

THOROTON



NUMBER 2

DECEMBER 1992

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.

I think Council owes the membership an apology - for not charging you enough ! This is the conclusion to be drawn, surprising though it may seem, from figures produced by Geoffrey Oldfield at the last meeting of Council. Geoffrey's figures showed quite conclusively that in the mid-1980s Council was too slow to respond to inflation. The subs increase from £6.25 to £7.50 in 1984 was not sufficient to meet our real outgoings, and then keeping the figure at £7.50 until 1987 merely ensured that the Society ran increasingly at a loss.

Faced with these unpalatable facts, and concerned that too great an increase in subs would lead to the members voting with their feet, the evil hour was again postponed when subs were raised to £8.50 in 1988. Eventually of course, time and inflation caught up, subscriptions were increased to £12 in 1991, and will go up to £16 from 1st January 1993. Meantime our overspend in 1991 was nearly £4,000.

This position cannot continue, which is why, in addition to raising the subs, Council has looked at various ways of cutting our costs. These include putting Transactions out to tender, considering a less elaborate and therefore less costly Annual Report, and a whole series of other matters. We hope in this way that £16 will prove a realistic figure enabling us to continue to provide the services members require.

The lesson of this excursion into the financial history of the society is obvious. For too long we have lived beyond our means, thus reducing our investment income. We should have raised the subs more rapidly in the mid-1980s, and thus avoided what has, give or take 50 pence, been a doubling since 1990.

It is a lesson we must not repeat if the Society's health is to be maintained, but if you do resent yet another rise in your subscription on 1st January, please accept Council's apologies for not raising them earlier. Meantime have a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year, and remember that even at £16, membership of the Thoroton Society is still cheaper than an away day in London !

John Beckett.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - THE HONORARY TREASURER.

Mr. Martin Pell FCA, who has filled this position for a number of years and has had the difficult task of bringing home to members the realities of our financial position, has resigned. Until the Annual General Meeting in April all the financial affairs of the Society will be the responsibility of the Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Keith Goodman BA, FCA, to whom all enquiries should be addressed.

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It has for some time been Council's policy to hold the Annual General Meeting in various places in the county; the 1993 meeting will be held in Tuxford Memorial Hall to be followed by tea. It is then planned to visit East Markham Church and the Newcastle Mausoleum at Milton with its beautiful memorial to the wife of the 4th Duke, as well as West Markham Church which the mausoleum replaced, for a short period, as the parish church. This is an area which has not been visited by the Society for a long time - make a note of the date, Saturday, 24th April, 1993.

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This issue of the Thoroton Newsletter includes accounts of last season's excursions, which in previous years have appeared in the Annual Report.

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Society or its Council - or its Editor ! Suitable contributions or comments will both be welcome - write to Neville Hoskins, 12 Forest Road East, Nottingham NG1 4RH.

THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
THE COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1992 EXCURSIONS.

DONINGTON-LE-HEATH MANOR HOUSE, AND STAUNTON HAROLD CHURCH AND HALL, LEICESTERSHIRE, - Saturday, 9th May 1992.

Over forty members and guests braved an exceptionally wet day to travel to north-east Leicestershire to visit three very contrasting, yet fascinating historic buildings.

At Donington-le-Heath we were met by leader Steph Mastoris and taken to visit the Manor House, a late 13th Century domestic building remodelled in the 17th Century. After a warming bowl of home-made soup, Dr. David Smith, a leading expert in vernacular architecture in Leicestershire, outlined the history of the building and then proceeded to give a fascinating tour around the inside, pointing out the structural development and suggesting alternative uses for the various rooms.

With the weather now abating we decamped to Staunton Harold, right on the edge of the county border with Derbyshire, where we visited, first, the church. Here we were welcomed by Elizabeth Adamson of The National Trust who sketched in the origins of the present church as a commission by the Royalist, Sir Robert Shirley, in 1663. After a thorough exploration of the church, John Fox introduced a history of the estate and Staunton Harold Hall itself in preparation for his tour of the building, which included many rooms not normally available for public inspection. The Hall is now a nursing home run by the Sue Ryder Foundation.

The visit to Staunton Harold ended with afternoon tea in the cafeteria and the very welcome appearance of blue sky and sun to accompany our return to Nottingham.

TICKHILL CASTLE, ROCHE ABBEY and CONISBOROUGH CASTLE - Saturday, 13th June, 1992

A full day meant an early start for the June excursion, led by Nancy Mulholland and Margaret Walton. After a welcome coffee stop at Oldcotes we were met at Tickhill Castle by the new owner Barry Moss; with him and our guide Dr. Philip Dixon we were able to see the substantial progress made in the renovation of this impressive ruin. Originally an 11th Century motte and bailey, part of Richard de Bully's estates, it was fortified in 1102 and the stone walls added in 1130. The view of castle and town from the top was well worthwhile, for those who were able to make the climb !

Richard de Bully also founded the 12th Century Cistercian monastery, Roche Abbey, which was our next call. The substantial ruins, in the care of English Heritage, are set in a beautiful valley which made a pleasant spot for lunch.

English Heritage are also responsible for the upkeep of Conisborough Castle, a spectacular ruin on a commanding site overlooking the River Don, and for the recent purpose-built interpretive centre, of a type which is adding greatly to the understanding and appreciation of such places. Philip Dixon again led us round the site and talked about its history and his theories on the architecture of the keep (much to the fascination of the custodians !)

Tea at Spinkey's Restaurant in Conisborough rounded off a most enjoyable day.

S I T U A T I O N S V A C A N T !

Dr. Maurice Caplan who has for many years been the Society's Honorary Lecture Secretary has indicated his wish to retire from that position. Council is, therefore, seeking a successor and will be circulating a 'job description' soon. Briefly, the duties involve contacting potential lecturers, making arrangements for and supervising lecture meetings. The Honorary Secretary, the Rev. Patrick Rowley, would be pleased to hear from anyone who may be interested, without obligation.

Council, aware of the interest in the bookstall at meetings and its potential as a fund raiser, is considering appointing a bookstall manager who would actively liaise with authors and publishers and oversee the purchasing and sale of publications. Please contact the Honorary Secretary, the Rev. Patrick Rowley if you think this is where you could help.

DONCASTER MANSION HOUSE AND HICKLETON CHURCH - Thursday, 30th July, 1992.

Although not planned as such, this excursion led by Geoffrey Oldfield, turned out to be a James Paine Day. Our first call was to Doncaster where we visited the splendid Mansion House designed by Paine and officially opened in 1749. We were welcomed by the Mayor of Doncaster and shown round the house by enthusiastic guides. One of only three Mansion Houses in England (London and York being the others) Doncaster's was built as an official residence for the Mayor where he could entertain fashionable visitors to the town.

We moved on to Hickleton where an excellent tea was provided by one of our members, Mrs. Gwen Turland, at her home in the grounds of Hickleton Hall. She and her husband placed their house and gardens at our disposal, tea was served in a stone barn which was previously the estate workshop. We were welcomed into St. Wilfrid's Church by the Vicar who spoke to us about its history. Members were also able to look at the village and at Hickleton Hall itself which is believed to be the work of James Paine and certainly the style is consistent with this. It was built for the Wentworth family and later became the home of successive Viscounts and Earls Halifax. It is now used as a Sue Ryder Home.

On the journey home we made a brief detour to see one of Nottinghamshire's James Paine houses, Serlby Hall. Formerly the home of the Viscount Galway it is at present undergoing renovation.

ROCK CEMETERY, CATACOMB CAVES AND TOLLERTON HALL - 12th September, 1992

Sixty members of the Society met at the gates of Church Rock Cemetery, Nottingham for an excursion led by Chris and Hazel Salisbury. The Victorian cemetery, including an area set aside for pauper graves, was examined and Mr Alan MacCormick led the members through the catacomb caves, opened specially by the Leisure Services Department of Nottingham City Council. We saw, by candle light, the five passages radiating like the spokes of a wheel, which were excavated by the Nottingham Cemetery Company in the 1830s. Although some interment chambers had been hewn, they were never used for burial.

The party then moved on to the Salutation Inn in Nottingham, where Simon Heald, a recent graduate of Nottingham University explained his work on the history of the building, culminating in the dating of its earliest roof to AD 1432. The portion of the roof immediately above the startling decor of the Bikers' Bar provoked considerable interest. A buffet lunch was taken in the lowest floor of a two storey complex of mediaeval caves which lies below the inn, and is entered by many worn and winding steps cut into the sandstone.

Our next call was Tollerton where Mr M T Weston of G & J E Bankart Ltd kindly gave us the freedom of Tollerton Hall. Although the Hall probably incorporates Philip Pendock's house of sixteen chimneys, built in the later 17th century, most of what is visible today is the work of two eccentrics, Pendock Neale (later Barry) and his son Barry Barry, who embellished and gothicised both hall and church in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Having inspected Tollerton church, we made our final call at Normanton on the Wolds, where members followed a footpath with five stiles to a mediaeval mill dam built across the valley of the river Torr to the north of the village. This together with the excellently preserved rig and furrow of the former open fields stretching away from the stream, is a remarkable survival of mediaeval landscape. Tea was taken at the Plough Inn at Normanton.

A member has ten volumes of the Transactions for sale, are you interested in increasing your own collection? Volumes 1962 - 66 inclusive: £10 o.n.o. Volumes 1967 - 71 inclusive: £10 o.n.o. One third proceeds to the Society. Please contact Miss Anne Fewkes on 609786.

THE KEITH TRAIN MEMORIAL LECTURE.
Friday, 23rd October, 1992.

Members who came to hear the lecture on 'Antiquity's Most Resolute Friend : John Carter and the Gothic Revival' by Professor J. Mordant Crook may have had as little idea beforehand as the present writer as to just who John Carter was, or how he earned his title. I am sure all left the hall with a vivid picture of this extraordinary man, of his superb architectural drawings and engravings (his buildings were rare and not too impressive, he was a designer and draughtsman, not a real architect) and of his importance in the history of the English Gothic revival. He was the vital link between the fantasies of Horace Walpole and his circle and the seriousness of A. W. Pugin and his successors. He was also peculiarly eccentric, writing endless polemics, mainly in 'The Gentleman's Magazine', supporting the English Gothic style. His most intense dislike was for the classical style, and, above all he hated the 'restorers and improvers' of his beloved Gothic. Among his arch-enemies (in his estimation) were the Dean of Westminster, who aided and abetted the 'improver' the architect James Wyatt (another foe), and 'I. Jones' among whose crimes was to have put a classical portico on Old St. Pauls. Carter may at times have seemed a faintly comic figure but his wonderful drawings in the British Museum for his abortive publication 'The Ancient Architecture of England' show that he was truly worthy of respect. His life, work and character were all portrayed with humour and great scholarship in an extremely enlightening lecture. R.T.C.

ANNUAL LUNCHEON.

The Great Hall at Southwell Minster, with its heraldic windows and portait-hung walls was again the venue for the Society's Annual Luncheon on 24th October. Many members arrived in ample time, enabling them to chat with friends they perhaps only see on excursions or across a lecture hall. The luncheon consisted of an attractive selection of salmon, cold meats and well presented salads, followed by a choice of sweets and coffee.

Professor John Beckett, Chairman of Council, proposed the loyal toast, followed by Philip Lyth, whose toast of 'The Thoroton Society' was responded to by the President, Miles Thoroton Hildyard.

The principal guests were Mr. & Mrs Richard Craven-Smith-Milnes of Winkburn hall, and Mr. Smith Milnes spoke feelingly and with humour of the history of the house, his family's association with it and some of the pleasures and problems which he and his wife had encountered during the restoration, which is still in progress.

Southwell has proved to be a popular venue, with attendance equal to the capacity of the hall; next year's event will be in the same historic surroundings, with Mrs. Victoria Jarvis of Doddington Hall, near Lincoln, as principal guest and speaker.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES : MOVE UPDATE

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The new Nottinghamshire Archives building is in the final stages of completion, though a large amount of move preparation work remains to be done over the next few months. In order to undertake this work the archive collections are closed until the 31st January, 1993, though the microfiche and microfilm services will remain open, these include all pre-1900 parish registers, all electoral registers, some wills and some other archives sources. Throughout the whole of February the office will be completely closed, though readers can consult copies of the pre-1900 parish registers at the Local Studies Library, Angel Row, Nottingham. The Archives will re-open to the public on the 1st March, 1993 in the new premises on Castle Meadow Road (just off Wilford Street) near Brewhouse Yard Museum. It is hoped to arrange a number of guided tours of the new building in due course. C.W.

THE NEXT RECORD SECTION VOLUME is ready for the press. However, the cost of having it professionally prepared ready for the printer is prohibitive. Is there a member with access to an IBM-compatible word processor who would be willing to do the typing in return for due acknowledgement and a modest honorarium? If so, speak to Adrian Henstock please.

* * Nottingham :504524

Some members have responded to the note requesting photographs of the Society's activities, but it is hoped that more can be produced, especially those showing people. Penny Messenger will always be pleased to receive archive material of this nature.

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THE WINTER LECTURES WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE MAIN HALL OF THE Y.M.C.A., SHAKESPEARE STREET, NOTTINGHAM AT 3.00 p.m.

Saturday, 8th January, 1993
UNLOCKING THE PAST AT NEWARK CASTLE
by Dr. John Samuels, B.A., M.I.F.A.

Chairman: H. V. Radcliffe M.L.A.

Over the past ten years excavations and surveys at Newark Castle have begun to increase our knowledge about this important yet little known monument. Last year an integrated programme of survey, excavation and research began, organised by the Newark Castle Trust. The initial results have been very impressive and within a few years much more of the castle's story will have been unravelled. This illustrated lecture will examine the background to the Trust's programme, its long-term aims and the conclusions already reached after the first year's activities.

John Samuels is a member of Council and a professional archaeologist who has been involved in surveys and excavations of all periods throughout Britain and in Norway and France. However, for the past twelve years he has lived in Newark and, not surprisingly, became very interested in the history and archaeology of this fascinating market town. He is Chairman of the Newark Castle Trust and with Dr. Philip Dixon was the joint director of last year's excavations.

Saturday, 13th February, 1993
THE NORA WITHAM MEMORIAL LECTURE
STAUNTON HAROLD AND THE FERRERS FAMILY.
by Mr. John Fox M.A. (Cantab).

Chairman: Geoffrey Oldfield M.A.

Pevsner wrote "For position Staunton Harold, the house and the chapel are unsurpassed in the county - certainly as far as Englishness is concerned". The house has seen many changes, having been a family home for centuries it became one of the first Cheshire Homes before taking on its present role as a Sue Ryder hospice. The chapel is unique, the only complete survival of a Church built during the Commonwealth period.

Members of the Shirley/Ferrers family fought at Agincourt and in the Civil War, were involved in the Mary Queen of Scots saga, and have contributed to the development of the East Midlands as well as to the history of criminal justice in England.

John Fox, another Member of Council, taught history in Nigeria and England before becoming an education administrator and then Chief Education Officer for Nottinghamshire. Since his retirement he has become involved in family and local history and is Secretary of Churches Together in Nottinghamshire.

Saturday, 13th March, 1993.
The FIRST MAURICE BARLEY MEMORIAL LECTURE.
ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ENGLISH BUILDING TRADITION.
by Dr. Peter Addyman.

Chairman: Dr. Philip Dixon.

Maurice Barley devoted much of his academic life to the study of English Vernacular building. Towards the end he was delighted to see answers emerging to some of the most intractable problems he had encountered. Archaeological dating techniques, particularly dendrochronology, had begun to show which were England's earliest surviving buildings. The spate of excavations in the 1970's and 1980's in Anglo-Saxon and mediaeval towns provided a huge corpus of well-dated ground plans giving regional sequences of building types from the 5th Century onwards. In this lecture Peter Addyman places the evidence from standing buildings against that from the excavations, and attempts the kind of reconciliation that Barley himself would have been supremely well equipped to achieve.

Peter Addyman, is Director of the York Archaeological Trust and President of the Council for British Archaeology. After 10 years as a lecturer in archaeology at the Universities of Belfast and Southampton he set up the York Archaeological Trust under Maurice Barley's Chairmanship in 1972. Twenty years of fruitful co-operation ensued in which, amongst other things, some 150 excavations were carried out in York, the award winning Jorvik Viking Centre and the ARC (Archaeological Resource Centre) were created, and Barley Hall, a 14th century hospice and 15th century hall, now a memorial to Maurice Barley, was restored for use for a living history display.

A PROFILE OF THE HONORARY SECRETARY

The Rev. Patrick Rowley, who took over as Honorary Secretary following the A.G.M. in April 1992, was born in East Yorkshire and educated at Beverley Grammar School and Pocklington School. He graduated in Agriculture at Newcastle in 1952 and subsequently worked with the then Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) Government on soil conservation. While in Central Africa he saw the missionary work of the Church at first hand and offered himself for ordination, returning to Mirfield Theological College in 1955. He was ordained at York in 1957, and served two curacies in York Diocese. He was sent to Sarawak (Borneo) with Christian Aid to work on agricultural development.

On returning to England he was appointed Vicar of Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk in 1965, and during the next 9 years he was privileged to rub shoulders with the Ampleforth Benedictines, and accompanied the then Abbot, Basil Hume, to Rome in 1970 for the Canonization of the Forty English and Welsh martyrs. It was while at Ampleforth that he realised the historical value of the Oswaldkirk Parish Registers, starting in 1538, which he transcribed and subsequently edited for the Yorkshire Archaeological Society in 1970. From this developed a deep interest in local history.

After ten years of Chaplaincy work in the Diocese of Sheffield he and his wife, Valerie, moved to Nottinghamshire when Patrick was appointed priest in charge of Elkesly and Bothamsall. On retirement from full-time ministry in 1991 they moved to Tuxford, and Patrick realised that almost by chance he had returned to that part of Nottinghamshire where his paternal grandmother worked as school-mistress at Babworth.

He resigned as a member of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, and instead joined the Thoroton Society. Patrick and Valerie have two married sons and three grandchildren.

Another recent addition to Council was Dr. Philip Dixon, M.A. (Oxon) Lit. Hum., D.Phil (Oxon), currently head of the Archaeology section of the Department of Classical Studies at Nottingham University. A historian by training, he has been excavating archaeological sites since 1964, for the past twenty-five years working at Crickley Hill, and was, with Dr. Samuels, joint director of the recent excavations at Newark Castle. In 1981 he became General Secretary of the Council for British Archaeology. Philip will be well known to members of the Thoroton Society for excursions he has led with Nancy Mulholland.

- and KEITH GOODMAN, THE ASSISTANT TREASURER, WRITES HIS OWN PROFILE -

I was born in 1936 in Stapleford just a few yards inside the county boundary, spent my formative years there and at the age of 11, on the whim of a local education authority, was shipped into Derbyshire to attend Long Eaton Grammar School where one of the good things that happened to me was that I met my wife Margaret.

After school it was back into the county again to do a degree in Industrial Economics at Nottingham University (when it was still in the middle of green fields) followed by three years as an articled clerk in Nottingham, eventually qualifying as a chartered accountant in 1961.

The next 10 years were spent in India working for the Church of South India in financial administration. This was a time of tremendous interest, in a fascinating area of the world. Then it was back to the U.K. into practice, eventually ending up in the Nottingham Office of Kidsons Impey.

It was while I was at university that I began to write the definitive history of Stapleford. However, everyone needs an unfulfilled ambition! The red and gold editions of the Transactions of the Thoroton Society were absorbing with their curious mix of scholarship and trivia, the latter often more interesting than the former. I little thought that I would be coming into contact with the Society some 35 years later, when I happened to walk past the computer running the Society's membership data base, and was called in to resue it. Until I met Neville Hoskins I had not realised that the Society was for ordinary people. Anyone who knows Neville will quite understand how quickly one can jump from casual contact with the Society to becoming its Assistant Treasurer!

I am married with two children and three grandchildren who live in Truro. Both Margaret and myself are actively involved with the work of the Methodist church locally and at district level. We enjoy walking and trying to convince our neighbours that the wilderness that they can sometimes see behind our house is a Site of Special Scientific Interest!



You are invited to donate, for sale on the bookstall, back numbers of magazines (on appropriate subjects), society publications and so on, or books surplus to your library.