THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Nottinghamshire's History and Archaeology Society

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Thoroton Society

Issue 105 Autumn 2021

Rosalys Coope with a model of Nottingham Castle (see page 8)

The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire

The County's Principal History and Archaeology Society

Visit the Thoroton Society website at: www.thorotonsociety.org.uk

THOROTON SOCIETY NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CHAIR

I am delighted to introduce the first of the Society's new-style newsletters and hope that members will welcome this change of format. It brings it into line with our existing template for the Annual Report and offers additional economies in terms of production. I would like to thank the newsletter editor, Paul Baker, and his assistant editor, Hannah Nicholson, for all their hard work in putting together another interesting issue.

Members will be pleased to see Barbara Cast's appreciation of our much-missed former President, Rosalys Coope. This is the centenary year of her birth and her legacy continues to be felt by all in the Society. Within the past few months, the Society has been honoured with a £1,000 bequest from Rosalys' estate, for which we are deeply grateful. We were also delighted that Geoffrey Bond has offered to continue his generous support of the Society's Research Award for another year. Geoffrey is a much-valued member of the Society, and we send him warmest congratulations on the award of the prestigious International Elma Dangerfield literary prize, awarded by the International Byron Societies, for his recent book *Dangerous to Show* (reviewed by John Beckett in the last newsletter).

Nearly 100 people attended John Beckett's online Cust Lecture on 26 June. A recording of the event is being prepared for the web and a printed version of the lecture will be published by the Society, thanks to generous support from the University of Nottingham's Cust lecture Fund. More details to follow!

As chair of council, I was pleased to attend the Newark book festival on 11 July 2021 where I found council members Judith Mills and Rob James on the joint FONA-Thoroton stall. It was a welcome return to live events and I hope is the signal for better times ahead.

Judith and Rob at the joint FONA-Thoroton Stall

Wishing that you all have had a healthy summer and have a happy and healthy autumn..

Richard A. Gaunt

ANNUAL LUNCH, SATURDAY 6th NOVEMBER

This year, following the postponement of last year's Annual Lunch due to COVID restrictions, we will be holding it in the Welbeck Banqueting Suite at the Masonic Hall, West Bridgford. The postcode is NG2 7QW.The date is Saturday 6th November and the time is 1.00pm -you are asked to arrive by 12.30pm. The lunch will cost £22 per person for a three course meal, including a traditional main course plus a vegetarian option and tea and coffee. A variety of drinks will be available from the bar. We are using our Annual Luncheon, as was planned for the postponed luncheon last year, to celebrate the services to the Thoroton Society of Professor John Beckett and Mrs Barbara Cast, both of whom retired from their respective roles in 2020. John Hess (formerly political editor of BBC East Midlands and a Thoroton Society Member) will be our Master of Ceremonies.

The lunch will also celebrate the publication of *Church, Land and People. Essays presented in 2020 to John Beckett volume 950, Record Series).*

IMPORTANT NOTE - At the time of writing, July 2021, Welbeck Hall has advised us that they are able to accommodate our event under the relaxations given on the 19th July.
If restrictions are re-imposed and numbers have to be restricted, we will operate a first-come-first-served,members only system.

(Please see the booking form for this event mailed to you as separate sheet with this Newsletter.)

David Hoskins. Chair, Events sub-committee.

THOROTON SOCIETY VISITS

Following our earlier messages regarding our summer programme of visits, The Thoroton Society are delighted to announce that two of our visits have now been confirmed by the host organisations. These visits are to Creswell Crags on Tuesday 24 August and to Nottingham Castle on Wednesday 8 September. Information sheets and booking forms have been sent out by email to all members on our subscriber list. If any member not on that list would still like to try a late application by post, please contact David Hoskins on 0743 611 4158 (with voicemail) for further details.

David Hoskins. Chair, Events sub-committee.

THE CUST LECTURE

The Cust lecture is an annual or bi-annual lecture of the University of Nottingham. It was founded to commemorate the life and work of Henry (Harry) Cust, scion of the Brownlow family of Belton House, Lincolnshire. Cust died in 1917. The first Cust lecture was delivered in February 1921 and it has been given every year or two since then. Initially the lectures were given primarily on aspects of the history of the British

Empire but in recent years it has been given on a broader range of topics, by distinguished historians, among them Eric Hobsbawm and Linda Colley.

It was my privilege to give the Cust Lecture for 2021, although it was originally planned to coincide with my retirement from the University in summer 2020. The impact of Covid19 was such that not only was the lecture postponed for a year, but it had to be given via Zoom! As many readers of this newsletter will be aware, in 2016 I published a history of the University of Nottingham.[1] This was a substantial volume, but it still left out more than it was possible to put in. Some of the gaps I have, or am, filling in other ways, such as my research on the Prisoner of War camp at what is now the University's Sutton Bonington Campus. Another gap was the Cust lecture: what was it, when did it take place, and so forth? Answers to some of these questions were to be found in the Brownlow papers in Lincolnshire Archives, as well as in the University of Nottingham's Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections.

Harry Cust is not known ever to have visited Nottingham University College (as it was until 1948), so why was the lecture founded? What I discovered was that as a contribution to the First World War, Harry Cust had set up the Central Committee for National Patriotic Organisations, designed to co-ordinate the work of numerous organisations formed at or shortly after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Most English counties had a branch of the CCNPO and the President and Chairman of the Nottinghamshire branch were the Duke of Portland and W Heaton Haslam. They were also respectively the President and Principal of University College. A small surplus on the CCNPO's local accounts was, at Haslam's suggestion, transferred to the University College and used to provide a fee, and to pay the travel expenses of the lecturer. The first Cust lecture was given

[1] John Beckett, *Nottingham: A history of Britain's global university* (Boydell and Brewer, 2016). Available through the University of Nottingham Online Store: search under 'Nottingham'

on 21 February 1921 by Lieutenant-Colonel Leo (L.S) Amery, M.P., Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. After the lecture dinner was served in the College building on Shakespeare Street, before the lecturer was whisked off to Nottingham Victoria Station to catch the train back to London.

Leo Amery was followed by many other distinguished speakers. In its early days after the First World War they included Sir Daniel Hall on 'The Food of the Empire', and in 1934 Sir Josiah Stamp on 'Central Banking as an Imperial Factor'. The first historian to give the Cust lecture was Professor E.H. Carr in 1937 on 'Great Britain as a Mediterranean Power'.The early lectures were all published (until 1970), and copies distributed both locally and further afield. As funding for the lecture was never over generous, and as one or two potential speakers turned down the opportunity to give it, Harry Cust's widow Nina supplemented the capital fund on a couple of occasions. By the 1980s she had passed away and the lecture could be given only when funds had been accumulated over several years. Fortunately, the 2021 lecturer required neither a fee nor expenses!

John Becket

The Society is publishing the 2021 Cust Lecture, both online and in print. Further information will be available in the e-newsletter and the Winter newsletter.

GEOFFREY BOND AND THOROTON RESEARCH AWARDS
A THANK YOU FROM SCOTT LOMAX

Thank you to Mr Geoffrey Bond, and the Thoroton Society, for providing the funding which has helped my research. Radiocarbon dating of material recovered from an archaeological excavation in the heart of Nottingham city centre, has been made possible by a grant from the Geoffrey Bond Research Award and the Thoroton Society. The dating

makes a significant contribution towards research for my PhD, by furthering the understanding of industry during the late medieval period.

My PhD examines the economic conditions of Nottingham during the period 1300 to 1540 using both archaeological and historical documentary evidence. Key research themes include: understanding changing land use within the town, including considering growth and intensification in different areas, as well as contraction of urban space; the growth and decline of trades and industries and the movement of zones of activity; the urban environment and sanitation.

The example of Nottingham is placed within the wider, national context to contribute towards a better understanding of late medieval towns.To address some of the research themes 10 samples were submitted to the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit last year, with two samples funded by this grant. The COVID19 pandemic caused delays, but the results have recently been provided. The samples for which the grant was funded were taken from industrial waste (specifically horn cores) found in a series of pits, and the results have indicated a late medieval date for the material.

The results contribute towards a greater understanding of the use of land in one area of Nottingham, and provide details of an industry which is mentioned only once in Nottingham's surviving medieval records. A paper detailing the results, and their significance, has been submitted for consideration in the next Transactions.

Scott Lomax (PhD Archaeology, University of Nottingham)

ROSALYS COOPE – A CENTENARY APPRECIATION

Rosalys Coope, our much loved and appreciated recent President of the Society, would have been a 100 on the 13th November 2021.
It is fitting to mark this centenary with a tribute to Rosalys and to look at her life and achievements.

Rosalys Torr was born in 1921 at Little Buckingham Farm in Old Shoreham, Sussex, to Freda and Harold. She was their second child, Penelope (known as Pen) having been born in 1916. Sadly their mother died some ten months after Rosalys' birth. Harold married again and half-siblings Iris and John were born, all playing happily together on the farm. Rosalys retained happy memories of the farm and its people, such as Ashie, the gardener, who made her a garden of her own with tree trunks for seats, and Mr Tuppen, the shepherd, who taught her how to read the weather.
The young Rosalys attended the village school for a while and then joined Pen at Chilgrove Manor School near Chichester – it was for "empire children" most of whom saw little of their parents – while there she did learn some useful skills such as telling the time (learnt while sat on a rocking horse) and dancing in a pink dress with a sash!). Whilst at her next school, St Margaret's in Bushey, she contracted appendicitis and, being very unwell, convalesced with her godmother, Vera Bates, who subsequently arranged for her to attend a school in Switzerland

where children who had health problems were educated – and where there was a high standard of education available – it was here that Rosalys learned to speak fluent French.
She returned to England when she was about 14 and was sent to a school called Glynn House which she hated! She never took the School Certificate because, as she said “I couldn’t do maths so they knew I would fail”. While at Glynn House she remembered hearing on the radio the announcement of Edward VIII’s abdication in 1936. Leaving Glynn House when 17 she joined a group of “young ladies” to study art with friends of her godmother, Lina and Aubrey Waterfield, she an author and newspaper correspondent, he a painter. They were based at the Villa Poggio Gherardo in Settignano near Florence. However, she also travelled in Italy with the Waterfields and the other girls, learned some Italian, painted, drew and received lectures on painting and the history of Italian art from Aubrey. She remembered hearing Mussolini giving a speech during a visit to Rome and learning from Pen about the Munich Crisis. Back in Little Buckingham by 1939 she and Pen were enrolled at the Hertfordshire Agricultural College, which neither of them much enjoyed.
Training for the Women’s Land Army was offered there so that might have been the reason for their attendance. Luckily (according to Rosalys) she got stomach ulcers while there and had to ‘escape’ to Godmother Vera to recover. Rosalys was very fond of Vera who was very important to her and a sympathetic influence. She lived with her in the early years of the war, first in Oxfordshire and then in White’s Cottage in Berkshire, in part because she found living at the farm at Shoreham difficult due to not getting on very well with her stepmother. Rosalys was given a pony at this time with the responsibility, as part of the Local Defence Volunteers, of riding up to the Ridgeway to “look out for German soldiers dressed as nuns", who might be parachuted into the area. Had she had any sightings she was meant to leap onto the pony and carry the news to Wantage but, as she used to take a picnic and a good book with her, she may well have missed seeing them even if

they did come! She was joined by Pen in Berkshire where plans were made for the future – Rosalys decided on an art course and enrolled at the art school at Beverley. Pen joined her in Beverley where they rented a bungalow together, sleeping under a table when there were air raids. The college was badly damaged by bombs which released Rosalys who had found that maybe art wasn't quite her forte.

In January 1942 Rosalys joined the Wrens and was sent to Chatham where she became a "writer" i.e. using a decoding book to turn signals into plain English.
After various postings she was sent to Dartmouth where she did a lot of sailing and having fun. Then she was sent to Greenwich for officer training, which involved a great deal of drill and naval history! It appears that marching up and down in front of the Queen's House at Greenwich was the inspiration for her to study architectural history.
On her commission she became Third Officer Torr, working in London as a coder and apparently, being involved in the anti-invasion preparations. She was then posted to Ceylon which did not suit her at all – scorpions in her shoes each morning, the tropical humidity and heat were too much. She became ill and was transferred to the better climate of Trincomalee – continuing her cypher work and also having an enjoyable social life (one of her favourite stories was when she forgot to remove her diamante earrings after a dance and got them caught on the drum of the cipher machine). She was not to last as Third Officer Torr, being relieved of this role as a result of "non officer-like qualities"! After Hiroshima she returned to England and – what next?
She decided she would like to work at the National Gallery so wrote to the Director, Kenneth Clark. As she had no school or academic qualifications, he suggested she should first consider studying art history. She applied forthwith to the Courtauld

Institute and, although lacking the usual qualifications, on explaining at her interview her experience in Italy with the Waterfields and her ability to speak French and Italian, Margaret Whinney, who was, in essentials, responsible for the Institute during the war, accepted her. When she first started she was still in her Wren uniform. She and other students newly back from the war were told that they could work as volunteers at the Institute until the end of the summer term and she was placed in the 'slide collection'.

After this Miss Whinney arranged for her to stay in Cambridge as the paying guest of a friend of hers to "swot" in the University library and prepare for an entrance exam to the Courtauld, which she passed. At this point she was told that she wouldn't be able to get a degree because she hadn't matriculated but she could be awarded an academic diploma if she did well enough - and she did. She subsequently worked as a freelance researcher. One day when she was in the library at the Courtauld the Director, Professor Anthony Blunt, came in and asked her if she would be interested in cataloguing the drawings of Jacques Gentilhâtre held at the RIBA. It kept her busy for many years! However, in late 1949 she became the Personal Assistant to Kenneth Clark, working for him for eighteen months doing a lot of "running about" collecting and returning slides. She also remembered peeking at glamorous guests arriving for parties at the Clarks' house – including Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh.

It was while in London, sharing a flat with Pen, that she met her husband, Peter Coope.

They married in 1951 and settled into The Poplars in Epperstone. (see photograph on back cover).

It was here that she continued her work for a PhD on French 17th century architecture under the supervision of Anthony Blunt. This culminated in her book *Salomon De Brosse and the Development of the Classical Style in French Architecture from 1565 to 1630* –her young daughters called Salomon "Mr Brush"!

Fontainebleau 1949

In the early days of their marriage both Rosalys and Peter joined the Thoroton Society, having been introduced to it by the invaluable Miss Whinney, and Rosalys soon became actively involved. It was in 1955 that Rosalys became a member of the Thoroton Society Council – not the first woman on Council, but those who were members were greatly outnumbered by the male stalwarts of the Society – including Miles Thoroton Hildyard, Maurice Barley, Keith Train, Professor AC Wood and Stan Revill. At first she found the experience of being on the Council somewhat intimidating – maybe partly because most of these male stalwarts were not particularly welcoming of this "young woman". It must surely have impressed those Council members when, in 1961, "young" Rosalys was elected as Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

It was following a Thoroton excursion to Newstead Abbey in 1973 that she decided to turn her attention to that most interesting house, conveniently sited in the vicinity of her home, and so her long association with the Abbey commenced. The post-Dissolution history of the Abbey was little understood at the time and Rosalys spent many, many hours in research there along with City Council staff, her great friend and mentor, Professor Maurice Howard, and, of course, Pete Smith, who collaborated with Rosalys on the acclaimed 2014 volume *Newstead Abbey: a Nottinghamshire Country House: its*

Owners and Architectural History 1540-1931. (Photograph on back cover of this Newsletter)

We should also thank Rosalys' family who encouraged her in updating her work on Newstead Abbey and were so helpful to the Society in achieving the publication of what became a best-selling volume. Pete remembers that in the '80s, when he was a student, he attended a Society of Antiquaries conference entitled *Archaeology and the Country House*, where one of the papers was given by Dr Rosalys Coope, the subject being Newstead Abbey.

He was already familiar with her work on Salomon de Brosse from when he was studying French renaissance architecture. The conference consisted of, in the main, very dry papers given by archaeologists involved in major restoration projects armed with professional photographs and other cartographic images. Rosalys, however, offered an historian's personal account of piecing together the history of a house without professional support. Her deferential and slightly informal delivery, with stories of following electricians and other maintenance men around the house every time a piece of panelling was removed or a floorboard taken up for some necessary repair, brought not only laughter but a human approach to the subject without detracting in any way from the seriousness of her study or the correctness of her observations.

Pete learnt that day, he says, that architectural history could be really enjoyable: thereafter, on all the conferences, visits and study days which he shared with Rosalys in the years after, she was always interested and enthusiastic and, more importantly, always ready to have fun.

Rosalys became the Society's first female Chair of Council on 17th May 1984 and she retained that important position until April 1992 when she stood down on the grounds that she was about to "fall off her twig".

We heard that expression regularly during her period as President, Vice-President and beyond, but the twig remained robust for many years. Rosalys was a great President, a position she held from 2006 until 2014, when she became a

Vice-President. She was also a great advocate for the Society and attended almost all lectures, the AGMs and the annual luncheons.

She was also fully involved in special events arranged by the Society such as at the millennium. Rosalys was jointly responsible with me for planning the visitation to Thurgarton Wapentake and, in preparation for this, I walked with Rosalys up the hill to Old Ox above Oxton – it was a very windy day and we had to cling together, especially on the descent, but we managed the walk and enjoyed our expedition – and the successful subsequent visitation. As well as being a champion of the Society she made a massive contribution to its academic work. Almost all of her work had a focus on Newstead Abbey, and it was the subject of eight articles in the Transactions. Her final contribution was a shorter piece on the watercolours held at Newstead which was collated by Pete Smith in 2017.Of course Rosalys had other interests and involvements, including in her own village of Epperstone. She also kept a proud eye on her family, daughters Clare and Helena, Clare's husband, Bob, and grandsons Matthew and Laurence.

There was a sad time for the whole family when Rosalys' husband,Peter,died in January 2005.

Rosalys was very involved in Bromley House too, becoming a Director in 1988 and serving as such until 2005. Rosalys edited, with the librarian Jane Corbett, a book about Bromley House at the time of the library's 175th anniversary: *Bromley House 1752-1991: four essays celebrating the 175th anniversary of the foundation of The Nottingham Subscription Library* (1991).

She was greatly respected by Bromley House staff and the other directors.

She also maintained a strong involvement in the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, particularly enjoying its annual conferences where friendships were made and renewed, and also provided opportunities to debate buildings of all types and periods. Always interested in the people who she came to know, in her later life Rosalys found those who supported her also another source of interest and friendship.

She was greatly missed when she was no longer able to attend Society events - her Society friends felt the loss of her cheerful and interested presence.
The last of her generation, Rosalys finally “fell off her twig” on 13th November 2018, peacefully at home with her family around her and at the tender age of 97. The esteem and affection felt for her by so many was demonstrated by the numbers who attended her funeral in Epperstone. A rich life – Dr Rosalys Coope was a woman of great achievements; she was a good friend of many in the Society and is much missed by all who knew and loved her.

Barbara Cast

(with thanks to Clare Coope and Pete Smith for their invaluable help)

(Editor’s note - see the colour photographs on the front and back covers of this Newsletter.)

EARLY MEMBERS OF THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Thomas Blagg – a founder member of the Society

‘The Thoroton Society owes a debt to Thomas Blagg for the zeal, scholarship and generosity which he so readily placed at its service during his long membership’

Canon R. F Wilkinson. TTS. Vol LII. 1948.

One’s early learning stays well embedded and dies hard. When I was a postgraduate at Newcastle in the 1970s ,well before the days of the internet, the publication of the ‘indices and abstracts’ was a great event. With rulers in hand, some academics would rush to the library to measure the length of the index of their publications. We used to liken them to adolescent boys comparing their prowess in the school changing rooms. However,I ruefully admit that when starting to research this article I reverted to this tried and tested, if faulty,

method.The result? Blagg, T. M. six and nine sixteenths column inches (16.7 column centimetres for those of you who use a modern version of this technique) in our Centenary Index to the Transactions, 1897 - 1997. A close-run thing but just bettered by Alfred C. Wood and only just ahead of a handful of other prolific contemporary contributors.

In addition to the transcription of numerous church and other records his TTS articles encompassed subjects such as 'The Manors of Cotgrave' (TTS 13), 'A note on the reputed portrait of Robert Thoroton at Nottingham Castle (TTS 44) … and 'The Thoroton Society: some memories of its first thirty years' (TTS 50). He also served as Secretary of the Society's Record Series, editing volumes I (1903), VI, IX, X & XI (1945).

Thomas Matthews Blagg was born in South Collingham on 5 March 1875, to a family whose links to South Nottinghamshire can be traced back to 1506. Educated at Newark's Thomas Magnus Grammar School, he inherited a lifelong involvement in the church and an interest in agriculture from his father (another Magnus alumni) and grandfather who was apparently involved in inaugurating Collingham's annual Agricultural show in the 1840's and which continues to this day. One rule of his father was to donate one tenth of his income to charity. It was at Thomas Magnus, inspired and encouraged in his interest in the past by his mother, that he developed his research and writing abilities and his painstaking approach in the collection and correlation of data and the piecing together of disparate facts, with palaeography being a particular interest.

He began examining and transcribing Newark Parish Church Records when he was 18.

Image: Twenty-year-old Thomas Blagg (grey jacket). At the first Thoroton Society Excursion 1898. W.P.W Phillimore (with beard) is to the left looking at Blagg. The full image can be seen, courtesy of John Beckett and James Wright, in Issue 103 of this newsletter. He is also present in the other image within that article.

After school he worked as a Corn Merchant in Newark then, shortly after his marriage to Ethel May Haywood of Navenby (Lincs) in 1909 he moved to Buckinghamshire and became a partner in a London genealogical practice and was for many years associated with W. P. Phillimore. His application to the services at the outbreak of WW1 resulted in his posting to the Port of Liverpool as an Inspector for Aliens branch of the Home Office. His subsequent career in the Civil Service earned him an MBE in 1933.

He did not return to live in his native Nottinghamshire until very late in his life, spending his final years at Brunsell Hall, Car Colston (Notts), which had been in his family since 1759 and to which he led a Society excursion in 1908. On his death on 11th August 1948 at 73 years of age, he was the last remaining original member of the Society.

Alongside his Civil Service career, he retained an active and prolific interest in local history, Newark, Nottinghamshire, and the Thoroton Society. He was elected to the Council of the Thoroton Society in 1901 and became the youngest Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1903.Interviewed by the Royal Commission on Public Records in 1915 as the General Editor of the British Records Society, he claimed to have personally examined the registers of over 500 parishes, of which he had transcribed some 300. Writing in *Transactions* after his death, Canon Wilkinson noted that Blagg was a popular man with ‘a remarkable memory, and an unrivalled knowledge of his native county’ and his scholarship, accuracy and willingness to help and encourage others. However, in the same obituary he observed that Blagg’s occasional brusqueness of manner and incisiveness of speech, hid a very kind and hospitable heart, noting that Blagg did not suffer gladly those he considered to be in error and had never learned an easy tolerance of ‘such common frailties as pretentiousness, indifference or slackness’. Wilkinson also acknowledged that Blagg was ‘well aware of his shortcomings, and that often the twinkle in his eye betrayed the sterner note that his tongue was striking’.

Wilkinson concluded that Blagg was popular with many who knew him well, especially with his grandchildren who visited him daily in his final years.
As noted by Wilkinson and as you will see, reading various correspondence and between the lines of several obituaries, Thomas Blagg appears to be somewhat like Marmite - your view of him dependent upon which aspect of his character and which side of his tongue you were subjected to.

Image: The image of Thomas Blagg commonly reproduced in obituaries and articles. Photographer unknown.

His approach to local history research and his confidence, perhaps arrogance, was publicly revealed when in February 1906 the *Nottingham Guardian r*eproduced a series of letters that had appeared in the *Daily Express*. A fellow Society member had written to the *Express* to criticise documents that were distributed to support work on the 'Domesday of Enclosures for Nottinghamshire'(a reprint of the agricultural inquisitions of 1517) in the 'Transactions Pamphlets' of 1900 and 1902. To which 30 year old Thomas Blagg issued a blistering riposte that included- 'The historical school of which Mr Stapleton is apparently a survivor, that which is content with mere recording of names, dates, and events – work which is largely a vanity and vexation of the spirit, without profit under the sun – has now been replaced by modern scientific students, who, removing historical study from the stagnant waters of

dilettantism, have rightly sought to show that history is the science by which we read the causes and processes of past and present social and economic evolution, the key by which we may to some extent unlock the mystery of the future if we only, with knowledge, read, mark and inwardly digest the records of the past.'

Stapleton had also complained about the pages of statistics included in the circulation, describing them as 'padding', to which Blagg countered that the publication without the tables 'would resemble the publication of a foreign treatise without translation, or a directors report without the balance sheet, or of a book of travel without the map'.

A further letter from 'a member' sided with Stapleton and another with Blagg. This exchange reveals an important point in what was later alluded to and as revealed by the changing contents of the Transactions, as a tension between those who enjoyed a Society of excursions and expeditions to which papers were read and those who desired a Society which promoted articles that would form a growing corpus of knowledge of Nottinghamshire. It is not known to what extent this exchange influenced Stapleton's decision to emigrate to Australia where he died. However, a short local obituary for Stapleton in the same edition of the *Nottingham Guardian* noted that there was in Nottingham a lack of material appreciation of his merits.

A letter from the Secretary of the Thoroton Society Council in December 1934, asking on their behalf whether he would take over as Secretary of the Records Section may also reveal his less than universal popularity within the Society as Blagg wrote to a friend and confidante from the Council, Mr Lehman, that it consisted 'of eight lines only and might have been written on the Ides of March or any other non-existent date, instead of written a day or two of Christmas … in fact it is the only ice I have seen so far this winter!' In the same letter he confided concerning this request: 'Heaven knows, I wanted no further burden than those I already carry, but I fear that If I crave to be excused I shall be thought to have shirked the consequences of my own action

and this most desirable project may die of inattention at birth'. However, he had previously outlined to the Council how the Records Section should be reformed. As requested, he refined his proposals to 'get the records section working', which he travelled from his home in Birkenhead to present to the Council at the end of January 1935.

To conclude, an obituary in the *Newark Advertiser* noted him as a 'wise counsel', 'kindly but firm', and of a jovial nature, 'those who could claim his friendship or even an acquaintanceship counted themselves fortunate' as I am sure the some in the Society did (and some seemingly did not) and those who know of his lasting contribution still do. Oh yes. Obituaries included *Newark Herald* 14th August 1948 - 65 column centimetres (25.6 column inches) and *Newark Advertiser* 18th August – 124 column centimetres (48 column inches).

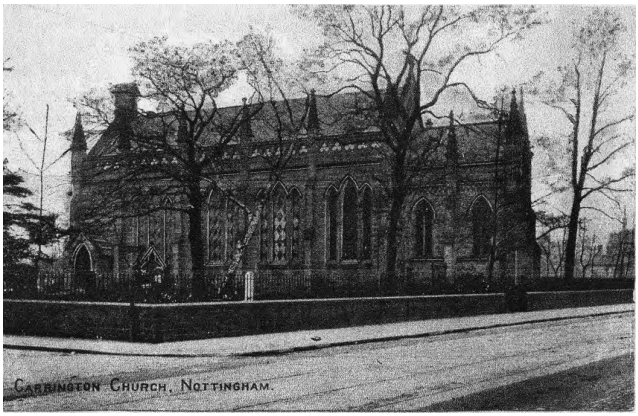
Christmas 1932. Photograph James Bacon & Sons, Liverpool. Courtesy of National Civil War Centre and Newark Museum.

Sources include; Thoroton Society Transactions (esp TTS 50 and Index), Collingham Village Archives, photograph and various obituaries held by Newark Library also the National Civil War Centre and Newark Museum, Letters and various documents held by Nottinghamshire Archives.
Also, Phillimore. W.P.W. *County Pedigrees. Nottinghamshire. Vol 1.* (London Phillimore. 1909).

Jeremy Lodge.

NOTTINGHAM CHURCH HISTORY

St John's, The Evangelist Church. Carrington



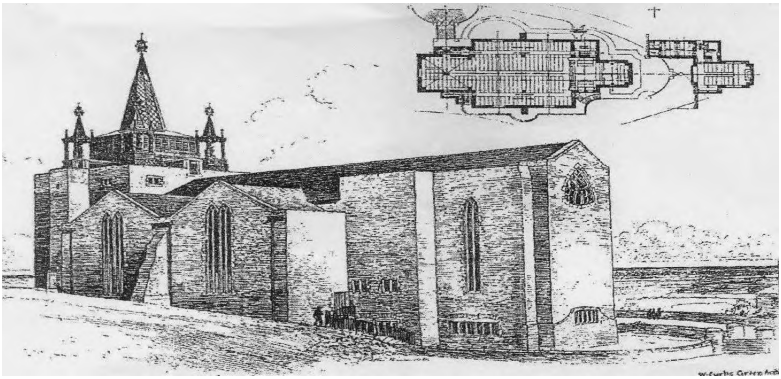
St John's Church stands on the west side of Mansfield Road, Nottingham between Carrington and Sherwood. The foundation stone was laid on May 12th 1841 and it opened in April 1843. The stone was laid by Ichabod Wright, the wealthy Nottingham banker who lived in nearby Mapperley Hall.

He not only provided most of the money and land for the project but clearly influenced the design, although the architect was William Surplice. The Church was privately funded with Ichabod donating £1,050, his brother John Smith Wright £510 and James Severn £500. Even Surplice coughed up £25. Queen Anne's Bounty paid the curated stipend. Ichabod's friend Archdeacon George Wilkins wrote, 'The church which is a gothic structure of the Early English and Decorated style was principally designed by 'Mr Wright', adding ' it was a beautiful feature in the landscape'. However, in April 1916 *The Church Builder* journal damned it as 'in the worst style of early Victorian architecture'.Today several members of the Victorian Society admire it. Surplice built a plain stone edifice consisting solely of a nave 83 feet long x38 feet wide, with a porch at the southwest corner and a single bell turret above the west end gable. The nave could accommodate about 400 plus 120 children in the gallery on the west end. The dark roof is of hammer beam

construction. Almost all the fittings were donated by the Wright family including the bell, the communion rail, pulpit, reading desk and the poor box. Surplice copied the stone font at Barnack in Northamptonshire.

St John's has been a High Church since the Tractarian Movement was in full swing in the mid-19th century. The re-emphasis on the importance of the chancel led to the building of one in 1873. Designed by Jackson and Heazell, it is 25 feet long with an organ chamber on the north side. The high chancel arch was inserted with serpentine marble shafts, the two carved corbels decorated with eye-catching angels. The window formerly at the east end of the nave was fitted into the east end of the chancel.

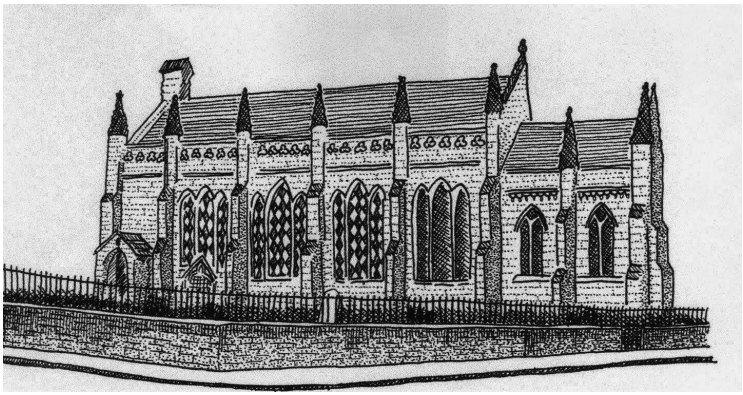
In the mid 1890s the gallery was removed and a door in the west wall blocked up. Pews were removed and replaced by chairs. (Pew rents were not abolished until 1897.) It was a District Church, a chapel-of-ease serving the mother church of St Leodegarius in Basford. It did not become a full parish until 1902. By then overcrowding was such that a new church was really needed. A fund was set up and a London architect, W Curtis Green, was chosen to erect a design on Loscoe Mount (now Watcombe Circus).



Proposed New Church by W. Curtis Green

The First World War intervened and the cost became prohibitive. So the fund was used in 1923-24 to extend the

church by opening up the north wall into an arcade. Behind it a north aisle, new vestries and a lady chapel were added, the latter with a Roll of Honour of all the 176 parishioners who died in that war.



Drawing by Terry's daughter - Karen Fry.

A few years ago major alterations were made to St John's. A new entrance was created at the west end through a new porch into a vestibule under the organ gallery. The nave has been retained as a main space for worship with a new altar brought instead of in the chancel. The north aisle has been utilised for two storeys of ancillary accommodation for community activities- meeting room, kitchen, storage, stairs, lift and toilets. The work included new sanctuary furniture, lectern, altar,ambry and candle stands, plus a rebuilt organ on the west gallery.

St John's was fortunate to have a succession of charismatic ministers who once packed the nave, two of them becoming Bishops. Reverend Herbert Wild, wild by name but not by nature, went on to become Bishop of Newcastle. The other is Reverend Alfred Blunt, blunt by name and nature, but who once gave a budgerigar a Christian burial. He may be chiefly remembered when he was Bishop of Bradford for a speech made in December 1936 in which he revealed the King's affair with Mrs Wallis Simpson.

Terry Fry

NOTTINGHAM HISTORY ARTICLES

NOTTINGHAM- 110 years ago: 1911 - a perfect summer?

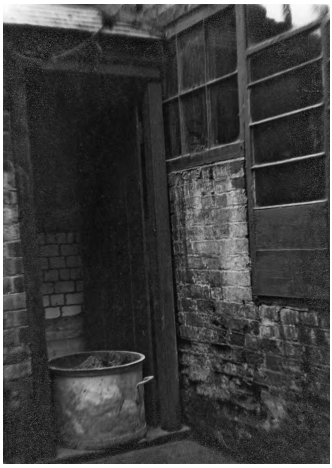
The summer of 1911 started out like many summers do – with thunderstorms. On 1st May, temperatures had begun to rise, and by the end of May there were serious thunderstorms. On 25th May a band of storms stretched from Mansfield to the south coast of England. On 26th May, Stubton, near Newark, received 2.14ins (54mm) of rain, 9.6% of the annual average, in one storm. The worst of the storms were over the south of England on 31st May.

The summer became extremely hot and dry, one of the hottest and driest on record. Thursday 22nd June was the day of the coronation of the new king, George V. (1)

The day opened with damp and light drizzle, a disappointment after the sunny days of early June. The 34th Wimbledon season opened on the following Monday, 26th of June, with the traditional dampness, noted in the *Daily Telegraph* as 'a familiar spectacle of sodden courts and idling players'. However, the weather soon became hot again, almost without change for weeks. August was particularly hot, with 9th August being the hottest day recorded to that date in the meteorological records. Nottingham Castle recorded a temperature of 94.6^0F (34.8^0C) on that day. This is the highest temperature ever recorded officially in Nottingham City. In 1968, the 'official' recording site for Nottingham was transferred from the Castle to the Watnall Weather Centre.Some people enjoyed the hot summer. Poet Rupert Brooke and his friends in the 'Neo-Pagan/Bloomsbury axis'(2) met at his home in Grantchester, near Cambridge, and held picnics and moonlight nude, mixed-sex bathing parties in Byron's Pool by the Cam. Others were less fortunate.

In Ascot Week, early June, there were strikes in the docks. The entire crew of SS Olympic, moored at Southampton, went on strike along with the crews of five shipping lines and members of the Firemen's Union. Later, in early July,theatres became so hot and stuffy that attendances at matinees fell away. People were taken to hospital with heat stroke. The weather had a bad

effect on crops. Farm incomes fell and there was much anxiety. The pressures began to show, with increases of drunkenness in many villages present, as people used alcohol to ease their worries. By mid-July, temperatures were in the eighties. In Derbyshire, mill owners and quarry managers started the working day at 4.30am so that they could close in the early afternoon. The *Times* started to print a column headed 'Deaths from Heat'.In early August the dockers, led by the firebrand union leader Ben Tillett, the founder of the Dockers' Union, went on strike. The great London docks became silent, but for the dockers and their families it was a time of great hardship. Working-class housing, often insanitaryat best of times, became unendurable.



Nottingham in 1911 saw the greatest number of deaths from infantile diarrhoea of any year. There were no refrigerators and very few flushing lavatories. Pail closets were the order of the day. The pail closet in the picture served two houses, numbers 24/26 Denman Street in Nottingham. There was no back gate to the little yard and the full pail had to be carried out through one of the houses by the night-soil men when they made their weekly call to empty the pails. No wonder that over 400 infants in Nottingham perished from diarrhoea (3). Nowadays diarrhoea is simple to treat, with rehydration salts, but in 1911 there was nothing of this nature available.The August temperatures remained very high. Over the summer, Hodsock Priory in Nottinghamshire recorded thirty days with a maximum temperature of over 80^0F (26.7^0C). Agricultural work virtually ceased as the ground was baked hard, and there were shortages of water as wells began to run dry. The strikes at docks meant that vast quantities of imported foodstuffs began to spoil. To make matters worse, railway workers began to strike on 7th August, the Bank Holiday

Monday. The country was at a standstill. On 9th August, the Parliament Bill was passed, without the need for the King to create new peers. The bill prevented the House of Lords from blocking for more than two years any bill which had been passed by the House of Commons. By 11th August, Lord George Askwith, comptroller-general of the Commercial, Labour and Statistical Departments of the Board of Trade, had made progress with the many claims for increased wages and many wages were raised. This, along with the various benefits to be incorporated into Lloyd George's National Insurance Act, ensured that many of the strikers went back to work.

By 23rd August, the weather station at South Kensington failed to register any bright sunshine for the first time in 53 days, and on 11 September the temperatures across the country dropped by an average of 20^0F. Thus ended one of the longest and hottest summers on record in the United Kingdom.

Notes

1.King George V came to the throne at a time of constitutional crisis. In 1910, a bill by the Liberal government to provide rather basic pensions and social security for the poor was opposed by the House of Lords, whose Tory majority would be the people on whom the taxation would fall to pay for the provisions. The new king agreed to create sufficient Liberal peers to defeat the Tories in the Lords and pass the bill. An election took place in December 1910, as a result of which various bills proceeding through Parliament failed. One of these was a measure to allow women the vote. The loss of the bill infuriated the Women's Social and Political Union – the Suffragettes. Their protests, which had so far been fairly genteel, thereafter became violent. Is it possible that the very hot summer of 1911 was a factor in this?

2. Friends of Rupert Brooke at the time included Hugh Dalton (Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 1945 Labour government, who had to resign following a leak of Budget secrets); Lytton Strachey, writer and literary critic; Rose Macauley, novelist; Geoffrey Keynes and his brother John Maynard Keynes, economist (think Milton Keynes with concrete cows and roundabouts); George Mallory (died on Mount Everest); Virginia Stephen, writer, who married Leonard Woolf.

3. J.Wilson 'And many of the little ones died' – Public health, sanitation and weather in early 20th century Nottingham. *Transactions of the Thoroton Society* 2012 vol. 116 pp 129-139. Further reading: Juliet Nicholson, *1911: ThePerfect Summer*. John Murray 2006

John Wilson

FROM THE PUB TO THE MUSEUM:RELOCATING GEORGE CAMPION'S NATURAL HISTORY SPECIMENS.

Matthew here reflects on the fascinating results of a placement with Nottingham City Museums and Galleries during 2020

Following a discussion with Ann Inscker, who, through her research on Nottingham lace, is interested in the Campion family, I began to conduct some research into the taxidermy specimens acquired by Wollaton Hall in 1929 or 1930 from the Nottingham bicycle merchant, George F. Campion (1889-1955). George was the grandson of William Campion Jr., a Nottingham sewing machine manufacturer, who was also a member of the Nottingham Natural History Society. According to the Nottingham Collections Register, committee minutes, dated 26 November 1929, George Campion 'wished to dispose of a large collection of Natural History Specimens' and Professor John Wesley Carr, Head of Biology at the University of Nottingham c. 1906-1928, 'had inspected the same and recommended that about 30 of such specimens be purchased… provided the price does not exceed £25', with the committee granting permission to purchase the items on behalf of Wollaton Hall. Committee minutes, dated 4 February 1930, further recorded that an undisclosed sum, most likely the amount allocated to Carr to purchase the specimens, was 'Paid to E.W. Campion'.

The database also explains that all of the specimens, purchased by Carr as a single lot, were transferred from the 'Sir Colin Campbell' public house, located on Robin Hood Street, Sneinton, Nottingham.[2]

[2] The description of Carr's purchase of specimens (Acquisition Reference Number 1929.04), containing information taken from the *Annual Report of the Public Libraries and Natural History Museum Committee 1929-1930*, the *Museum Accessions 1926-1933* (Registry No. 604), f.10, *the Public Libraries and Museum Committee* (26/11/1929, 21/01/1930) and the *Committee Ledgers* Vol. 57 (1929-30), p. 375 comes from Nottinghamshire Archives, CA/TR/12/16, and Nottingham City Museums, Wollaton Hall Museum Register (privately accessed).

This information corresponds with research conducted by Joe Earp and Iris Tansley, who explain that Edwin William Campion, George Campion's brother, owned and ran the pub before selling it in 1929 'to concentrate on his retail business'. Indeed, the 'Campbell 'was infamous for having stuffed animals around the walls and hanging from the ceiling, which were sold separately to the Nottingham Natural History Museum'.[3] The Natural History Register lists the individual items included in Carr's purchase as a 'Blue Shark or Porbeagle, collected from the Humber River', a 'sawfish', a 'sun-fish', an assemblage of 'small reptiles and amphibians', an 'alligator', 'cases of tropical birds (about 150)', a 'pair of Kestrels with nests and young', an 'Eagle-Owl', a 'Greater Anteater', a 'Lemur' and a 'Diana Monkey'.[4] From this list, the only specimen, which has been positively identified is the Diana Monkey (V1800M) which the Vertebrates Database states as having come from the pub and which is described as 'dusty', with damage to its feet and missing the tip of its tail.[5] Using the Wollaton Hall Vertebrates Database, I have subsequently researched and recorded those specimens, currently in the Wollaton Hall collection, which correspond to Carr's list and could, therefore, be the items he purchased. I have also transferred this information into a table, which identifies these specimens more clearly. Unfortunately, the 'saw-fish' and the 'Greater Anteater' appear to have been lost, as the provenance of the specimens of these species, currently held in the Wollaton Hall taxidermy stores, is already known, and not linked to Campion. However, as there are specimens of shark, sunfish, alligator, eagle owl and lemur, whose provenance is not yet known, it would be worth conducting further research to see if any of these can be linked to Campion. It has been difficult to conduct searches for some of the Campion specimens owing to the vagueness of the descriptions provided in the committee minutes. For instance,

[3]https://www.fiddlebase.com/biographical-sketches/campion-william/ (accessed: 1 March 2021).

[4] Wollaton Hall Museum Register.

[5] The Wollaton Hall Vertebrates Database (privately accessed).

references to ‘small reptiles and amphibians’ and ‘cases of tropical birds’, provide no individual species names, which can be searched for on the database. Similarly, it is likely that the ‘pair of Kestrels with nests and young’ have been listed as individual specimens on the Vertebrates Database and so it is difficult to ascertain if any of the kestrel specimens described form part of this mount. Three photographs of the interior of the Sir Colin Campbell public house, dated around 1900, have particularly helped with specimen identification.[6] Indeed, following close examination of these photos, they have revealed that the preserved shark bears a strong resemblance to specimen V5169P currently in the Wollaton Hall taxidermy stores, suggesting that this is probably the ‘Blue Shark’ listed in the committee minutes. Additionally, the alligator specimen, V1658R, also in the museum stores, is likely to be the suspended alligator seen in the photographs. This is further supported by the indentations that can be seen on the specimen’s skin, close to its forelimbs and hindlimbs, which appear to correspond with the metal hoops or wires that were used to secure the mount to the ceiling when it was on display in the pub. Additionally, specimens of two species of phalanger in the Wollaton Hall taxidermy stores (V4531M and V2532M) seem to align with specimens that can be seen in one of the glass cases in the photographs, suggesting that these specimens were also possibly purchased by Carr. Whilst there are no direct references to these specimens in the committee minutes, it is worth noting that, in the photographs, they appear to be sharing their large display case with a number of taxidermy birds. Is it possible, therefore, that they were included in the committee minutes as part of the ‘cases of tropical birds’ and that they were placed in their current, smaller display case after their arrival at Wollaton Hall? The fact that there are no other records of phalanger acquisitions on the Natural History Register also suggests that these might be linked to Campion.

[6] Seehttps://picturenottingham.co.uk/image-library.html? keywords=colin

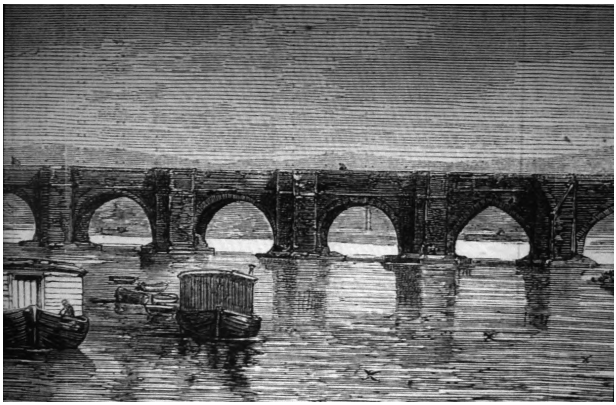
In terms of future research, it would be useful to see if any of the cases of birds seen in the pictures can be found in the Wollaton Hall taxidermy stores, but it is entirely possible, of course, that these cases were not, in fact, purchased by Carr. Furthermore, the composition of these bird cases could easily have been broken down into their corresponding elements, which would make identification more difficult, particularly if the specimens were reduced to skins whilst being stored. It might be helpful to try and obtain additional pictorial and written evidence, which could shed more light on the taxidermy specimens displayed in the pub, as this would provide a clearer picture of the key features of other Campion specimens, which might still exist in the Wollaton Hall taxidermy stores. This and broader research into the Campion collection would benefit those who are interested in the development of natural history as well as those interested in local history.

Matthew Carter

Matthew Carter, is completing his PhD at the Universityof Nottingham,with Midlands 4 Cities Doctoral Training Consortium funding.

HETHBETH BRIDGE

(History with Antiquarian and Archaeological information)



The Hethbeth Bridge as drawn in 1871, reproduced from the Illustrated London News (5 August 1871)

In July 2021, the Trent Bridge celebrated its 150th anniversary. Throughout its existence, it has been a vital means of crossing the river, with tens of thousands of vehicles and many pedestrians passing over the bridge each day by February 2020, according to a study. A river crossing has, however, been necessary for Nottingham since the early medieval period, so what came before this iconic bridge?

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that in the year 923 or 924, King Edward the Elder ordered a new stronghold to be established on the southern side of the River Trent, and that a bridge be built to connect that stronghold with the burh of Snotingeham. It is widely believed that this was the bridge later known as the Hethbeth Bridge (the immediate forerunner of the Trent Bridge), although it has also been suggested that the southern stronghold may have been Wilford and that the early 10th century bridge was therefore further to the west.

Certainly, by the Norman Conquest there was a bridge connecting West Bridgford and Nottingham, and this formed the main access route from the south. It was a vitally important means by which goods and people could be brought to and from the town, and it connected the North and South of England. After crossing the Trent, people would make their way over the causeway which was raised above the often-flooded Meadows and would then cross the River Leen, entering the town near Narrow Marsh and Fisher Gate.

By the early 13th century, St John's Hospital was entrusted with the upkeep of the bridge but by the early 14th century the responsibility was given to individuals such as John and Alice Palmer. A succession of kings took great interest in the bridge's condition, with a number of Royal inquisitions set up to ensure it was rebuilt.The bridge was originally constructed of timber, probably on stone piers. Records indicate that stone was quarried for the bridge in 1234, but large parts of its structure remained of timber throughout the medieval period, during which it was often described as being in a ruinous condition, in need of rebuilding. According to records, as well as a description by the antiquarian Charles Deering, the bridge was

still partly made of timber in 1683 when it was largely destroyed, having also been damaged during Civil War skirmishes. In 1683 rebuilding works led to the bridge becoming a 20-arch bridge, built entirely of stone. However, photographs and illustrations of the bridge show at least two distinct phases of construction, with the southern arches of the bridge appearing to be of a late medieval form.

There was a chapel on the bridge, which enabled travellers to say a prayer as they crossed, and this was also used as a means to collect alms for the upkeep of the bridge. The earliest reference to a chapel dates to 1301/2 when it was dedicated to St Mary, but a rebuilding of the bridge before 1322 led to a new chapel, dedicated to St James, being built. A chantry certificate of the 1540s referred to Launcelett Wodhall as being the *'chaunterie preste' and described a 'chappell covered with leade, with an alter [sic] to celebrate, upon the bridge of Nottingham…'.* In 1817, 1826 and 1831, during repairs to foundations of the bridge and during periods of low water level, substantial amounts of stonework were found on the riverbed, including sculptured stone and mullioned windows resembling those at St Mary's Church. The stone was found close to the 6th and 7th arches of the bridge, and it was suggested that was where the chapel may have stood.

Due to the increased volume of traffic, it was decided in 1868 that a new bridge was needed and so the extant Trent Bridge was built in 1871.

The Hethbeth Bridge and New Trent Bridge photographed in 1871

It stood adjacent to the Hethbeth Bridge and, for a few months these bridges co-existed, before Hethbeth was demolished later that year. A short length of the bridge survives just outside the City Council boundary, at West Bridgford, close to County Hall, and this is preserved as a Scheduled Monument meaning that it is legally protected and deemed to be of national significance. It is believed that these remains are of late medieval date, although they have yet to be dated more closely than this broad period.During the excavations for the bridge's foundations in 1871, remains of what was believed to be a landing stage were encountered. It was formed of black oak beams trenailed together with oak pins, cross braced framing, all resting on large blocks of an unidentified type of stone.

Scott Lomax, City Archaeologist

BOOKCASE

BOOK REVIEWS.

Richard Thomas Parker.

The last man to be publicly hanged in Nottingham
by Emmaline Severn (2021)
Published by Amazon and available from Amazon.co.uk
priced at £4.99. ISBN 9798731765695

On the 10th of August 1864, a large crowd gathered on High Pavement in Nottingham near the County Gaol (today, the National Justice Museum) to see a public hanging. The man to be hanged was Richard Thomas Parker for the wilful murder of his mother. The public execution of any villain always proved to be a popular event attracting large crowds and this one was execution were different; however, this would turn out to be the

last one to be held in public The trial and execution held at the County Gaol, as the crime had been committed at Fiskerton in Nottinghamshire. The story is one I have heard and read about when doing research on the Lace Market area of the city, but the book gives a good insight into the life of Richard Parker and his parents, Elizabeth, and Samuel Parker. Describing the early life of Elizabeth and Samuel in the early to middle 1800's the book paints a picture of an idyllic rural life on the farm at Fiskerton which they ran and the land they held. Today, we see Fiskerton as a rural village between Nottingham and Newark easily reached by modern transport, yet in the period when the event happened it was one of many small villages dotted around the Nottinghamshire countryside. Its neighbours were Bleasby and Thurgarton and these three villages formed a close-knit community.

Richard Thomas Parker, known as Tom, was born in 1834; at 18, he was apprenticed to a butcher in Nottingham. As a butcher, his parents indulged him and purchased a butchers shop in Fiskerton opposite their house. Sadly, 'drink' played an important role in his life and often after drinking his temper flared and he became violent, both with his wife, Emily (whom he married in 1860) and his father. His mother often had to intervene to break up their arguments. So it was on that fateful day in March 1864, when Tom returned from Sheffield, that an argument with his father ensued, leading to Tom taking a shotgun and firing it blindly from the house into the barn where his father was. His mother stood in the yard and was struck on the head when the gun was discharged (she died four weeks later), his father being wounded in the barn. Realising what he had done, Tom attempted to flee but was arrested on the way to Newark. The author goes into great detail explaining how the evidence was gathered from witnesses, the post-mortem on his mother, and, finally, the inquest resulting in Tom being committed for trial for the crime of wilful murder.

Using the original transcripts, the author gives an insight into the procedures which led to Richard Thomas Parker standing trial for murder on the 25th of July 1864.

Kevin Powell

Collingham and East of the Trent volume 1: Ice Age to the Romans

By Jeremy Lodge (2021) published privately jeremylodge@yahoo.co.uk. ISBN 978-0-9956634-1-1

This fascinating book is concerned with the area known as the Trent Washlands and the East Nottinghamshire Sandlands. The Trent Washlands cover the area of the Trent Floodplain north of Newark, and the East Nottinghamshire Sandlands extend eastwards to the limestone escarpment on which stands the city of Lincoln. The book covers a very long period – from the end of the last Ice Age around 12,000 years ago, to the end of the Roman period, usually regarded as AD410 or a little later. The story begins with an overview of what is known of the changes in the landscape following the retreat of the ice, culminating in the submerging of Doggerland, the area of land which connected what is now the island of Britain with mainland Europe. As sea levels rose, the land was gradually submerged. A major landslip on the coast of Norway (the Storegga incident) probably finished the job and finally separated the British and Irish Isles from Europe. There is much information on the River Trent and other rivers, such as the former River Bytham, and I learned of places such as the Trent Trench, formed by the retreating ice, which includes the river cliffs near Kneeton and Syerston. The cover picture, although of a ‘braided’ river plain in the Yukon, shows how the Trent may have looked after the end

of the Ice Age. The changing vegetation patterns are well described, as is the likely pattern of human encroachment into the area. The author makes much reference to Creswell Crags and the areas around Collingham and Farndon, and the archaeological investigations there.
The population increased and became relatively sophisticated, culminating in the Bronze Age and Iron Age peoples and settlements.Then came the Romans, with their very rapid takeover. The area under discussion was largely the land of the Coritani (Corieltauvi) who may have been relatively friendly towards the Romans, or at least less antagonistic. The Romans quickly built the Fosse Way with many settlements including Margidunum near Bingham (today commemorated in the large intersection on the A46). One of these settlements was at Potter Hill, near Norton Disney, just over the border in Lincolnshire.
The villa there was excavated in the 1930s by Adrian Oswald. In 1935, the Thoroton Society contributed £21 towards the costs of the excavation at Potter's Hill and £15 to the excavation at Margidunum.

The book then has a number of case studies, including 'Becoming an Island' – an in-depth study of the loss of Doggerland and the gradual changes in the landscape; farming and the development of the plough; the Norton Disney Roman villa; and the settlement at Brough (Crococolana). There is then a gazetteer of archaeological finds from the area, all with their County Council Heritage Environment Register references. The book contains numerous allusions to the Thoroton Society and ends with an extensive bibliography. I have one or two minor criticisms. Some of the statements made are not well referenced. As an example, on page 54 it states 'Fieldwalking in advance of quarrying in Collingham has produced 'a remarkably high incidence of debris from the production of chipped stone

tools'… This seems to be a quote from a paper, but who wrote the paper? And when? I would like to know. Interestingly, in the case studies, there are very adequate references.

A few typos have escaped the eagle eye of the proof-reader. There is an error on page 105, where there is a mention of 'small [Roman Army] forts which would have accommodated less than one cohort – 80 to 100 men' This is very much less than a cohort, which typically would have comprised six centuries each of 80 men, i.e. 480 soldiers [1]. It would be more accurate to describe the forts as accommodating a century or so. I am surprised that the bibliography did not include Mark Patterson's book on Roman Nottinghamshire (2011). However, these are minor points. The few criticisms certainly do not detract from the enjoyment of the book, which I am pleased to say is easily readable with good spacing of the text and a sensible font size, and is well furnished with photographs, maps and diagrams.

Volume 2 of this work is promised for the summer of 2022. It will cover the period from the departure of the Roman legions to Domesday, 1086. I am looking forward to it. Thank you, Jeremy, for a very interesting and useful book.

[1) Salway, P The Oxford Illustrated History of Roman Britain OUP 1993

John Wilson

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Further details and description for each volume can be found on the Society's website. Orders can be placed by email to: sales@thorotonsociety.org.uk

Rob James

FROM THE EDITOR

Starting with the Winter Edition in December an online version of theThoroton Newsletter will be available as well as the printed Editions. Please contact me by email if you would like an online version of the Newsletter

Paul Baker (pb3448@gmail.com)

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VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY: For information and to join the group contact the County Editor, Philip Riden **:** philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk

LECTURES AND EVENTS: 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 2p.m. Contact: **dhoskins@talktalk.net**

(Other Events such as Excursions will be notified in prior Newsletters to the Event with booking details.)

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.

The Newsletter is published four times a year. The Spring Newsletter from the 2022 edition will be included at the end of the Annual Report. Deadlines for contributions to the Newsletter are: **1 February (and Annual Review deadline), 1 May, 1 August, and 1 November each year** .Please send all contributions to the Editor by email. pb3448@gmail.com. There is also the eBulletin which members can request to receive . If you do not already receive this you can sign up for it by contacting admin@thorotonsociety.org.uk .

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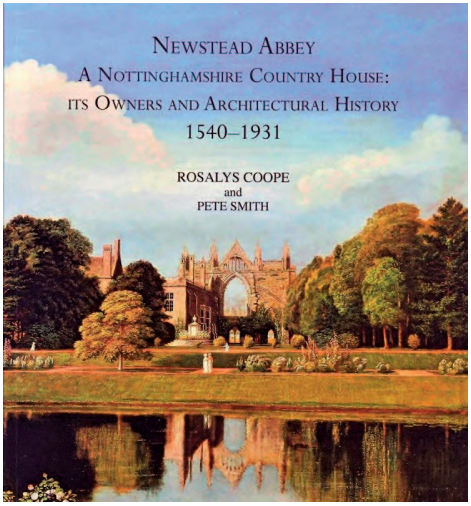

Top left: Rosalys with Elain Harwood at Rufford
Bottom left: *Newstead Abbey A Nottinghamshire Country House* (2014) by Rosalys and Pete Smith
Top right: Rosalys' home at the Poplars, Epperstone
Bottom right: Rosalys with Pete Smith