

THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Nottinghamshire's History and Archaeology Society



No 55: SPRING 2009

Peter Hoare - The Nora Witham Lecture 10 January 2009 - Bromley house in Context: Nottingham Subscription Library and the Library World of Nottinghamshire Before the Public Libraries Act.

Peter Hoare former Nottingham University Librarian, is an acknowledged expert on the history of libraries. He is also a member of the Board of Directors for Bromley House Library and was thus well qualified to talk on the subject for our first meeting of 2009.



Peter Hoare

Originally known as the Nottingham Subscription Library, Bromley House was created in 1815, well before the development of the public library system as we know it today and it quickly became the cultural centre for Nottingham society. However, the idea of such a library had much more humble beginnings and our speaker demonstrated the wide variety of libraries which had become established from the early 18th century onwards, illustrated with examples from all over Nottinghamshire. The earliest libraries were usually in religious establishments so it is not surprising that Southwell Minster and

the major churches should have gathered collections of books. Less well known, however, are parish libraries, often endowed by local benefactors, such as the small building in Epperstone built in 1840 and intended for use by all villagers. Smaller libraries were often to be found as book clubs in pubs or as circulating libraries in shops catering for other purposes as well. Their proprietors offered such goods as patent medicines, upholstery or varieties of tea. Jesse Boot made libraries a feature of all Boot's branches in later years.

As the industrial revolution took hold there was a growing need for better educated workers and thus artisans' libraries and mechanics institutes came into being. As the talk was being held in the new Nottingham Mechanics, slides of its earlier homes showed its development as a place for meetings as well as classes and a library. Bromley House provided a home for a more cultural level and initially offered a kind of literary and philosophical society with a library, reading room and even a billiard table for use by its subscribers. Now its anonymous frontage hides a time capsule as one steps through double doors into a different century. It is also unique in having a garden in the very heart of the city.

David Bagley

Dr. Mark Dawson, 8 November 2008 - The Nottinghamshire History Lecture

Eating and Drinking in Nottinghamshire Households, 1540-1640.

Dr. Dawson introduced the problems of studying household consumption in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Referring to earlier research in the archives of the Willoughbys of Wollaton Hall, which revealed details about the household of a gentry family, he outlined the difficulties of

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extending the study to the experience of ordinary people. Probate records were a fruitful source, but were rare during this period for the Archdeaconry of Nottingham. However, richer records from other local ecclesiastical jurisdictions (peculiars) enabled him to analyse a sample of inventories from four contrasting communities - Southwell, Misterton, Cropwell Bishop and East Drayton. Although a minority of parishioners featured in the probate records, items listed in inventories could be used to suggest both common and unusual aspects of Tudor and Stuart consumption. This was inevitably less than a full picture, as daily consumables were not generally relevant to the record, and some examples probably indicated commercial interest and referred to stock in hand.



Dr. Mark Dawson

With supporting illustrations from a variety of sources and historical studies, Dr. Dawson presented a fascinating account of the diet and domestic habits of different households in the selected communities. The theme was extended through a wealth of evidence about utensils listed incidentally in the accounts, which allowed a picture to emerge both of the goods owned by different people and the way in which households stored, cooked and consumed their meals.

Dr. Dorothy Johnson

AGM Papers

The paperwork associated with the AGM (see page 8) are not included with this issue of the Newsletter but will reach members by a separate mailing.

Emeritus Professor John Morehen - 13 December 2008: John Blow, Son of Newark: A Tercentenary Tribute



Professor John Morehen

John Blow (1648-1708) was Newark born and attended the Thomas Magnus school before moving in 1661 to be trained as a chorister at the Chapel Royal. His subsequent career was to take him into all the important musical posts in London and also Court appointments. His compositions were very highly regarded.

Professor Morehen, who was Professor of Music at Nottingham University is an specialist in Tudor and Jacobean music together with Italian renaissance organ music. His talk was unusual for The Thoroton Society because he included examples of the music which he was discussing to demonstrate his points and bring the audience to a greater understanding of Blow's abilities.

At the end of the talk the audience requested that our speaker play the entire anthem, *Symphony Anthem, I was glad*, (Psalm 122).

The speaker was able to express his love of the music and convey his enthusiasm in an excellent and enjoyable manner.

Ed: This talk was introduced by Trevor Foulds. Trevor has written a longer appreciation of the lecture which will be in the Summer issue of the Newsletter.

Contributors to this issue are:

David Bagley, John Beckett,
Barbara Cast, Terry Fry,
Robert Howard, Dr. Dorothy Johnson,
and Pauline Miller.

Other items are contributed by those Council members whose roles are covered by the items. All their contributions are much appreciated.

THE 2009 EXCURSIONS PROGRAMME

Saturday, 9 May

Boston Stump, Brant Broughton and North Muskham

Led by Alan Langton, this outing into Lincolnshire is particularly significant: we are to visit Boston Stump during the seven hundredth year of its foundation. Although the tower is its most famous feature, the inside of the church is equally spectacular, and demonstrates the wealth which wool created in the Middle Ages. After a guided tour of the church, we will have free time for lunch in Boston: climbing the tower is optional!

We journey next to Brant Broughton. The church is recorded in Domesday Survey, but none of the original building survives. What we shall see is an eighteenth century restoration which, it is said, created a 'medieval dream' out of an interior of 'poverty and squalor'.

Back in Nottinghamshire, we visit Saint Wilfrid's, North Muskham, which boasts fragments of Norman arcading, a 13th century tower and a 15th century font.

The day will end with a traditional Thoroton tea at Ossington village hall.

Wednesday, 17 June, 7 p.m.
Newark Resource Centre

Mammoth teeth, Roman remains and folding parachute bikes - if any of these take your fancy, then a trip to the Newark Resource Centre next June may be for you. They give just a taste of the very diverse range of some 60-70,000 objects of historical and archaeological interest to be found here.

The collection contains a number of Civil War objects including a nationally significant siege plan. From more recent hostilities the folding bike was used in the parachute drop on Arnhem in WW2. There are portraits of local worthies including artists, Roman lead coffins, Newark agricultural smocks among the costume collection and bottles from the local breweries. Many artefacts of everyday living in Victorian times and the early 20th century are also on display. Finally, maps as well as written and printed archive material completes the collection.

The Centre has been open to the public for the last two years and what was a storeroom is now more like an extension to Newark Museum. Tea and biscuits will be served and parking is free.

Saturday, 11 July
Woolsthorpe and Grantham (Isaac Newton)

Our leader for this excursion will be David Crook.

In the morning we shall visit Woolsthorpe Manor where Newton was born in 1642. His father was a prosperous farmer who died before Newton was born. His mother married again to a local clergyman and Newton was brought up in the Manor by his grandparents. While there we will see the exhibition that explores Newton's childhood at the Manor, the Interactive Science Discovery Centre and a descendant of the apple tree that inspired Newton to discover gravity. He attended to Dame schools in the nearby villages.

In the afternoon we visit King's School, Grantham, where Newton was a pupil from 1654 to 1660. He went on to Cambridge university in 1661 but returned to Woolsthorpe for two years from 1665 because of the plague in Cambridge. He became Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge and published his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* in 1687. In 1692 he moved to London to become Warden of the Royal Mint and later, President of the Royal Society. He never married and planned to retire to Grantham House, but became ill in old age and remained in London. He died in 1727 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Our afternoon tea will be taken at Grantham House with an opportunity to see around the house.

Thursday, 10 September
Arbury Hall, Nuneaton

This visit will be led by Penelope Messenger and Margaret Trueman.

Arbury Hall, the home of Lord and Lady Daventry, is only open to the general public on Bank Holiday weekends, but tours are available to groups like such as ourselves on Thursdays.

The hall, which is an Elizabethan mansion standing in beautiful grounds, has its origins

in a 12th century monastic building. In the 18th century the owner, Sir Roger Newdigate, redesigned the interior in the Gothic Revival style and the house is now an outstanding and beautiful example of that style.

While Arbury contains many fascinating and wonderful objects and paintings, it is very much a family home and there are many

photographs of Lord and Lady Daventry, their family and friends. In addition, the house has a very particular literary connection: George Elliott's father was the estate manager in the 19th century, so she knew the house and estate well. Arbury is described in several of her works, most notably in '*Scenes of Classical Life*'.

FOREST AND GARIBALDI

It is 50 years since Nottingham Forest won the F.A. Cup, beating Luton Town 2-1 at Wembley Stadium on 2 May 1959. That was the second time that the club had lifted the trophy, having defeated their local rivals, Derby County, 3-1 at the old Crystal Palace ground in 1898. The club was founded in 1865 and, at first, played on the Forest in Nottingham, hence the club's name. The astonishing and exciting successes of Giuseppe Garibaldi and his army of a Thousand Red Shirts in the campaign for Italian unification had captured the interest of millions, so the new team's colour was never in doubt. At first the players wore caps with red tassels as well as red shirts and were known as the 'Garibaldi Reds'.

Garibaldi had paid his third visit to Britain in 1864. He was mobbed by supporters when he landed at Southampton on 3 April, but was promptly whisked off to the Isle of Wight to stay at Brooke, the home of Charles Seely, the radical MP for Lincoln. (His son, Sir Charles Seely, was the MP for Nottingham

from 1869, benefactor of St. Paul's Church, Daybrook, Christ Church, Cinderhill and the General Hospital, Nottingham. He was the owner of Babbington Colliery and became High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire. He was buried at Brooke.) At Brooke, Garibaldi met Tennyson and his wife who fell for him, but not as hard as Mary Seely, Charles's wife, who wrote him soppy letters which might have disgraced a Victorian Mills & Boon volume.

Undoubtedly, Garibaldi had the charisma and appeal of a modern pop star. After eight days on the Isle of Wight, he travelled by train to London. There he was greeted by a massive crowd of admirers, estimated at 500,000. This was somewhat more than the 200,000 fans who lined the streets of Nottingham on 4 May 1959 to welcome home their heroes, Nottingham Forest.

As an aside, Garibaldi biscuits were introduced in 1861 by the Peek Frean Company and resembled a fruit bread, *pane dei pescatore*, which is still sold on the Ligurian coast.

Terry Fry

EDGAR FILSTRAP SIMPSON - JEWELLERY DESIGNER, 1867-1945

A local 'arts and crafts' enthusiast asks whether any Thoroton member can help his research into the life of Edgar Filstrap Simpson. Simpson was born in Basford in 1867 and was clearly a talented freelance jewellery designer whose work appears in various publications, including *Charles Horner of Halifax* by Tony Lawson and *Modern Design in Jewellery* by Edward Charles Holm. Charles Horner, who manufactured 'jewellery for the masses', marketed Simpson's work in the early 1900s when he was working in London. Specimens of his work - which was all in the Art Nouveau style and sometimes

featured fish designs - are in the museums of Birmingham and Cheltenham. There is also a silver plaque depicting Dr. Thoroton in Nottingham Castle.

Directories show that in 1861 Simpson lived in Highfield House, Derby Road, and in 1901 he worked in Parade Chambers on South Parade. By 1901 he had moved to York and during the 1920s and 1930s he took up commercial photography. During the second world war Simpson moved as a civil servant to Llandudno where he died on 7 January 1945.

If anyone has information please contact the editor who will pass it on to the enquirer.

LOCAL HISTORY EDUCATION

A meeting called by Professor John Beckett in response to a news report in the last issue of *The Nottinghamshire History* (No. 81, Autumn/Winter 2008) has resulted in members of The Thoroton Society and Nottinghamshire Local History Association joining forces to propose that Sue Clayton, a local historian, speaker and tutor from Flintham, be commissioned to look at 'The Current and Future of Local History Education and Research in Nottinghamshire', by establishing current levels and types of activity and to assess what future provision and support might look like in five to ten years time.

Those present at the meeting were mindful of how local history and heritage related activities have changed with the coming of the digital age and that there is a generation gap which needs to be addressed. The growth in Family History also means that Local History related research often takes place without any direct contact with local historians or their organisations. The Thoroton Society and NHLA committees are both being asked to contribute £1,000 to funding this very important project, which will not be formally launched until both committees have agreed.

At present, a brief, framing the aims and objectives of the project is being finalised, with the intention of actively involving local and family historians and other interested people, as well as local history and education related organisations.

Members will be kept informed as this project develops.

Ed: I am grateful to Robert Howard, who participated in the meeting, for permission to base this item on an article which he has written for publication elsewhere.

Members will recall John Beckett's item in our last Newsletter dealing with this subject.

THE PARISH OF ALL SAINTS, ST. MARY & ST PETER

In September 2007 Nottingham's ancient parish of St. Mary the Virgin, now often referred to as St. Mary's in the Lace Market, was united with that of St.

Peter's with All Saints to become the Nottingham City Centre Parish, now known as All Saints, St. Mary and St. Peter.

At 3.30 pm on Sunday 22 February 2009, the Revd. Christopher Harrison will be licensed by the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham and installed by the Archdeacon of Nottingham as Priest in Charge of the new parish. The Revd. Christopher Harrison's multi-stranded career has taken him from the higher levels of Government to the heart of inner city London's drugs and crime culture. Having studied economics at Cambridge, he became an advisor at the Treasury, eventually running the office of the Economic Secretary to the Treasury. However, in 1984, Christopher decided to train for ordination. Following a Theology BA at Cambridge, he worked as a curate in Camberwell, a place which experiences high levels of poverty, deprivation and crime. IN 1996 he returned to his native Derbyshire together with wife Isobel and sons, Peter and Mark and for the past decade he has been Rural Dean of Ashbourne.

St. Mary's will be well prepared for its new Priest in Charge having recently purchased what is hoped will be regarded as more comfortable chairs for the front section of the nave; new loos and a new kitchen, in the hope that the building will be more hospitable to its visitors. Two big events for the spring are:

Good Friday, 10 April at 7 p.m. J. S. Bach - St John Passion with St. Mary's choir and Paradizo Baroque Orchestra directed by Andrew Abbott. Richard Roddis - Evangelist.

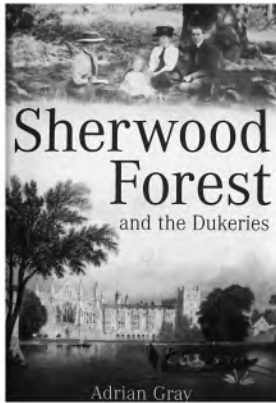
Entrance is free but there will be a retiring collection.

Saturday, 6 June at 7.30 p.m. Orchestra of the Restoration. Violinist Florian Rago and the Choir of St. Mary's. Programme: Slavonic Dances Dvorak; Mass in G Major Schubert; Violin Concerto Sibelius.

Tickets £15(£13), £12(£10), £5 (student standby on the door £3) from Nottingham Playhouse - Box Office tel. 0115-941-9419

Pauline Miller

REVIEWS



Adrian Gray, *Sherwood Forest and the Dukeries* Phillimore, 2008: ISBN 978-1-86077-482-9)

Anyone with an interest in the history of Nottinghamshire will welcome a book on Sherwood Forest, and this is a good read with plenty of pictorial material. The transformation of the Forest from a medieval royal hunting park, to a landscape of large houses with associated parks, and then to an industrial landscape as coal mining reached the area, is well handled, although the reader might be forgiven for wondering what happened to the Forest. Less commendably, there is a sense that the author is so keen to be inclusive that anything that can remotely be connected with the Forest area is thrown into the mix without much thematic discrimination. The text is based on only a limited number of secondary sources, and the vast riches of the Portland and Newcastle estate papers have not been raided. Thorotonians will be interested in footnote references to 'Journal of the Thoroton Society', which suggests the

author was a little lax with the proof reading, but as a good read on the topic this is well worth dipping into.

John Beckett

Foundations of Medieval scholarships: records edited in honour of David Crook, ed. by Paul Brand and Sean Cunningham (2008): ISBN 9781904497240

Dr. David Crook, who was editor of The Thoroton Record Series 1986-97, is currently a member of the Society's Council, and a frequent contributor to our *Transactions*. Many Thorotonians will know that he spent his career at the Public Record Office, now The National Archives. Following his retirement in 2007, a festschrift has been produced celebrating David's work. The book, published jointly by the Borthwick Institute and The National Archives, contains contributions on a range of medieval documents. David is described as 'the leading archivist historian of his generation', (Professor Nicholas Vincent, UEA) and the line-up of scholars who have contributed to the volume indicates just how widely regarded David is in the field of medieval records. The book includes a memoir of David, largely from his colleagues at TNA, a list of his publications, and a splendid colour photograph of him with his family and two Beefeaters outside Buckingham Palace when he was awarded the OBE in December 2007.

John Beckett

Transactions - back issues

Copies of the following back issues of The Transactions are available:-

1949-56	1958	1960-68
1971	1973-87	1990-95

Also Subject Index 1951, vols. 1-LV

Any interested member should email oxfamshop1510@btconnect.com stating that the message is for Eve Leadbeater or phone on 0115-962-5813.

Highways and Byways Roads in the Historical Landscape

A full-day event by Nottinghamshire Local History Association at Ravenshead Village Hall on Saturday, 28 March 2009.

Speakers are Adrian Henstock on Turnpike Roads; Sue Clayton on the Fosse; David Hey - Packmen and Carriers and Joan Board - Travellers on the Great North Road.

Contact: Miss D. Pearce, Rhed Cottage, Station Road, Ollerton, NG22 9BN

THE HARRY JOHNSON AWARD 2008

This award is held every other year and is a joint venture between the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust Limited and the Campaign to Protect Rural England. It is awarded for the best new building or restoration of a building, within a Nottinghamshire village setting.

The 2008 award considered thirteen projects submitted by Parish Councils which included the new War Memorial at Blidworth designed and built by local people, the conversion of outbuildings at Epperstone Manor, 'Byways' in Harby and the reclamation of Sutton Manor Farm in Sutton-cum-Lound.

The four judges eventually chose as the winner The White Cottage, Church Street, Misson. The cottage owners, Julie Watkins and David Hobson, in conjunction with local builder John Bingham, have successfully preserved a

seventeenth century framed farm house and its associated buildings. Originally six separate farm buildings enclosing a courtyard the early C17th White Cottage was the Red Lion Inn during the C19th. Whilst including modern provisions, the restoration focussed on sustainable construction, energy efficiency whilst using traditional materials such as lime plaster, lime wash, green oak, handmade joinery, stone and lead.

Runners-up were the conversion of Epperstone Manor outbuildings designed by the Henry Mein partnership and the 1795 Nottingham Canal Toll Office, Langley Mill. The latter has been restored during 2007-8 by a team of volunteers.

The next award will be in 2010 and the two sponsoring organisations hope that more Parish Councils will submit projects for consideration.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Joyce Beilby

It is with great sadness that we record the death on 15 December 2008 of a long standing member, Mrs Joyce Beilby. For many years Joyce and her husband Bernard fulfilled the role of Thoroton Society Lanternists and she was very active in Society events.

Barbara Dobbin

We are also very sad to learn of the death of Mrs. Barbara Dobbin. Barbara's husband, Michael, was Honorary Secretary of the Society for 11 years, retiring in May 1982 but continued as a Council member. After Michael died, Barbara continued to work for the Society, arranging teas for the excursions, until she moved away to live with one of her sons.

We offer our sincere condolences to both families.

We welcome the following members who have joined us since the Winter Newsletter was published:-

Mr. C. A. Barton
Mrs. J.M. Dewey
Dr. M. A. Hutson
Mr. C. Matthews

Mrs. J. M. Berry
Mr. J. Goldsmith
Mrs. K. M. Jackson
Mrs. A. Parker

Mrs. N. Crossland
Mrs. A. Henstock
Mr. E. Keon
Mr. J. Wishart

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Laxton: farming in an open field village

An exhibition by The University of Nottingham's Manuscripts and Special Collections Department at the Weston Gallery, D. H. Lawrence Pavilion, University Park, University of Nottingham, Thursday 9 April 2009 to Sunday 16 August 2009.

The village of Laxton in North Nottinghamshire is unique in preserving the medieval traditions of open field farming. An otherwise typical agricultural community, it escaped being fully enclosed in the nineteenth century. The three open fields, divided into strips farmed by tenants of the Laxton estate, are still managed today by a jury reporting to the Manorial Court Leet.

An exceptional series of records from the Thoresby estate, owners of the manor of

Laxton from 1640 to 1952, is held by Manuscripts and Special Collections, King's Meadow Campus, University of Nottingham. Supplemented by material from other collections, including manor court records and photographs of modern-day Laxton, this exhibition highlights aspects of farming life in Laxton. It extends the theme covered by the University's recently released teaching resource on Laxton: www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss/learning/laxton/

A series of talks and events will be held to accompany the exhibition. For further information, see the Lakeside Arts *On* brochure, or contact Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University: tel:0115-951-4565; email mss.library@nottingham.ac.uk

Coach Visits to The National Archives, Kew 2009

The Flintham Society at The Flintham Museum is running outings to The National Archives at Kew in 2009 on Thursday 19 March, Tuesday, 23 June and Thursday, 24 September.

The cost is £20 and the coach picks up at Flintham, Radcliffe-on-Trent and Jubilee Campus, Nottingham. At the latter venue car parking is available with a charge. Departure from Flintham is 7 a.m. and from Jubilee Campus at 7.40 a.m.

These outings provide a very cost effective way of undertaking research at TNA, Kew.

First time visitors are given help and assistance by Sue Clayton who is the organiser for the Museum. Details of reader's ticket requirements are included when Sue sends booking confirmation. TNA has full catering facilities and own food can be consumed in the cafe area.

Some folk use the coach to visit Kew Gardens which are near to TNA.

Further information and booking details from Sue Clayton, 01636-525641 or email at flintham.museum@googlemail.com

AGM 2009

Woodborough is our venue for this year's Annual General Meeting, to be held on Saturday, 25th April. We will be meeting in Woodborough Village Hall and, after the business of the meeting, will be hearing about the history of this attractive village, taking our usual AGM tea and being conducted around the village to see some of its most interesting features.

The AGM takes us to different parts of the county each year and is a good opportunity to visit new places or learn more about some of our favourite areas, as well as meeting other members. If you have never been before, please come along and I am sure you will find it a very enjoyable event.

Barbara Cast, Hon. Secretary

Items for the Summer issue, No. 57, of the Newsletter should be sent to the Editor by 1 May 2009, either by mail to 21, Brockwood Crescent, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5HQ or email to: hf773@btinternet.com. Text may be in Word file, typed or hand-written and images either jpeg or tiff.

Any views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editor, The Thorton Society or the Society's Council.