

THOROTON NEWSLETTER



No 46: Winter 2006

THE 2006 SOCIETY LUNCHEON - BACK TO THE GREAT HALL!

This year's Luncheon, which was held on 18 November in the Great Hall of Southwell Minster, was a great success. The room, in all its medieval resplendence, was welcoming and attractive, the food was



superb and plentiful, and the company was in good form. Memories of our past President, Neville Hoskins, were recalled by the Chairman, Professor John Beckett, and by our new President, Rosalys Coope. Claire Wells gave the toast to the Thoroton Society, and in her reply the President particularly thanked Mr Adrian Henstock for his years of service as senior editor, and Mrs Barbara Cast for organizing the lunch and, more generally, for her work as the

Society's Honorary Secretary. She also remembered our late President, Neville Hoskins.

The lunch was rounded off by a talk by Professor Michael Jones, which was given to mark the 1050th anniversary of the Southwell Charter of King Eadwig - a fitting talk for this venue with past Minster worthies staring down at us from the walls.



*Guests pictured at the Annual Luncheon:
Top - Pauline and Brian Miller enjoying the ambience of the Great Hall. Since they had clearly finished the main course, and the puddings can be seen on a table behind them, full marks for restraint!*

Centre - Jim and Pauline Chettle, Peter and Ann Reddish. Peter is proudly displaying his Thoroton tie. Any members yet to acquire a tie can purchase one from the bookstall at lectures! Bottom - Ann Hoskins, Sarah Hoskins and Peter Bloomfield.

~ The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire ~
~ The County's Principal Historical Society ~
Visit the Thoroton Website at: www.thorotonsociety.org.uk

NEW RECORD SERIES VOLUME LAUNCHED



It's been a while coming, but the latest volume in the Thoroton Society's *Record Series* was launched at the Harley Gallery, Welbeck, on Friday 3 November. The book (reviewed below) is an edition of the manuscript diary of William Gould, a Derbyshire farmer who in 1780 became chief land agent to the Duke of Portland's Welbeck Abbey estate. It has been edited for publication by Michael Hanson, a direct descendant. At the launch Mr Hanson talked about

Gould and his activities, which included being a tenant farmer at Pilsbury, and spending some time as agent for the Dukes of Devonshire at Chatsworth, as well as the Welbeck connection.

On behalf of the Society, the Chairman, Professor John Beckett, thanked Mr Hanson, and his wife Ann, for their hard work on the volume; and also Adrian Henstock, the General Editor, for the effort he had necessarily had to put into preparation of the book for publication. This was not made any easier when the printers went into liquidation on the day Adrian turned up with the text for printing!

Professor Beckett presented a copy of the book to Robin Brown, William Gould's current successor as agent to the Welbeck estates [see picture above]. In the background is Adrian Henstock. Also present at the launch were Derek Adlam of the Welbeck estate, Lisa Gee, Director of the Harley Gallery who allowed us to use the Gallery, and, representing the Derbyshire Record Society which will be making the book available to its members, Dudley Fowkes and Philip Riden. Thanks were offered to Valerie Henstock and Barbara Cast for providing refreshments.

John Beckett

Thoroton Society Record Series, 44 (2006)

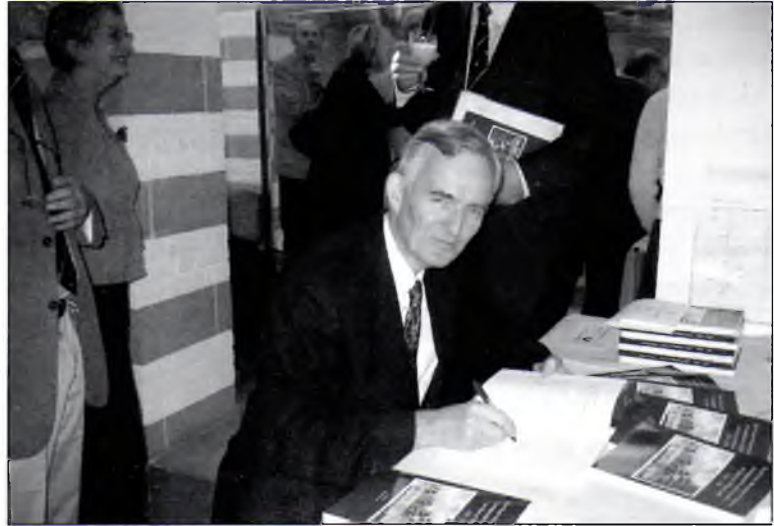
'Ducal Estate Management in Georgian Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire:

The Diary of William Gould, 1783-1788', Michael Hanson, ed.

The diarist, William Gould (pronounced 'gold') was a tenant farmer of the Duke of Devonshire in the remote hamlet of Pilsbury near Hartington, which is in the upper Dovedale area of the Peak District on the Derbyshire/Staffordshire border. Although moving to Welbeck, Gould retained the tenancy of Pilsbury, and also carried out some agency duties for the Devonshires' Chatsworth estate. Approximately two-thirds of the contents of the diary relate to Nottinghamshire affairs and the remainder to Derbyshire and Staffordshire. The editor Michael Hanson [pictured opposite] has the original diaries in his possession, and contributed an introduction and a biographical index of the people mentioned.

Most of Gould's entries describe his duties as agent at Welbeck; these included letting farms, collecting rents and planting woodlands. He refers to visits by the architect John Carr of York, and voices his evident disapproval of the extravagant proposals to extend and alter Welbeck Abbey. Such features as the estate ice house and fire engine, and the trial of a new patent washing machine are mentioned! Gould had a low opinion of the household servants at Welbeck, describing them on one occasion as 'a parcel of thieves and designing persons'! He also appears to have had an uneasy relationship with the Welbeck gardener, William Speechly, who had achieved some fame for his publications on growing trees and pineapples.

As this was the period of the agricultural and industrial revolutions, Gould gives details of the establishment of the new cotton mills on the Arkwright model, and he highlights partnership disputes over the Town and Field Mills at Mansfield. He also makes reference to the dispute over the water supply between Lord Byron and the owners of Papplewick mills, and problems with poaching by workers from the Cuckney mill. He describes the protracted negotiations over the Parliamentary enclosure of Arnold commons, and his opposition to the proposed turnpike road from Nottingham to Mansfield.



Visits to theatres in Mansfield, Nottingham and Buxton are mentioned, and he writes a detailed description of the riotous events of the county election at Nottingham in 1784. There are extensive references to his travels by horse, coach or chaise - during the years 1783-87 he describes journeys totalling nearly 10,000 miles made in all weathers, often encountering problems with Peak District roads covered in snow.

The book consists of 282 pages, including twenty illustrations and maps, and retails at £14.95. Existing subscribers to the Record Section will receive their copies by post, but the volume may be purchased by personal subscribers to the main Thoroton Society at the discount price of £11.95, or £13.50 post free (in UK) if ordered before 31 March 2007. Please send your name and address together with a cheque for £13.50 payable to 'The Thoroton Society' to Adrian Henstock, 24 Long Acre, Bingham, Nottingham, NG13 8BG; my email address is adrian@henstock1642.fsworld.co.uk

Adrian Henstock

A WEEKEND IN SWANSEA?

Many members of the Society will remember Steph Mastoris, who has lectured to the Society, led excursions, and was a long-serving member of Council. Steph left Nottingham to become Director of the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea, which opened with great ceremony last summer.

Steph has suggested that members might like an excursion to Swansea, which he would lead, and which would include a visit to the Waterfront Museum, a tour of the city's historic buildings, and possibly visits to the Dylan Thomas Centre and the Swansea Museum (established 1841). But as it is a long haul to get to Swansea, he suggests a couple of options: either a 7am start and 11pm finish from Nottingham, or a two-day event including an overnight stay in Swansea (cost about £60 per person). He would be happy to organize the

accommodation.

We could do this, but Council was anxious not to commit our hardworking Programme Secretary and his helpers to start work on such an unusual excursion without an indication of whether there would be sufficient support from members and their friends. We intend to put out a list at the December lecture for members to sign up if they would be interested in the visit.

If members cannot come to the lecture but would be happy to come to Swansea, please let either Barbara Cast or me know as soon as possible. We would probably be looking at a Saturday/Sunday weekend; but a mid-week excursion might be possible if there is sufficient support. Please email BJCast@aol.com or telephone 01636 830284, evenings only.

John Beckett

SPRING LECTURE PROGRAMME 2007

Saturday January 13: Archaeology Lecture ***The Newark Iron Age Gold Torc - Rachel Atherton and J D Hill***

Rachel Atherton is Finds Liaison Officer for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Portable Antiquities Scheme. The gold torc, which is pictured right, came to her notice soon after she started work in the county in 2004. It was examined by Dr J D Hill, Curator of the Iron Age Collections at the British Museum. Its discovery near Newark by local metal detectorist Maurice Richardson was certainly unexpected, and raises new questions about the Iron Age in the Trent Valley. This talk will describe the discovery and the torc itself, one of the finest uncovered in Britain since the 1960s. It will also ask why a torc which was probably made in Norfolk ended up near Newark.



[Illustration: The Newark Iron Age Torc; Copyright the Trustees of the British Museum]

Saturday 10 February: The Nora Witham Lecture ***Nonconformity in South Nottinghamshire - Howard Fisher***

A member of the Thoroton Council, Howard recently completed the MA in Local & Regional History at the University of Nottingham, and this talk is based on his dissertation. It will look at the nonconformists of South Nottinghamshire from 1672-1913, and will seek to set the people into a social context. The speaker's home village of Keyworth will be used as a case study and compared and contrasted with surrounding villages. The establishment of chapels, their modes of operation, the type of people who attended and how the chapels educated village children will all be examined to provide a picture of community life in the Wolds villages.



[Illustration: Interior of Keyworth Congregational church; reproduced courtesy of A P Knighton and www.picturethepast.org.uk]

Saturday 10 March: The Maurice Barley Lecture ***The Castles of Nottinghamshire: A Thematic Approach to Recent Fieldwork - James Wright***

James Wright is Archaeological & Historic Buildings Assistant at Notts County Council's Communities Department. He has been running the Nottinghamshire Castles Project since January 2004. The project has concentrated on the largely unknown minor castles of the county, and focuses on the archaeology and history of everyday life at Annesley, East Bridgford or Worksop, rather than the great political events that took place at Nottingham or Newark. James studied archaeology at the University of Nottingham and is known to the Society through his publications: *Transactions* vol 108 (2004), 'A Survey of King John's Palace, King's Clipstone, Nottinghamshire'; and vol 109 (2005), 'Update on the Castles of Nottinghamshire Project'. *[Illustration: Bothamsall Castle, Spring 2004; by James Wright]*



REPORTS ON EXCURSIONS AND LECTURES

9 September: Excursion to North Leicestershire and South Nottinghamshire Churches



A pleasant journey through the south Nottinghamshire and north Leicestershire countryside in autumnal sunshine brought us to the rather isolated Stapleford Church, situated on the estate which originated at the time of the Norman Conquest, although the church dates from only 1873. We were met by Mr John Plumb, who gave a knowledgeable introduction to the fascinating history of this fine church, with its impressive western gallery and monuments, which is now in the good care of the Churches Conservation Trust. We then visited St Mary's Church Melton Mowbray [pictured left], dating from the 13th century, which is more a mini cathedral than a parish church. Here John Plumb gave us another lively and interesting talk, and we were able to admire the fine clerestory windows and Galilee porch. After lunch Mr Robert Jones, a very knowledgeable student of St Luke's church and the village of Broughton Solney, took us on a tour beginning at the churchyard, with a view

of the former village layout, followed by a walk past unusual gravestones.

The church porch at St Luke's [pictured right] has an intriguing piece of carved stonework which defies explanation, and the church and tower contain significant remnants of Norman and medieval stonework.

A splendid Thoroton Tea was served and much enjoyed in Granby village hall, after which Mrs Brenda Preece introduced us to All Saints church with its massive tower, its 600 year old door, and its fourteen benches with their quaintly carved heads of almost mythical creatures.

Alan Langton



21 October: 'Geo-archaeology in the Trent Valley using new technology to investigate the buried past' - Keith Challis

Keith Challis, who has recently taken on the mantle of the Society's Archaeology Editor, gave an excellent and very accessible lecture on a subject that may have appeared from its title to be specialised and possibly incomprehensible to the lay-person. In fact, his presentation gave members a very clear understanding of the latest techniques, some extremely high-tech, which archaeologists use to gain a greater understanding of landscape changes and human land use.

Keith went on to explain 'airborne alternatives to muddy boots', ranging from the well-established air photography to the very sophisticated Lidar, which is used to determine deposit character and preservation, and which gives spectacular detail of buried features. He also gave a broad picture of techniques used to explore underground archaeology. Using a combination of techniques, archaeologists are able to demonstrate more and more of the rich, but largely invisible, history of the Trent Valley.

Keith [pictured right] is Remote Sensing Manager in the HP Vista Centre at Birmingham University's School of Archaeology, and coordinates the Masters Degree in landscape archaeology and geomatics. He is involved in a number of research projects relating to alluvial archaeology and remote sensing in Britain, mainly in the Trent Valley. He is also involved in projects in the Near East, and is running the ongoing survey of Laxton Castle with Sarah Speight.

Barbara Cast



Sherwood Forest Trust - A celebration of Sherwood Forest

The Sherwood Forest Trust is planning to produce a book to celebrate Sherwood Forest, and is collecting photographs and recent living memories of the forest area. The themes are the Spirit of Survival, Spirit of Fun, Spirit of Robin and Sherwood Forest at War. For further information contact the Trust at adrian.andrews@nottsc.gov.uk, or log on to their website at www.sherwoodforest.org.uk

OBITUARY: Mrs Ida Coultard 1905-2006

Members who knew Ida Coultard will be sorry to learn of her death earlier this year at the age of 100. Ida was born in 1905 into a Southwell family, which for generations had played an important role in the Nottinghamshire lace industry. She taught at schools in Southwell, Bilsthorpe and Blidworth, and at Farnsfield Church of England School for nearly thirty years.

Ida owned her own motorbike and car, at a time when very few people had cars. She travelled far and wide, from the Northern Highlands of Scotland to Lands End, and on several occasions to the continent. Once she and some friends found themselves struggling to escape from Czechoslovakia, at the time when Hitler annexed the entire frontier districts of the country. When war broke out she joined the Red Cross, and remained an active member for some years afterwards.

Ida's interests outside teaching included local and family history and archaeology. It was through her digs with the Thoroton Society that she met her husband Edward (Ted) whom she married in 1958. After her teaching career came to an end, and with Ted's support, she devoted much time to researching the history and development of Halam village, resulting in 1978 in *Halam: The Story of a Nottingham Village*.

Geoffrey Oldfield

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE REGISTER OF EVENTS

This year sees the 450th anniversary of the martyrdom of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, a son of Aslockton in Nottinghamshire.

NOT TO BE MISSED: 9 DECEMBER, AT NOTTINGHAM MECHANICS:

**Peter Gibson's lecture on
THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN STAINED GLASS'**

A concert of medieval and renaissance music for Christmas, 'Tydynges trew', will take place in Long Eaton parish church on 16 December. Music from the East Midlands will be included in the programme. Tickets cost £7. Further details from website www.Aitone.org.uk or from Thoroton's Treasurer Keith Goodman, tel 0115 9726590.

Please email contributions for Newsletter No 47 by 1 February 2007 to Janice Avery at: janaver1@yahoo.co.uk. The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Society or its Council