

THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Nottinghamshire's History and Archaeology Society



The Quarterly Newsletter of the Thoroton Society
Issue 80 *Summer 2015*

The 2015 Spring Meeting and AGM, Thurgarton



Photographs by David Hoskins.

More pictures from the Spring Meeting are on the back cover

The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire
The County's Principal History and Archaeology Society
Visit the Thoroton Society website at: www.thorotonsociety.org.uk

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Summer 2015 edition of your Thoroton Society Newsletter. The Society now has a new editorial team, John and Janet Wilson, to whom the Standing Committee has, perhaps rather rashly, given free rein to re-design the publication.



We would like to pay tribute to the previous Editor, Howard Fisher, who has stood down after a number of years in the editorial chair. Howard took the Newsletter from a four-page affair to the rather splendid, high-quality publication that we now have. Several recent issues have consisted of 32 pages, but on account of the increasing cost of printing and postage, Standing Committee have agreed that we should attempt to limit each issue to 24 pages. However, we hope that the quality of the production will be the same as before.

We will very much miss Howard's excellent photography.

John's amateur efforts with his Box Brownie will probably be no match.

We hope to introduce some new features to the Newsletter, including a **readers' letters page**. We would also appreciate feedback. So, if you wish to make suggestions as to the content and layout of the Newsletter, to express irritation or even offer a bit of praise, you will have an opportunity.

John and Janet Wilson

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SPRING MEETING AND AGM 2015

On another fine spring day we met at Thurgarton for our Spring Meeting and AGM. 85 members were welcomed by our President, Adrian Henstock, who reminded them of how important the road through Thurgarton had been in the past, with the Augustinian Priory of St Peter at Thurgarton itself, Gonaston Spital at Broadbusk dedicated to St Mary Magdalene and Southwell Minster all ensuring that there was a great deal of ecclesiastical traffic. Added to the regular passage towards Southwell, said Adrian, was the annual Gate to Southwell when, from the Middle Ages to the mid 1600s, the Mayor and Corporation of Nottingham delivered, in all but the most extreme of weathers, the Southwell Pence to the Minster Chapter, sang a Te Deum and then turned round and went back to Nottingham – surely stopping at a few hostleries on the way! This custom was revived in various guises over the years, in recent times as a pilgrimage of Morris teams still under the name "The Gate to Southwell", with 2014 seemingly being the last such procession due, it seems, to 'health and safety' issues! The President also drew attention to the encouraging signs of a greater appreciation of the East Midlands' history, as was well demonstrated on the line of the Fosse Way, which could be called the Heritage Way linking as it does Leicester and its new Richard III Centre, the recently opened National Civil War Centre in Newark and Lincoln's new Magna Carta visitor centre at the castle there.



Our President, Adrian Henstock

He reminded us that Nottingham Castle, one of the most important castles in England in the Middle Ages, was also in line for improvements.

Professor Beckett then presented the annual report and following this John Wilson, Honorary Treasurer, talked through the accounts which showed that the Society was using its financial resources wisely and to good effect. The Chair thanked John Wilson and also Peter Bloomfield who was our Independent Examiner.

In his Chair's remarks Professor Beckett noted that George Ridding, the first Bishop of Southwell, apparently thought that Thurgarton was a major city because he told his first Diocesan Conference that a bishop should live among his people, and then spent twenty years living in Thurgarton. His excuse was, of course, as John said, that it was on the main railway line from Newark to Nottingham, which in the 1880s was crucial for getting around. As he had once suggested that he should live in Ilkeston, Professor Beckett felt that this would not have been welcomed by his aristocratic wife! The Chair added just one important fact about

Thurgarton which was relevant to the current commemorations of the First World War – it is one of the few villages in the county to have a war memorial which is not in the churchyard, probably largely because (again unusually) it was privately sponsored.

We missed David Bagley, our Circulations Secretary, who was not at the Transaction 'collection point' due to having recently undergone surgery. We heard that Council had agreed that, in view of her long service to the Society, our former President Rosalys Coope should be made an honorary member. She was also congratulated, together with Pete Smith, on their book in the Record Series about Newstead Abbey which was selling extremely well and had been nominated for an award by the Society of Architectural Historians.

Two officers stood down this year. Howard Fisher has resigned from the position of Newsletter Editor after six years, having very successfully developed the newsletter: we are very pleased that John Wilson and his new wife, Janet, have taken on the newsletter as a joint venture. The other retiring officer is Keith Challis who, after eleven years as our Archaeology Editor, has decided to stand down. Keith was thanked for keeping the archaeology contributions coming in and to a high standard. We know from Council member, David Knight, that there have been a great many new finds recently as a result of ongoing work in the county – not least for the tram extensions in Nottingham – which should lead to some very interesting contributions to Transactions in the future which Dr Chris King of the Archaeology Department at Nottingham University will now be overseeing as the new editor.



Adrian Henstock, John Beckett, Barbara Cast

Two members of Council also stepped down. Peter Reddish has been on Council for a number of years and is possibly best known to members for running round the hall in the Mechanics with the microphone during questions following lectures. Although he is leaving Council, Peter has agreed to keep running, and we thank him for that! Andy Nicholson is also standing down - he is our Webmaster, the editor of the Nottinghamshire Bibliography, controller of the Nottinghamshire Heritage Gateway, the technology behind the e-bulletin (now two years old), and many other technologically challenging roles, all of which he has agreed to continue

doing. We were pleased to welcome Rob James on to Council. Rob is a relatively new member of the Society and was at our annual meeting last year. And he came back for more!

Professor Beckett took the opportunity to ask members to be as much involved with the activities of the Society as they could – remembering to publicise it at any events they might be involved in, keeping their eyes open for potential damage to the historic environment through planning or others developments, joining the team at history fairs etc.



Ellis Morgan gives his talk

After the business had concluded, Ellis Morgan, a local historian and Thurgarton resident, gave an excellent illustrated talk on the history and architecture of the Priory Church of St Peter. He paid tribute to two of the previous researchers on the Augustinian Priory, Jenny Alexander from whom he had learned much, and Trevor Foulds whose book “The Thurgarton Cartulary” was his ‘bible’ which he used regularly. He held it up to illustrate that it was very well-thumbed!

We then had tea, amply provided by Catherine’s Bakery of Calverton. My thanks to the tea makers, pourers and washing uppers!

After tea many of us visited the remains of the priory which are now the parish church. Members were able to see the great pillars which indicated its previous size, rivalling that of the Minster just a few miles away. We also noted the wall painting of Walter Hilton, mystic of the priory, which was painted after the 1996 celebrations of Walter’s life which some of you may remember. Thanks to the owner of Thurgarton Priory, the Georgian mansion which replaced much of the original priory,

we were able to visit its undercroft and view the imposing arches and pillars and the hints of its previous uses.

It was another interesting and enjoyable spring meeting – we look forward to another next year – again in a different venue with a new place to explore.

Barbara Cast, Hon. Secretary

ROMAN SOUTHWELL COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT



The Roman Southwell Community Archaeology project (‘Researching Roman Southwell’) was set up in 2014 to investigate the Roman settlement of Southwell, Nottinghamshire and the surrounding landscape. The project is professionally led by Matt Beresford of MBarcheology. Phase One ran throughout 2014 and looked at documentary and archival sources, old maps, Historic Environment Records and past excavation reports. The results of the first investigations are documented on the project website – www.romansouthwell.wordpress.com. Phase Two of the project involved a very successful fundraising campaign, supported by DigVentures, in

order to fund a season of fieldwork in the town of Southwell. Work on the Harvey’s Field site (adjacent to the Roman Villa site) can now begin as planned from May 2015 onwards. The project leaders are continuing

their fund raising through events, public donations and local business support in order to raise enough money for Phase Three. This will be a landscape approach, and will involve geophysical surveys and fieldwalking in an attempt to shed more light on to the Roman Road (Newark Road) from Southwell through to Kirklington. The provisional start date for this will be October 2015, depending on sufficient funds being raised.

Thoroton Society members can sign up to be part of the project by donating towards the project's funding goal:

Auxiliary Package (£10 donation) – you will receive email updates of progress, upcoming events and activities.

Legionary Package (£25 donation) - as above, and you will receive a mention in the acknowledgements section of all reports. In addition, you will receive electronic copies of the reports.

Gladiator Package (£50 donation) - as above. You will also receive a hard copy of the reports and free entry to all our activities and events (including the post-fieldwork parties!).

Caesar Package (£100 donation) - all of the £50 level benefits plus an 'Archaeology Day Experience' (either a Dig-day, Finds Analysis day, Geophysics session or Fieldwalking day, depending on current plans)

Emperor Package (£150 donation) - Premium Package! All of the £50 level benefits, plus a two-day activity plan (choose 2 x Dig-day, Finds Analysis day, Geophysics session or Fieldwalking day, depending on current plans)

John Wilson

CONFERENCE REPORT – SOUTHWELL'S FIRST ARCHAEOLOGY DAY

The 'Researching Roman Southwell' Project team hosted an Archaeology Day at the Minster School in Southwell on Saturday 17th January, with all proceeds from the day going into the project funding campaign. A packed Arts Theatre at the Minster School heard four excellent presentations. The first speaker was **Matt Beresford (MBArchaeology)**. Matt summarised the background to the 'Researching Roman Southwell' project and the current state of knowledge of Roman Southwell. The existence of a large villa is known, but its extent is largely unknown as much of it lies beneath later buildings. The villa is near the Potwell Dyke, which may have been wider in Roman times, and there was possibly an Iron Age shrine on or near the site of the villa. From April onwards, a geophysical survey will be carried out, followed by the digging of test pits from Farthingate to the Potwell Dyke. A full report will be prepared once the field work and the processing of any finds have been completed.

The Project, which raises its own funds, needs £4,200 to carry out the work; £1,200 had already been raised and Matt invited members of the audience to join in supporting the work.



Coins from the Dovedale Hoard. Picture courtesy of Richard Davenport Photography

Andy Gaunt (Mercian Archaeological Services) then described the ongoing exploration of King John's Palace at Clipstone and explained the extent of Sherwood Forest in mediaeval times, indicating the features it encompassed, its uses and its importance. A paper on this topic was published by Andy in collaboration with James Wright in *Transactions of the Thoroton Society* volume 117 (2013).

Rachael Hall (National Trust) gave a fascinating account of the recent discovery of a Late Iron Age/Roman coin hoard in a cave at Dovedale in the Derbyshire Peak District. A climber sheltering from heavy rain in the cave known as Reynard's Kitchen found four coins, three Roman and one Iron Age British. A team of archaeologists from the University of Leicester, the National Trust and the Defence Archaeology Group then explored the cave. They recovered twenty-six coins, including three Roman coins that dated from the Roman republic, well before the

invasion of Britain in AD43. Most of the coins were of gold and silver and have been attributed to the Corieltavi tribe. This is somewhat surprising as the tribe was mainly associated with areas further to the east, such as Lincolnshire. The coins will be displayed at Buxton Museum.

Finally, **Kevin Winter** delivered a detailed, well-illustrated talk on the work that has been undertaken to set up a new National Civil War Centre at Newark. An article on the National Civil War Centre can be found on page 8.

John Wilson

THE ROMAN LANDSCAPE OF SOUTHWELL: A PRESENTATION BY MATT BERESFORD OF THE ROMAN SOUTHWELL COMMUNITY PROJECT, 19TH MARCH 2015.

Following on from his talk at the first Southwell Archaeology Day in January 2015, Matt Beresford, the director of the Roman Southwell Community Project, delivered a fascinating lecture on the current state of research into the Roman features of Southwell and their relationship with the local topography and other discoveries further afield. Preliminary work involved collating the results of earlier investigations to produce a comprehensive map of Roman (and Iron Age) sites and finds throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and beyond. This exercise made it clear from the pattern of roads, forts, villas, waterways and geological structures that the area was of considerable strategic importance. A series of maps and plans illustrated Matt's lecture most effectively.

About ten hill forts have been identified in the Peak District and several in the areas near Bolsover and Southwell, including Dorket Head. It is possible that the Burgage in Southwell may have been the site of an Iron Age/early Roman fort or camp; it lies on a Roman road that runs between Ad Pontem and Osmanthorpe in a NW direction. The fort at Osmanthorpe is the largest in the area and seems to have been constructed on an existing site by the earliest Roman invaders in the 50s BC, long before the Claudian conquest of AD43.

Evidence suggests that the Coritani (or Corieltavi) tribe in Nottinghamshire and the neighbouring Brigantes in Derbyshire may have established a boundary between their territories along a magnesium limestone ridge running diagonally over the two counties. A few Iron Age coins, found mostly in the Newark and Sherwood district, are linked with the Coritani and confirm their presence in the area.

Lower Kirklington Road is of Roman origin and crossed by another Roman road near the Burgage which leads to Southwell's villa. Two coins have been discovered along this road, which runs out to the villa in Thurgarton; but why should coins have been left on the precise line of a road? It is thought possible that they were deliberately embedded in the road as offerings to the gods rather than just lost by accident.

The scanty remains of the villa in Southwell were noted as early as the 18th century but not excavated until the 1950s, when part of the east wing incorporating a bath house with painted wall plaster (a fragment of which can be seen on display in the Minster) and part of the south wing with a mosaic floor were brought to light. The exact extent of this villa is still unknown and may never be confidently established due to the fact that an Anglo-Saxon church with a burial plot was constructed across part of the site and the impossibility of digging under existing buildings. Even a LIDAR (Laser Illuminated Detection And Ranging) survey of the area failed to indicate any traces of the villa; this technique can produce digital elevation models that show details of landscape and the structures upon it with more precision than aerial photography or geophysical surveys, and can be adjusted on a computer to give the lie of the land beneath any buildings or woodland.

The next phase of the Community Project is to sink about 20 test pits in Harvey's Field and a strip on the far side of the Potwell Dyke, which was probably a much wider waterway in Roman times. Previous investigations here have shown the presence of layers of tufa, which is found in flood plains, and potsherds between the layers dating from the Roman period to mediaeval times have been discovered. This therefore would seem to be a fruitful site for further examination.

The campaign to raise funds and support for the Project's work has been very successful, thanks to generous donations and the money raised from events. But more funds will be required for future ventures, and active

support from interested individuals. Please refer to the earlier article about the Archaeology Day for information about how to get involved!

Janet Wilson

THE DEFENCE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

Thoroton members may not be aware of the valuable work done by the **Defence Archaeology Group**. The Group's *Operation Nightingale* is a scheme that provides recuperation through field archaeology for service personnel who have been injured in conflict in places like Afghanistan.

More information is available at www.daguk.org



Soldiers from the Defence Archaeology Group excavating at Hadrian's Wall
Pictures © Ministry of Defence

SOCIETY NEWS

Obituaries

We are sad to report that Mrs Audrey Simpson, a very regular attendee at Thoroton events, recently died. Many of you will remember her and she will be sadly missed by her friends in the Society.

Sadly we have also lost Hugh Proctor, again a long-standing member of the Society.

Our sympathies go to the families of Audrey and Hugh.

New members

The following new members were approved at the February and May meetings of Council:

Ordinary:

Mrs Rosemary Gower, Bramcote
Mrs Barbara Smith, Wilford
Ms Susan Hawkesford, Nottingham
Dr Ellis Morgan, Thurgarton

Mr Gregory Jackson, Nottingham
Mrs Margaret Beresford, Matlock Bath
Mr Brian Rich, Leek, Staffordshire
Prof. Sandra Harris, Ruddington

Ordinary and Record:

Mr John Bailey, Retford
Mr Richard Lansdall-Welfare, Calverton

Dr Chris King, University of Nottingham

Ordinary and Associate:

Mrs Judith and Mr Ian Hughes, Nottingham

Student members:

Ms Megan Doole, Worksop

Miss Anja Rohde, Nottingham

The Society extends a warm welcome to all our new members.

SNIPPETS

Newark Archaeological and Local History Society (NALHS) is a reciprocal member with the Thoroton Society. NALHS have now developed a website which can be found at www.newarklocalhistory.org. Although it is 'early days' in the development of the website, it is well worth a look!

UK'S NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE UNVEILED WITH A BANG IN NEWARK

The Civil War was Britain's deadliest conflict and one which shaped our modern world.

Now the UK's first ever National Civil War Centre – a flagship project by Newark and Sherwood District Council – has opened in Newark.

The £5.4 million attraction, backed by £3.5m from the Heritage Lottery Fund, is based in Newark's magnificent Grade II* Old Magnus Building, which began life as a Tudor grammar school. It is expected to attract over 60,000 visitors a year.

The opening was marked with a terrific early May Bank Holiday weekend involving over 1,000 re-enactors and camp followers. Newark Castle, the Queen's Sconce and Riverside Park all saw dramatic scenes with cannon fire heard across the town, whilst the Market Place resounded to a mass salvo of musket fire!

The British Civil Wars were fought across England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland from 1638 to 1652. Newark, held by the Royalists, played a major role, undergoing three sieges. The last of these in 1645-46 caused terrible suffering.

Historians have gained a unique insight into the town's experience with the discovery of a treasure trove of previously unexamined papers in local archives. They reveal how ordinary people coped with being caught in the cross-fire between cavalier, roundhead and Scottish armies.

Stuart Jennings, from Warwick University, probed this forgotten material.



Tokens were minted for use as coinage during the Siege of Newark



"By the time I got to the third box of papers I could see that we had something unique here. On individual sheets were accounts, petitions and bills, the kind of things generated by everyday life in 1640s Newark. This kind of material does not normally survive the Civil War, so we are getting a rare glimpse into ordinary lives. We have records of poor relief detailing how money was raised and to whom it was paid during the third siege. There is a petition from a man with seven children whose house was blown up by cannon fire and receipts for food and medicine for plague victims."

This insight into the past has been used with state-of-the-art technology and many previously unseen relics to create a unique museum experience. The aim is to tell the story of the man and woman in the street, as well as the fateful decisions of the power-brokers. Newark's story has also inspired another UK first innovation – an augmented reality National Civil War Trail. This £300,000 project tells the story of plague and plot using a specially designed app for smart devices. Featuring lavishly filmed costumed scenes worthy of Hollywood and shot at locations in Newark, visitors are encouraged to explore key Civil War sites across the town's historic landscape.

Newark was hotly disputed during the Civil Wars because it lay at the crossroads of the Great North Road and Fosse Way and also provided a key crossing over the River Trent. Parliamentary forces and their Scottish allies were desperate to oust the Royalist garrison and the last siege saw over 16,000 troops seal off the town. An outbreak of typhus and plague added to Newark's woes as the population swelled to 6,000, creating near starvation conditions. A third of the inhabitants died and one in six buildings were destroyed.

The National Civil War Centre is open from 10am to 5pm daily. Prices – adults £7, children £3 and concessions £6. The town trail app can be downloaded for free on Google Play of itunes App Store. Search for NCWC.

Further information: National Civil War Centre
www.nationalcivilwarcentre.com



Richard Darn, National Civil War Centre [photographs © National Civil War Centre]

BOOKCASE

WATERLOO BATTLEFIELD GUIDE

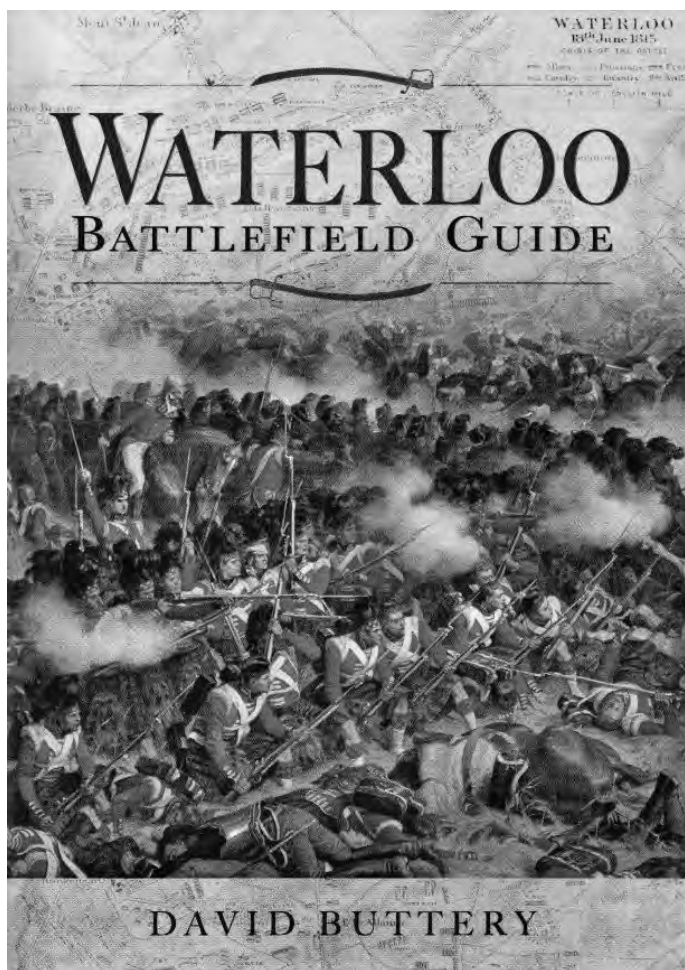
David Buttery.

Pen and Sword 2014. PB £15.99 ISBN 78 1 78303 513 7

Last year and this, there have been a large number of organised visits to the battlefields of the First World War, but to my knowledge, none has been organised to visit the site of the Battle of Waterloo. This year sees the 200th anniversary of Waterloo and an avalanche of books has been published to commemorate the anniversary. Most concentrate on the history of the battles on the day. However, this book by local author David Buttery is a guide to the battlefield sites and is essential reading for anyone wishing to go to the area. Waterloo was a milestone in the defeat of Napoleon and, indeed, was a turning point in world history. The battle was complex, and cannot be fully understood without a detailed, on-the-ground study of the landscape in which it was fought. David Buttery's guide makes use of contemporary accounts and a most detailed knowledge of the terrain as it is today. There is a focus on the various parts of the overall battle, including the day-long struggle for the chateau at Hougoumont, the fall of La Haye Sainte and the fighting in the village of Plancenoit. Three farmhouses – Gemioncourt, Piraumont and Grand Pierrepont – played a part in the delaying of the French advance. Gemioncourt was (and is) a particularly well-built farmhouse and French losses were very heavy before they managed to capture it. Later in the day the farmhouse was recaptured by a combined force of British, Brunswick and Hanoverian light infantry. There is a memorial on the farm's gatehouse, placed there by the Association for the Conservation of Napoleonic Memorials which states (in French) 'In memory of the soldiers of the Grande Armée who fell before these walls on 18 June 1815'.

The book has many eyewitness accounts of the battle, one being in extracts from the diary of Sergeant William Wheeler of the 51st regiment. He sent letters home to his family in Somerset, recounting his

experiences. He had an enduring faith in the Duke of Wellington, at one point writing 'If England should require the service of her army again, and I should be with it, let me have 'Old Nosey' in command...'



There are numerous high-quality maps showing the positions of the various units in the attacks, and pen-portraits of commanders. One of these is of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir James MacDonell, the son of Clan Chief Duncan MacDonell of Glengarry. Sir James led the defence of Hougoumont and was given an award for his bravery in the action. The loopholes in the garden wall of Hougoumont, made to allow muskets to be fired by the defenders, are still visible. The book is even-handed and includes pen-portraits of members of the Napoleonic army, such as General Count Philibert Guillaume Duhesme. Duhesme had a dubious past, with accusations of corruption, but succeeded in being given command of the Young Guard at Waterloo. He was shot in the head towards the end of the defence of the village of Plancenoit and died from his wounds.

The book ends with a detailed chronology of the battle and advice to visitors to the battlefield. There is a detailed index and a useful bibliography. Altogether this is an excellent book which can certainly be recommended for anyone interested in Waterloo, and is an indispensable guide for those intending to visit the area.

John Wilson

HARRY'S STORY: THE MEMOIRS OF HARRY CAST

Barbara Cast ed.

**Obtainable from The Bookcase, Lowdham; Five Leaves Books, Long Row, Nottingham;
or direct from barbaracast@btinternet.com.**

ISBN 978-0-9931612-0-9. £8.

Harry Cast was born in Sneinton, Nottingham, in 1898 and his Memoirs record his early life down to the end of World War 1 in 1918. He came from a working class background but won a scholarship to Mundella School (which he had to give up after a year or so because of his parents' need for an increased family income). He was evidently possessed of a phenomenal memory as his memoirs were written in 1977-78 without recourse to any original diaries. He appears to have total recall of events – and even conversations - from his childhood and teenage years, often to the exact year and month.

The book is subtitled *Memoirs of a Nottingham Childhood, of Life as a Young Miner and of the Privations and Horrors of the Great War*, which neatly summarises its three dominant themes. The first records his deprived upbringing in a large family of seven children. His first homes were back-to-backs, one near Huntingdon Street surrounded by the all-pervading odours of a slaughterhouse, tripe manufactory, several stables, pig sties, and numerous middens which were cleared twice a week by the nightly 'muck-majors.' However all was not gloom as he mentions childrens' games, schoolboy pranks and cinema visits.

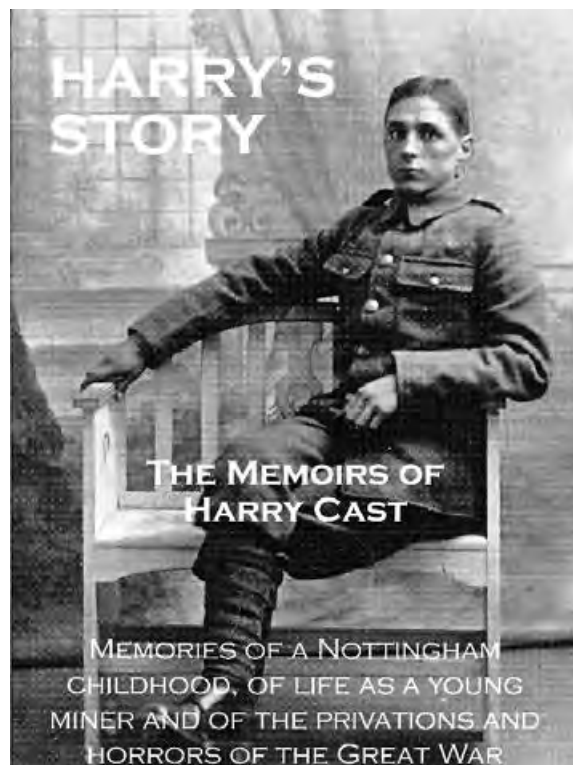
The descriptions of coal mining record the total disregard for health and safety and the often cynical brutality of mine officials. Harry's family moved to Redhill when he was 14 and he began working in Bestwood Pit as an underground pony-driver. The work involved extreme heat, constant danger, and back-breaking physical labour if the half-ton coal wagons became derailed. He vividly describes a tragic accident when a fellow 14-year old pony-driver was killed by a roof fall and the bullying overseer tried to force the miners to continue working.

It is, however, the descriptions of Harry's experiences whilst serving in the Great War which will be of most current interest. Many local historians all over the country are painstakingly attempting to research the army careers of their local servicemen, hampered by the barest of official records, the official censorship of the true horrors of the trenches, and the understandable reluctance of those who returned to talk about their experiences. The fact that Harry was writing so long after the events enabled him to describe his memories in a largely dispassionate and objective manner, revealing less of the bitterness which he evidently felt after enduring such unspeakable atrocities. As the editor remarks, this 'makes the anger which breaks through from time to time even more telling'.

His account of his army career clearly sets out each stage of the process that the ordinary soldier went through from enlistment to training to his periods of service in the front lines. It highlights the everyday hardships of life in the trenches, e.g. the itching lice which were constantly present in the uniforms, the flies and the maggots, the stench of dead bodies of men and horses, the rats, the rain and the mud, the constant noise and the 'shell shock', etc. Astonishingly he survived the chaotic slaughter of the Battle of the Somme in 1916 when his battalion of nearly 700 men was reduced to a mere 146. The numbers were shortly 'made up to strength' again by raw new recruits who had no inkling of what was to follow. His only relief from the fighting was when he was twice wounded and invalided back to British hospitals.

This review can only give a brief flavour of the detail contained in the Memoirs - a compelling narrative which vividly evokes the events, sights, sounds and smells experienced by many young Nottingham men of that era.

Adrian Henstock



TOLLERTON: A VILLAGE HISTORY

Tollerton Village History Group

Barny books: ISBN 978.1.906542.75.7: £10.00 from Barny Books (www.barnybooks.co.uk)

Barny Books is a business of publishing advisors which helps authors to self-publish under the Barny Books name. One of the Tollerton Village History Group members is a partner in the business.

This book was launched on 9 May 2015 in the church at Tollerton. It is 19x25.5 cms in size, perfect bound, has 160 pages and many monochrome and colour images. It is nicely presented and written in a clear and easily read style.

However, the borders around the printed area are narrow and so make for difficulty in reading the inner print due to the curl of the perfect binding and this detracts from the enjoyment of reading the book. Why this wasn't considered at the lay-out stage is surprising because part of the pleasure of a book is its presentation and ease of handling.

Whilst the sources used are mentioned throughout the text, a bibliography section would have been useful.

I also feel that the use of sources has been restricted to those easily available; no use, as far as I can see, has been made of the facilities at Kew (National Archives) or at Lambeth Palace (Anglican Archives) and there is great reliance placed upon the Rev. Potter's *History of Tollerton* written in 1929. As all historians know, there is great danger in using secondary sources without checking their accuracy. The same comment applies to the use of the internet. Perhaps taking a little longer to do the research and delving deeper into the sources – mention is made of the catalogue at Nottinghamshire Archives but whether the actual documents were all accessed is unclear. If not, one wonders why not. Explanations of events are given in a brief way but some need greater comment. For example, mention is made of enclosure but not what that involved.

Having said all this, the book is aimed at the general reader, not an academic historian, and so perhaps doesn't need the depth of explanation and research that a more scholarly work would require. It certainly serves as a starting point for further research into the history of Tollerton. I am sure the general reader in the village and further afield will find the book interesting, especially the direct quotes from people who have been contacted and who have given of their time to find letters and delve into memories.

The more recent history of the village is covered in much more detail than the history beyond living memory but that is the nature of such works of local history.

The many photographs, some in colour, add greatly to the understanding of the story told in the book and the reader will learn a great deal about Tollerton. The book is well worth the cost and for anyone interested in the South Nottinghamshire villages it is highly recommended.

With this publication and that for Normanton-on-the-Wolds published quite recently, we are seeing the story of the South Nottinghamshire Wolds villages come to life. Perhaps someone will be stimulated to write the story of Wysall and, maybe, Keyworth's history could be written in a single book on the lines of this one about Tollerton – using the quite extensive research and writings on aspects of the village already published by Keyworth & District Local History Society – which would be a very useful introduction for new people coming to live in the area as well as being, perhaps, more accessible to the general reader than some of the existing publications. Food for thought indeed, stimulated by the work of the Tollerton History Group.

(The Rev. Sidney Pell Potter's book on the History of Tollerton is available in reprint form from Reprint, Loughborough (www.reprintuk.com) at £6.00)

Howard Fisher

NOTTINGHAM RISING – THE GREAT CHEESE RIOT OF 1766 AND THE 1831 REFORM RIOTS

Valentine Yarnspinner

Loaf on a Stick Press, 2014 ISBN 9780956913951

**£6 from Five Leaves Bookshop, Long Row, and Waterstones
and from the publishers at peopleshistreh.wordpress.com**

This interesting book deals with themes of rebellion, topical in light of the proposed focus for Nottingham Castle's transformation. It brings together, and updates two pamphlets, "To the Castle!" and "Damn his Charity", published by People's Histreh, Nottingham and Notts Radical History Group, in 2010 and 2011. It deals with the riot sparked by food shortages and which happened during Goose Fair in 1766, including the famous story of the cheese rolling which reputedly took the Mayor off his feet. The other main area of the book relates to the 1831 Reform Act riots which saw, amongst other acts of violence by the enraged populace, the burning down of the Duke of Newcastle's mansion at Nottingham Castle, the owner being a noted opponent of the Reform Act.

Well worth reading for the additional detail of unrest and of living and working conditions in 18th and 19th century Nottingham.

Barbara Cast

GEOFFREY BOND RESEARCH AWARD

The following information appears on the Thoroton Society website:

Geoffrey Bond, a life member of the Thoroton Society, has kindly provided funds to underwrite research into the history and archaeology of the county of Nottinghamshire (the remit of the Thoroton Society).

Awards totalling £1000 are available annually.

Terms and Conditions

1. Anyone, or any group, currently researching the history or archaeology of Nottinghamshire is invited to apply for financial support from the fund. Applicants, whether individuals or groups, are limited to one award per year but are not prohibited from applying for awards in successive years.

2. What can the money be used for?

i. The money can be used to support research into any topic relating to the history or archaeology of the county. This may include the acquisition of research resources, including books, photography and photocopying, and travel expenses. Applications are also welcome from individuals or groups currently working up a project on Nottinghamshire, especially where some financial support will lead to an application to, for example, the Heritage Lottery Fund, research councils (RCUK), or research charities such as the Leverhulme Trust.

ii. Awards will not be made towards the payment of fees (as in the form of fees to a university for registering for a doctoral programme, or groups wanting to employ someone, or for subventions towards the cost of publication. [Note that the Nottinghamshire Local History Association has awards for this purpose.]

3. Applications.

i. Anyone wishing to apply to the fund for support must do so on or before 1 September 2015. [NB that this date is likely to change in subsequent years.]

ii. The application should take the form of a statement (maximum 2 pages A4) outlining the nature of the research being undertaken, plans for dissemination of the research (including by publication) and the way in which it is intended to use the award. The total sum applied for should be clearly stated.

iii. Applicants should include an indicative budget under appropriate headings (i.e. travel, reprographics, readers' fees, subsistence etc).

iv. Applicants should also include a one-page (A4) curriculum vitae in the case of an individual, or statement of purpose in the case of a group.

v. Applications should be submitted by e-mail to the honorary secretary barbaracast@btinternet.com.

Decisions will be taken by a committee of the society's Council by 30 September. Any money awarded will normally be paid by BACS transfer or society cheque on the presentation of receipts, although an upfront payment may be made in exceptional circumstances such as, for example, pre-booked travel. The grant recipient will be responsible for guaranteeing the appropriate use of the funds. It is a condition of the award that receipts are kept (for auditing purposes) and that an account of expenditure is returned at the end of the award period.

4. What will be expected of the recipient?

i) All activity associated with the award should be completed within one year (i.e. 30 September following the award), at which point a short report (maximum 2 sides A4) should be submitted, outlining the work undertaken, its outcomes, plans for dissemination (including publication) and an account of expenditure accompanied by supporting receipts.

ii. Award recipients will be expected to write a short article about their research project for an edition of the Society's quarterly newsletter, and will be encouraged to write up some or all of their research for possible inclusion in the Society's annual volume of *Transactions* or its online Heritage Gateway. Receipt of an award does not guarantee publication, which is subject to the usual editorial processes. Recipients may also be invited to contribute to the Society's annual lecture programme.

5. Award recipients should acknowledge their award in any future publications or outputs from the research.

6. In the event of award recipients being unable to undertake the work for which financial support was granted, the award will be withdrawn.

THE MAURICE BARLEY LECTURE, SATURDAY 14th FEBRUARY 2015

Paul Everson and David Stocker - The corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture from Nottinghamshire: the County's Distinctive Antiquarian Tradition

Report by David Knight

Society members were treated to a fascinating presentation by Paul Everson, Honorary Lecturer at Keele University, on the subject of Nottinghamshire's rich heritage of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture. The lecture was



Dr Paul Everson delivers his lecture

Photograph © David Hoskins

prepared jointly with David Stocker, Honorary Visiting Professor at Leeds University, but much to our regret David was prevented from attending by an unexpected hospital operation from which he was still recuperating.

Following completion of their study of Lincolnshire stone sculpture, published in 1999 as Volume 5 of the British Academy's *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture of England*, David and Paul embarked upon a detailed investigation of Nottinghamshire's Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture. This has now been completed, with input also from Dr Graham Lott on geological sources and Dr David Parsons on epigraphy, and will be published by Oxford University Press later this year as Volume 12 of the British Academy series.

Pre-Conquest sculpture was one of the many subjects that had intrigued Maurice Barley and hence provided a particularly appropriate subject for this annual commemorative lecture. Paul discussed Maurice's contribution to this subject towards the end of the lecture, which focused upon the history of antiquarian investigation from the first descriptions of Anglo-Saxon stonework in Throsby's expanded edition of Thoroton's pioneering study of the antiquities of Nottinghamshire. We were led expertly through the maze of antiquarian studies, encountering en route the work of key figures such as William Stretton, Edward Trollope, William Stevenson and his son William H. Stevenson, Cornelius Brown, Arthur du Boulay Hill, Alfred Stapleton, J. Romilly Allen, Bishop Browne and of course Maurice Barley. Their investigations illuminated a wide range of material, including decorated stone crosses, grave covers and fragments of figurative scenes, and in some cases provide the only record of material that has subsequently been lost. Paul discussed the circumstances of discovery, iconography and significance of the sculptured stonework, drawing particular attention to the incorporation of material in later church buildings, notably at Hawksworth, Church Warsop and East Bridgford, and the riverine focus of many stone crosses.

At Stapleford, Shelford, Rolleston and South Muskham, for example, crosses may have marked both river crossings and boundaries, while their Trent Valley location supports the growing evidence that the Trent had marked a significant cultural boundary and transport route during the Anglo-Saxon period.

THE MYLES THOROTON HILDYARD LECTURE, SATURDAY 14 MARCH 2015

Dr Richard Gaunt, Associate Professor, University of Nottingham

Nottinghamshire and the Great Peace: Reflections on the End of the Napoleonic Wars, 1815

Report by Professor John Beckett

One hundred years ago the people of Nottinghamshire were engaged with their fellow countrymen in the First World War. There was little time to commemorate the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in May 1815, but one hundred years further on in 2015 – and in peace time – there is greater scope for examining the end of what had been more than twenty-years of almost continuous warfare with the French. The response to Waterloo in Nottinghamshire was curious. Local people celebrated with gusto the Treaty of Paris of 1814, following which Napoleon was despatched into exile on the isle of Elba. His subsequent daring escape and the final, decisive confrontation with the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo on 18 June 1815, almost passed the county by, and there were no public celebrations. Richard Gaunt's knowledge of the period, and of the events of 1814-15 made for an excellent lecture which included numerous references to relevant events in the county. The illustrations were also memorable, none more so than the buried leg! In the closing moments of the battle a cannon ball struck the Earl of Uxbridge as he rode with the Duke of Wellington. The Duke said 'By God, Sir, you've lost your leg,' to which the Earl replied 'By God, Sir, so I have'. The remains of the leg were amputated in a house nearby and the owner buried the leg in his garden: Richard's research had taken him to the garden where he had taken a picture of the site of the buried leg!



Dr Richard Gaunt
Photograph © David Hoskins

Richard offered the lecture as a foretaste of a major new exhibition he is curating at the Weston Gallery, Lakeside, between 22 May and 6 September. For more details of the exhibition, please see: <http://www.lakesidearts.org.uk/Exhibitions/ViewEvent.html?e=2860&c=5&d=3257>.

NEWS FROM NEWARK AIR MUSEUM

Museum staff and volunteers are currently making plans for Victory Days 2015; a two day event in July (Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th 2015) that will commemorate the 70th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day at the Newark Air Museum.

Our organisers are keen to hear from any veterans of any of the military or civilian forces during World War II, as the museum is keen to invite these veterans along to the event as its special guests. Details of a former

service number or membership of an appropriate armed forces veteran's organisation can secure them free entry to the event at the museum's site in eastern Nottinghamshire, close to the border with Lincolnshire.

For the younger visitors the museum is planning to operate a World War II style sweet shop in the Dambusters' Hut, where visiting children will be able to collect their free World War II sweet ration. To collect their ration they will need to bring along some pre-decimal coinage – so parents and grandparents will need to look out for those sixpences, three-penny bits, pennies, half-pennies or even farthings – and make sure that they bring them along. Visitors should not worry too much if they cannot find suitable coinage as the museum will have some available to make sure that everyone gets their ration!



WW2 memorabilia. Photograph © Newark Air Museum

Throughout the two days there will be a host of World War II related activities and entertainment taking place around the site, including alongside its famous Anderson Shelter and Dig for Victory Garden. Visitors will also be able to sample some examples of wartime food delights, such as bread & dripping, spam, corned beef and jam sandwiches.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES NOTED

Local History News Number 114 Winter 2014

Researching an Exhibition (the German naval bombardment of Scarborough 16th December 1914) - Esther Graham and Robin McDermott

Sister Kate Maxey MM RRC FNM - John Banham

VCH Durham Update - Anthony Pollard

'A Rainy Day above Dorking' – topographical drawings for local history - Margaret O'Sullivan

Keeping it all together - Steven Hobbs

Gateways to the First World War - Mark Connelly

Protests against the Hearth Tax - were there any in your locality? - Heather Falvey

The local history of common land - Angus Winchester

The Local Historian January 2015 vol 45 no 1

Researching mediaeval wall paintings: a guide to archival sources in England and Wales
- Ellie Pridgeon

Food protests and the (in)equality of sacrifice in First World War Devon - Bonnie White

Italian ice cream families in the East Sussex seaside resorts - Trevor Hopper

The secrets of Magpie Lane: prostitution in medieval Oxford - Helen Kavanah

Medieval local history from published records: a case-study of the manor, market and church of Masham, Yorkshire - John S. Lee

Opinion: us and them - William Evans

Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter Spring 2015

The Civic Society Plaques Scheme

A New River Landmark for Nottingham? A possible foot/cycle bridge near Lady Bay Bridge – Hugh McClintock

The Refurbishment of the Malt Cross Music Hall - Ken Brand

St Martin's: English Heritage Angels - Ken Brand / Hilary Wheat

Nott(Shopp)Ingham

A press release describing the development of the Bioscience area near Pennyfoot Street

Remembering Jesse Boot, Lord Trent

The Sculptor: CL Doman - Ken Brand

The newsletter also reported that the £40,000 restoration of Green's Mill had been completed. Two of the sails had been repaired and the other two replaced.

THE MICHAEL WOOD HISTORY AWARD

In 2013 the well-known historian and television presenter, Michael Wood, gave a lecture in Newark for the Thoroton Society. He had recently been involved in filming at Laxton. After the lecture, he generously donated his speaker fee to the Laxton History Group to be used to promote 'local history as a leisure time activity' in the local community.

The Group decided that there is no better way to promote local history than through young people, some of whom might go on to develop history as a lifetime hobby. The suggestion was made to offer prizes for young people to produce their own personal research completed in their leisure time. There seems to be, however, a sad lack of young folk taking an interest in local history groups. The way forward seemed to be to work through schools, but as anyone involved in education will tell you schools these days are reluctant to be involved in activities which do not encompass the National Curriculum. The last thing we wanted was for the Michael Wood History Award to become yet another school prize as this would defeat the object of personal research completed as a hobby.

After discussion with some of our Nottinghamshire schools we found themes in the History National Curriculum which could certainly include local history elements, and we suggested that the students who chose to participate in the Award should extend their school learning at home in their own time and that the prizes would be awarded to those students who had most enthusiastically undertaken their own research. Michael Wood was made aware of this and he thought it was an excellent idea.

Kneesall School were most enthusiastic and they agreed to pilot the scheme this year as it fitted in with the National Curriculum history element for Years Five and Six, who were working on the theme of 'Then and Now.' After some initial teaching in school about the history of the village of Laxton, on a cold, grey and windy day in March, Years Five and Six arrived at the Visitor Centre at Laxton. The children were keen to know how the village had changed over time and in the Visitor Centre we were able to examine with them

the photographs and the agricultural implements on show. They had some interesting and imaginative ideas on what the implements may have been used for! They particularly enjoyed pretending to use the old plough but they were horrified at the thought of a plough boy ploughing one of the strips in a day.

We then took a very brisk walk to the motte and bailey castle where we were invigorated by the cold winds which came roaring in over the Lincolnshire plains. The children were fascinated by the thought that this was once King John's hunting lodge and they used the clues around them to work out the layout of the castle and surrounding buildings. It was delightful to see how much they had remembered from their lessons in school and how they could apply it to the grassy mounds.

Off we went again to one of Laxton's Open Fields and there a local farmer spoke to the children about the three field system of agriculture and how it had worked in the past and how it still works today. They were delighted to have "a real farmer" speak to them and they asked intelligent and insightful questions about the



system and how it has changed over the years. On the way through the fields we looked at trees and wild flowers and talked about their history in the environment. Finally we walked back through the village and talked about the village today and how it has changed over the years.

It was then up to the children to choose an aspect of local history and to continue their interest in their own time and to produce their own individual projects to be judged by the school for the Award.

We were amazed and delighted at what the children produced. Some chose to study their own localities in the way we had looked at Laxton but the diversity of the projects they had chosen to study was surprising; some chose the history of their own house; some looked at a particular family; one boy studied mining in the area; another looked at the history of the oil industry locally; a girl studied ancient trees in Nottinghamshire. They were enthusiastic and industrious and they involved their parents and grandparents in the studies. One grandmother confessed to me that the whole family had to visit all of the sites mentioned in her granddaughter's project. All of the parents we spoke to said how much the children had enjoyed and become involved with the project.

At the end of term the school held a wonderful open afternoon for the parents, grandparents and members of the Laxton History Group so that they could see the results of the children's efforts. We also displayed the children's work at the Local History Fair in Mansfield in May.

What it brought home to those of us who were involved in this pilot scheme is how history came alive for those children because it related to them, their families and their localities. It brought whole families together studying their own history and it involved the school in the community too. The awarding of the prizes became only secondary to the involvement of the young people in local history. Michael Wood can be proud of the hares he set chasing and we would thoroughly recommend other history groups to think of ways to involve young people and to work with their local schools if possible.



Joan Cottee, Co-Chairman of Laxton History Group. Photographs © Laxton History Group

YOUR SOCIETY

OFFICERS

President: Adrian Henstock BA DAA FRHistS

Chairman: Professor John Beckett BA PhD FRHistS FSA

Secretary: Barbara Cast BAHons Little Dower House, Station Road, Bleasby, Nottingham, NG14 7FX email: barbaracast@btinternet.com

Treasurer: John Wilson BPharm MPhil FRSPH email: wilsonicus@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary: Judith Mills BAHons MA PhD email: membership@thorotonsociety.org.uk

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Individual Ordinary membership £25.00

Associate member (at the same address) £6.00

Student/Under 21 £6.00

Individual Record Section membership £15.00

Combined Ordinary and Record Section £35.00

Institutional Ordinary membership £25.00

Institutional Record Section £20.00 (non-UK £24)

RESEARCH GROUP

Meets twice a year. Contact for details: John Wilson email: wilsonicus@btinternet.com

RESPONSE GROUP

The Society seeks to respond to matters of historical and conservation concern which arise in the County. If members become aware of such matters please contact the Group Co-ordinator, Barbara Cast - contact details above.

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY

A group of researchers continuing the VCH of Nottinghamshire. For information and to join the group contact the County Editor, Philip Riden at philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk.

PUBLICATIONS

The Society publishes an annual *Transactions* volume which is distributed to all members.

The Record Section volumes are published from time to time and are distributed to members paying the extra subscription for this Section. They are also available for purchase by other members and the general public. Quarterly newsletters are circulated to every member.

LECTURES

Lectures, unless stated otherwise in the programme booklet, are held at the Nottingham Mechanics, 3, North Sherwood Street, Nottingham, NG1 4EZ, commencing at 2.30 p.m. with the Bookstall open from 2 p.m.

DEADLINES for Newsletter items are 1 February, 1 May, 1 August and 1 November of each year.

COPY should be sent to the EDITOR, John Wilson, 38 Stuart Close, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8AE email wilsonicus@btinternet.com

Items can be handwritten or typed in Word format, either suffix .doc or .docx. Pictures, diagrams and maps are all most welcome to illustrate an item. Images can be submitted on CD, DVD, as an email attachment or sent for scanning. Preferred size 300dpi JPEG. Images will be adjusted to suit the publication.

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Acknowledgement of authorship and photographer will be given where this information is known.

All views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily shared by the Thoroton Society, its officers or Council members.

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Waiting for the AGM to start



Thoroton members attack the tea!



Exploring the fine grounds around Thurgarton Priory



Remains of the base pillars of a stone sedilia in the Crypt of Thurgarton Priory



Examining a mediaeval stone coffin outside Thurgarton church



The grounds of Thurgarton Priory