mandy de Belin
Treasurer	Karen Donegani	Mary Bryceland	John Parker
Membership Secretary	Karen Donegani	Mary Bryceland	Michael Gilbert
Editor of the Newsletter	Mandy de Belin	Robert Mee	Michael Gilbert
Programme Secretary	Vacant		
IT Coordinator	John Parker	Mandy de Belin	Michael Gilbert
Committee	Vacant		
Committee	Anne Coyne	Karen Donegani	Mary Bryceland
Committee	Linda Harrison	Mary Bryceland	Michael Gilbert
Committee	Jeremy Lodge	John Parker	Karen Donegani
Committee	Robert Mee	Mandy de Belin	Mary Bryceland
Committee	Andrew Wager	Robert Mee	Mandy de Belin
Student Representative	N/A		
Student Representative	N/A		
Centre Representative	N/A		

9. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Awaiting response from the current independent examiner, Paul Shipman.

10. Proposed review of constitution

Karen Donegani introduced the item saying that the Committee felt it is not the time at the moment either to change the name of the Association or to make any significant changes to the objectives. However, there is a need to align what are our current practices with our Constitution particularly in regards, for example, to electronic means of communication, and also to acknowledge the change of the Centre's name even though we are not changing our own name. So the document which has been sent out to everyone is a series of, in some ways, administrative changes which propose to align our current practice with our Constitution, then we are not in default of how we should be behaving and operating.

Karen suggested that, as the proposals had been circulated, the items should be open to questions and comments to which she would respond. Robert Mee said that all the proposed changes were sensible but that he felt that one proposal change did not meet the Friends' requirements. He spoke about his reasons for removing the approval for changes by members at an AGM. He proposed the following amendment to the suggested amendment:

5.1 The rates of membership for each category of Ordinary Member (except Student Members) shall be determined from time to time by the Committee. REMOVE and subject to the approval of the Annual General Meeting

Sylvia Pinches agreed with Robert. Karen almost felt she should abstain, but responded that there should be an opportunity for members to have an input into subscriptions whether at the AGM or through committee members. Chris Dyer asked what was the view of the Charity Commissioners, who are concerned about self-serving cliques who spend the money unwisely; a vote at the AGM was a safeguard against this. Robert responded that the Charity

Commissioners didn't disapprove, and none of the societies to which he belonged required approval at an AGM; if the committee raised subscriptions disproportionately, members could raise objections at the AGM.

Robert Mee proposed that item 5.1 should read:

The rates of membership for each category of Ordinary Member (except Student Members) shall be determined from time to time by the Committee and subject to the approval of the Annual General Meeting. The annual subscription shall be:

Individual Members £12

Joint Members £15

Group Membership £12

Subscriptions shall become due on the 1st day of October each year. The membership of Friends whose subscriptions are more than twenty-four months in arrears shall be deemed to have lapsed

The amendment, seconded by Mandy de Belin, was put to the vote and was approved.

Robert suggested that the annual Treasurer's report should include a statement that the committee had set the membership rate at a specified amount. The approval of the report would become part of the members' approval of the Treasurer's report at the AGM. The Treasurer agreed.

Vote on the proposed changes to the Constitution which had been sent out: proposed Karen Donegani, seconded John Parker: approved.

Andrew Wager reminded the committee that someone should inform the Charity Commission of the changes. Karen agreed to do this, together with the contact names.

11. Any other business

Trixie Gadd thanked the committee members for their work.

The meeting closed at 7.32 pm.

Mary Bryceland

Receipts and Payments Account for the year to 30 September 2023

Receipts and payments	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
Receipts	£UK	£UK
Subscriptions and donations	1,725.00	1,917.00
Dividends/Interest (C&C, CAF)	881.08	453.90
Gift Aid	0.00	1,177.19
Publications & 2nd hand book sale	78.30	0.00
Hoskins Day tickets	20.00	75.00
Study Day tickets	455.00	0.00
Total	<u>3,159.38</u>	<u>3,623.09</u>
Payments		
Student Support	2,149.36	568.84
Administrative Costs	348.75	290.05
Newsletter	138.16	182.82
AGM Expenses	58.91	0.00

Hoskins Day	44.14	830.22
Study Day costs	550.51	0.00
Total	3,289.83	1,871.93
Deficit/surplus (receipts less payments)	130.45	1,751.16
Excess of income over expenditure		
Opening funds at 1st October 2022	31,841.34	30,090.18
Deficit/surplus (receipts less payments)	-130.45	1,751.16
Re-valuation investment assets at cost	2,186.08	
Closing funds at 30th September 2023	33,896.97	31,841.34

Breakdown of closing funds at 30th September 2023

Bank balances	Cash	47.16	0.00
	CAF Bank - Gold (Current)Account	0.00	3,162.71
	Natwest Bank Current Account	3,259.44	5,837.96
	Cambridge & Counties savings account	19,945.34	14,381.72
	Sub-total	23,251.94	23,382.39
Investments	Investment Assets at cost:		
	IFSL CAF UK Equity Fund B Income	4,278.61	4,278.61
	IFSL CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income	4,180.34	4,180.34
	Sub-total	8,458.95	8,458.95
	Increase in value at switch, less fees:	2,186.08	
	IFSL CAF ESG Income and Growth Fund	10,645.03	
Total funds (Bank balances plus investment assets at cost)		33,896.97	31,841.34
Closing assets at 30th September			
	Bank balances	23,251.94	23,382.39
	Market value of investments:		
	IFSL CAF UK Equity Fund B Income		6,313.52
	IFSL CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income		4,758.06
	IFSL CAF ESG Income and Growth Fund	10,326.00	
	Total	33,577.94	34,453.97

Karen Doneganí

We look forward to seeing you at the 2023 AGM, Tuesday Nov 21st, 7 pm on zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84989759733> (passcode 559016)

Friends of the Centre for English Local History

(Registered Charity no. 1073528)



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