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*The ichthyosaur fossil found at Rutland Water  
(Anglian Water).*

### **Rutland County Museum**

Plans are afoot to develop the museum into a Cultural Centre.

Rutland County Council is proposing to invest £6million as part of a plan to boost Rutland's wider appeal to tourists by developing the museum as a cultural centre. The aim is to increase the number of visitors to the county which will open the door to bidding for external funds in the future. Most of the funding for the proposal is included in the council's 2026/27 budget, but £2million would come from levelling up funding

already awarded to the council by the government to create a digital visitor experience. The County Council wants to make the 180 million year old

ichthyosaur fossil found buried beneath Rutland Water the centrepiece of a re-arranged Rutland County Museum. While the ultimate goal is for the fossil to be housed physically at the museum, the initial plan is to create digital displays of both the ichthyosaur and the Roman Trojan War mosaic found near Ketton in 2020.

These plans have implications for museum access as well as for our meetings. Members will be advised accordingly as and when details become available. (see <https://rutlandcountymuseum.org.uk> for more information).

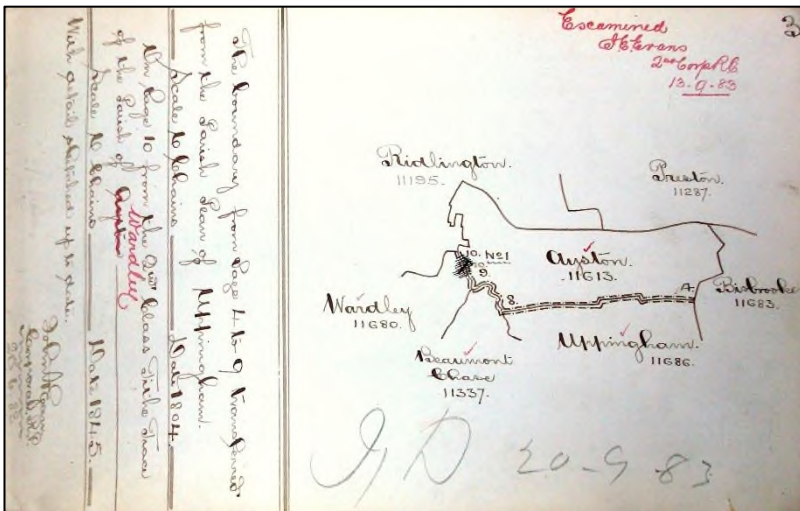
# Frozen in Time

## Ayston Parish Boundary

Tony Martin

Those of you who are aware of the ongoing parish boundary survey will likely have begun to realise from my reports that many of the boundaries examined so far appear relatively unchanged from when they were first recorded. Certainly, when compared with maps dating from the early 19th century our parish borders follow identical routes on almost every occasion. The last time that every parish was accurately surveyed and mapped was in 1883 when an Ordnance Survey was carried out on the County by men from the Royal Engineers.

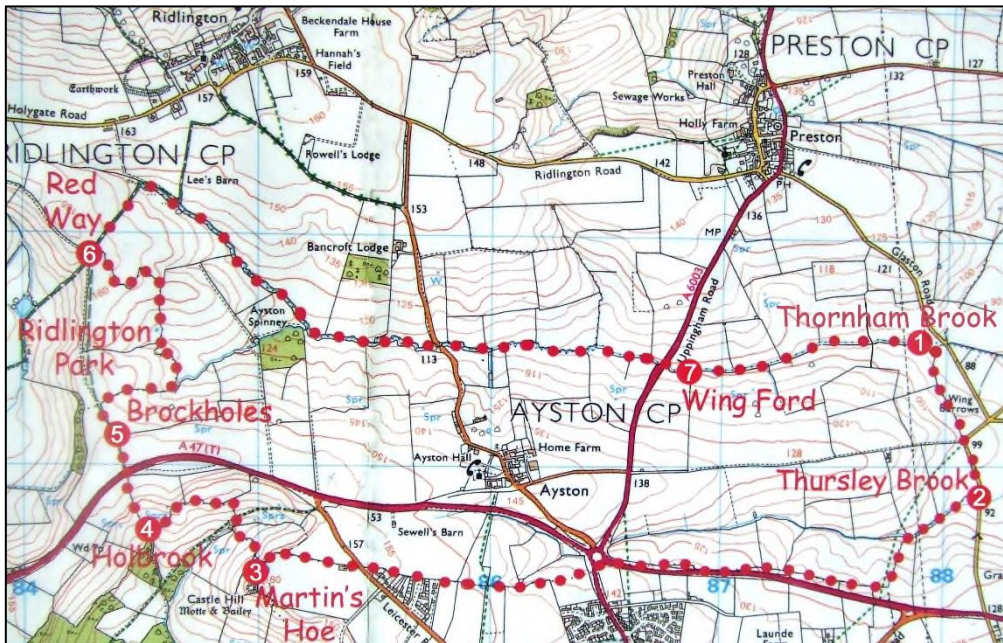
Historically it was this body of men who were responsible for surveying and creating the first accurate topographical maps of Great Britain, trained as they were in the arts of cartography and drawing. The Royal Sappers and Miners (to give them their original title) had honed these skills on the battlefield, mapping defensive works and coastlines since the late 1700s as part of the Board of Ordnance, hence the title given to modern maps. The fruits of their labours in Rutland can be examined at The National Archives, where the series of hand drawn and annotated *Boundary Remark Books* are catalogued as part of the national records in OS26.



A page from the Board of Ordnance Ayston Boundary Remark Book (The National Archives OS26).

They show a remarkable amount of detail and have so far proved invaluable as part of the current project. Comparison between modern maps and these hand drawn books helps solve many of the difficulties encountered in walking the boundaries. Their accuracy is undeniable as the original surveys were carried out by the soldiers in collaboration with each parish Meresman. This ancient title was bestowed on the person (some were women) deemed responsible for the knowledge and upkeep of every parish boundary, and they would have conducted their own regular surveys on behalf of the parish. During the survey of 1883 they accompanied the Engineers. Meresmen from the parish under survey together with those from each adjoining

parish would have been present for each leg of the survey and had to agree on the accuracy of the maps produced. Any anomalies were noted by the Engineers in the Boundary Remark Book and each Meresman signed the final drawings on behalf of their respective parishes.



However, there is one parish in Rutland which has been subject to a much older survey which still exists in a written form, allowing us to compare it with what remains now.

*The original Anglo-Saxon perambulation of Ayston Parish marked on a modern Ordnance Survey map (RO).*

Remarkably this survey of Ayston, commissioned in 1046 for Edward the Confessor, mirrors almost exactly the modern parish boundary. Use of natural



1. *Thornham Brook* (author).



2. *Thursley Brook* (author).



3. *Martins Hoe* (author).



4. *Holbrook* (author).

features to help delineate the parish means that almost every inch of the boundary has remained unchanged.

The original Anglo-Saxon perambulation is described through a series of eight bounds<sup>(1)</sup>, and modern translation allowed us to identify and replicate them as our survey was conducted.

Modern grid references included in the translation helped with accuracy, but many of the points mentioned were easily identifiable as natural features which have remained almost unchanged for close on 1000 years. The start point is given as near a road crossing at **Thornham Brook [1]**. The precise point is unclear because the modern Glaston to Preston road has likely moved slightly east and the brook now runs through a culvert under the road. In Anglo-Saxon times this would probably have been just a ford. Coincidentally this point also marks the convergence of four parishes; Ayston, Bisbrooke, Preston and Wing.

From here the Ayston boundary turns due south and follows what was probably the line of the original track between Glaston and Preston before joining the modern road. The perambulation tells us it meets the next point named **Thursley Brook [2]** where it turns south-west. The brook is now nothing more than a ditch but the boundary faithfully follows its course before leaving it to head uphill towards the modern Clatterpot Farm and the A47. Here it turns west, shadowing the modern bypass which has been installed sympathetically so as not to generally encroach.

There is one recent change however, due to the installation of the roundabout at Ayston Road/A47. The ancient boundary would have simply crossed the old Ayston Road here at a point where Thursley Brook to the west intersected it. Now we have to imagine the exact point, somewhere close to the roundabout. The boundary continues west following a series of hedges which lead towards Castle Hill. A new housing development on Leicester Road recently threatened to remove a section of this hedge, but thanks to an intervention by the Society its historical importance has been acknowledged and this has been dropped from the scheme.

At a point immediately north of Castle Hill the boundary turns south-west and drops down the valley to a spot called **Martins Hoe [3]** on the old perambulation. A gateway now marks this point and it was clearly of some significance at the time, sitting as it does at the base of the hill upon which the castle was situated. Perhaps this was the site of something much earlier prior to the Normans fortifying it? Three boundaries meet here: Ayston, Uppingham and the old parish of Beaumont Chase. Passing through the gateway the boundary turns 180 degrees north and follows a meandering course uphill until it meets another ditch further west. This point is termed **Holbrook [4]** and the boundary now follows this ditch northward. Holbrook is yet another point where boundaries meet, in this case Ayston, Beaumont Chase and Wardley.

It continues north, crosses the A47 and follows an ancient hedge dotted with oak trees. Somewhere along the



5. Brockholes (author).



6. Redway from Ridlington Park (author).



7. Wing Ford (author).

Comparisons with both a surviving Brudenell estate map of the 1600s and the Ordnance Survey of 1883 bear testament to the fact that Ayston as a parish has remained almost entirely unchanged since before Domesday. We are truly blessed in Rutland, as it seems our little County parishes have somehow survived the ravages of time and overdevelopment so far. But one has to wonder for how much longer?

#### Reference

1. Hart, C R, *The Early Charters of Eastern England*, Leicester University Press, 1966, pp 107-109.

line of this hedge is an area referred to as **Brockholes [5]** in the ancient text. The boundary next takes a deviation and drops down the valley, heading east following a small stream which eventually empties into Thornham Brook. We are now tracing the edge of what was once Ridlington Park, part of Wardley Wood and an ancient deer park. Dropping to the bottom of the valley the boundary intersects the stream mentioned earlier which continues east to Ayston Spinney and eventually joins Thornham Brook. At this juncture the boundary turns north and follows a meandering hedge line before turning west and heading uphill once more.

On reaching the ridgeline the boundary meets the bridgeway which runs along it and now turns due north along a sunken road leading to Ridlington. This is named **Redway [6]** in the original Anglo-Saxon text and is clearly an ancient route way. Heading downhill, this path eventually crosses what will become Thornham Brook, which at this point is nothing more than a ditch, the source of which lies just to the west. Now the boundary turns due east and follows the brook faithfully, crossing the Ayston/Ridlington road and marching on until it reaches the Uppingham/Preston road. Here the perambulation refers to a spot called **Wing Ford [7]**, which likely lay slightly east of the modern road. The latter has been raised to accommodate a culvert which passes under it, so a ford would have possibly existed at a lower level in the field to the east. The boundary continues to follow Thornham Brook until it arrives back at the start point adjacent to the Glaston/Preston Road.



1600s Brudenell estate map of Ayston Manor (Deene Park Archives).

## Exton Village Visit

Saturday 20th September 2025

Robert Ovens

The Society's 2025 Village Visit was to Exton. An audience of more than 80 members and village residents filled the Village Hall for a presentation delivered by Society committee member Richard Hunt. Introduced by Master of Ceremonies Tony Martin, Richard spoke of the early Roman and Saxon occupation of the village based mainly on archaeological finds and then traced the history of the owners of Exton, particularly the Culpepers, Kelways, Haringtons, Hicks and Noels, the Earls of Gainsborough.



*Richard Hunt presented the talk (RO).*

A display featuring photographs of the village from the Jack Hart Collection at Rutland County Museum was prepared by Deborah and Tony Martin who also researched another display on the history of Church Farm and an information panel on Pte Alfred Tyler of Exton. Whilst working for the Earl of Ancaster on the Hardwick Farms, Alfred enlisted in the Leicester



*Deborah and Tony Martin with their Church Farm display (RO).*

Regiment in 1916 and was almost immediately transferred to the 2/6th Sherwood Foresters who were detailed to Ireland to quell the Irish Rebellion. Pte Tyler was killed there by a sniper on 27th April 1916.

Another First World War soldier was celebrated by Peter Whadcoat of Exton. His grandfather, Douglas Murray Wilson, known as Pat, was born in February 1893 at Galashiels. After three years military service in the Yorkshire Hussars, he emigrated to Montreal, Canada, where in October 1914, at the age of age 21, he signed up for the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Twenty-four officers and 1062 men left Canada on the SS Cameronia, arriving at Plymouth on 20th May 1915. They continued training near Folkestone and sailed for Boulogne to join the war in September.

Lieutenant Wilson took part in trench warfare in Belgium and France. He was also a photographer in the Royal Air Corps. On 6th November 1917, near Hillside Farm, a mile from the village of Passchendaele, they came under intense shelling and Pat was wounded in the thigh and sustained two broken ribs. By now the Company's strength had been reduced to some 30 men and one officer. Nearly half of the men of the 24th Battalion, CEF, had been killed or wounded.

He was transferred to the Queen Alexandra Military Hospital in London on 22nd January 1918 to recover, after which he returned to Canada.



*Peter Whadcoat talks to Sheila Sleath about his grandfather's exploits in the First World War (RO).*

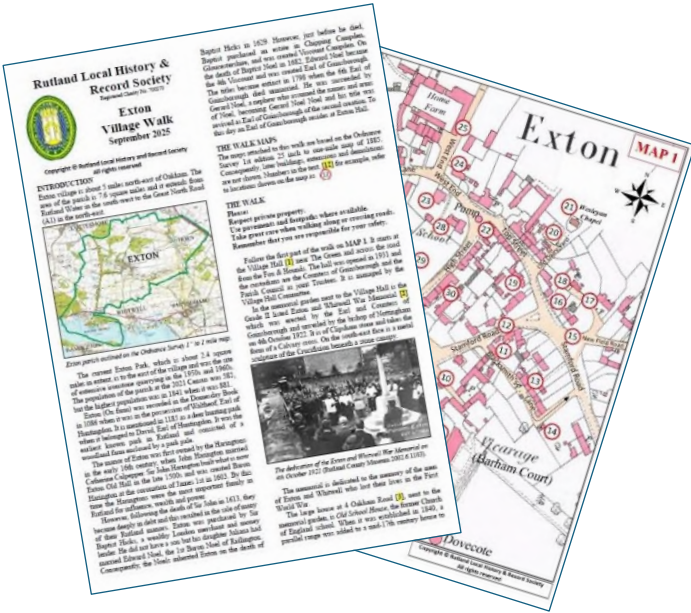
Peter Whadcoat had a good collection of his grandfather's ephemera, including photographs, documents, buttons from his uniform and his gold pocket watch.

Other village contributors included Ann Bell with her scrap books, Philip Corsano, Annie Lea and Paul Taylor. From the church safe, Bernadette Wallace brought the magnificent handwritten manuscript of *Exton Remembered*, the memoirs of Herbert Robert Wilton Hall, who was a school master in the village in 1876, along with a copy of *The Thatched Village*, by James Buchan, detailing life in the village between

1919 and 1935. Alex Buchan, James Buchan's grandson, brought along a silver teapot presented by The Old Scholars of St Mary's Catholic School to his great grandmother, headmistress of the school, on her retirement in 1953.

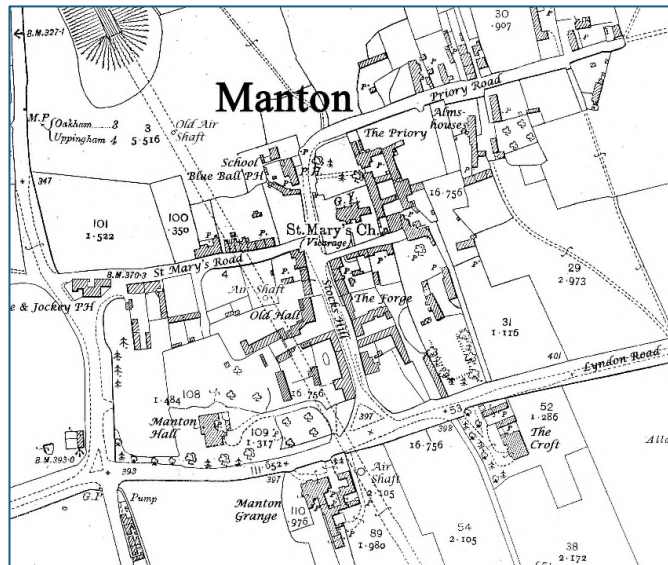
Paul Reeve had a table of Society publications for sale and refreshments were provided by Deborah Martin, Lynn Ryder and Jill Kimber.

The afternoon concluded with a leaflet-guided historical walk around the village and church prepared by Robert Ovens. This walk is now available to download and follow on the Society's website.



**The 2026 Village Visit**

The next Village Visit is to Manton in September 2026. Details will be sent to members in July or August by email if we have a current email address, otherwise they will be sent by post. The details will also be included in the Society Events section of our website. Admission will be via the Eventbrite website, or by advance postal booking.



Manton from the Ordnance Survey 2nd Series 25-inch maps of 1904 (Rutland County Museum).

**The Braunston Carving – a Goddess or a Fantasy?**

Ian Ryder

The recent Society village visit to Braunston brought attention once again to the unusual sculpture which stands outside at the base of the church tower. The sculpture is carved at one end of a rectangular shaped stone; the other is set in the ground as shown in the photographs. The carving has been variously described as Iron Age, Romano-Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, a Goddess, a gargoyle or a Hunky Punk grotesque. It is not clear when the carving was discovered. Most articles mention the 1920s. However, it was first illustrated in the 1911-12 volume of the *Rutland Magazine* in an article on Braunston. It was described as previously being used as a doorstep into the church, presumably with the carving face down. It seems likely that it was found as part of the 1885-90 Braunston church renovations (Refs 1 & 2). Braunston All Saints' church was until 1885 a chapelry of Hambleton from which it separated with the appointment of a Braunston vicar. It was this change that prompted the renovation. The new vicar, Benjamin Barratt, did not mention the carving and was more concerned, at the time, with the fate of an ancient font that had 'long ago' been removed from the church, used as rainwater butt, later broken, buried and lost. (Breaking and burial, symbolic of death, were an acceptable method of disposal, whereas use as a butt was sacrilegious.) Following a successful search the font was repaired, reinstalled and used for baptisms at the reopening in October 1890. Did this search also unearth the carving? (Refs 3, 4 & 5) The 1911-12 article simply describes the carving as Anglo-Saxon. The lack of any further information may be due to the sensitivity of the Rev Barratt, still the vicar, not wishing to acknowledge a pagan idol. This may also explain its position outside the church. However, the *Victoria County History of Rutland*, written a quarter of a century later, describes it as 'an example of the rude Fertility Figures which occur in England, Wales and Ireland' which are associated with the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, saying that the carving is a grotesque stone figure of a type known in Ireland as 'Sheela-Na-Gigs'. The stone's dimensions are given as 3 feet 10 inches long by 14 inches wide by 7 inches thick, with the carving extending over the top 21 inches (Ref 6). However, a more recent assessment, by a group established to collate information on 'Sheela-Na-Gigs' sculptures, discounted the Braunston carving as being a member of the class, due to its lack of genitalia. Their assessment gives a good description of the carving: a 'head with two eyes with a pronounced eyebrow ridge. The only remaining eye has a drilled pupil, and it would seem reasonable to assume the

other also did. There is considerable damage to the left side of the head, but the remnants of the other eye remain and more unusually a second 'nose' is also present. Below the eyes is a large open mouth with what appears to be a tongue.

'Deeply carved striations appear on both sides of the figure with an almost 'concertina' effect. Underneath these striations appear to be fairly pert breasts, however the right one is damaged'. The group went on to say that 'whereas the figure was quite unusual it would not look out-of-place with other sculpture from the medieval period' (ref 7). It has also been observed that the way the stone is carved on only three of its sides is unlike functional gargoyles (water spouts) but has some semblance to late fifteenth and early sixteenth century Somerset 'Hunky Punk' grotesque carvings. However, as these mostly feature dragonsque beasts and are carved in full 3-D they are significantly different from the Braunston carving. Nevertheless, these Somerset carvings give a clue to its purpose. If it were designed to jut out high on a wall this would explain why the carving has a flat unseen back that could have supported a wooden beam or truss. The uncarved over fifty percent portion of the sculpture would have provided a counterbalance to the overhang. Added to these uncertainties is an ambiguous dual perspective if viewed from below. From one direction it has a female form, from the reverse it is male as shown in the photographs (Ref 8). It would therefore seem likely, in the absence any other information, that the 'Goddess' was most likely a medieval mason's piece of fancy, in the same manner as many gargoyles. The sculpture may not even have originated in Braunston. In nearby Brooke, the Priory was demolished after its dissolution and some of its stonework reused in local houses and its Church was subjected to extensive reconstruction around 1579 (Refs 9 & 10) Was either of these the source of this convenient step-sized stone?



The carving at the base of the church tower (author).

If positioned high on a wall and viewed from below there are two perspectives:



Female



Male

#### References

- 1 <http://www.stone-circles.org.uk/stone/braunston.htm> - accessed 13 April 2025.
2. *The Rutland Magazine and County Historical Record*, Vol. V, 1911-2, plate between p197-8.
3. *Leicestershire & Rutland Notes & Queries*, Vol. 1, Leicester, 1891, p71-2 & 274-5.
4. *Stamford Mercury*, 17 Oct 1890.
5. <https://lawandreligionuk.com/2015/04/07/they-bury-fonts-dont-they/> - accessed 21 April 2025.
6. *A History of the County of Rutland (VCH)*, Vol.2, London, 1935, p36.
7. <https://sheelanagig.org/braunston/> - accessed 13 April 2025.
8. <https://www.indigogroup.co.uk/edge/braunstn.htm>— accessed 13 April 2025.
9. VCH, Vol.2 p38.
10. *Rutland Record*, Vol. 1, 1980, p27.

## The 2025 LAHS History Fair

The Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society celebrated its 170th Anniversary with a History Fair at Oakham Castle and Rutland County Museum on Saturday 5th July. It included an interesting mix of re-enactment groups, talks by local experts and displays by heritage groups and societies from across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. This pictorial report highlights a selection of what was on offer to the many visitors. The event also saw the official launch of the Leicestershire and Rutland Festival of Archaeology for 2025.

The full day of talks in the main hall of the Museum included *Roman Villas in Rutland* by Peter Liddle, *Rutland, the Secret County* by Mike Burton, and *Under the Horseshoe Hall – the Archaeology of Oakham Castle* by Mathew Morris.

Also present was the University of Leicester Reenactment Society, portraying the life, crafts, and warfare of the high middle ages.



Richard Hunt and Tony Martin on the Rutland History Society stand featuring short PowerPoint presentations on the Lost Historic Buildings of Rutland and the Stoke Dry section of the Council for British Archaeology Parish Boundary Project (RO).



Chevaliers du Leon re-enactment group are a Leicester based medieval group, specialising in living history and combat displays (RO).



The Hallaton Field Workers, a community heritage group, with Hazel Wallace and Ce Ponting (RO).



Longthorpe Legion members Lucius Vinvis Luci (Neil Turner) and Titus Martinus Petrus (Dan Petter).

The Longthorpe Legion is a living history re-enactment group portraying life during the Roman occupation of Britain (RO).



Leicestershire Industrial History Society with Julie and Bob Cooper, promoting tours of the Glenfield railway tunnel (RO).



*The Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society (LAHS) stand with Cynthia Nixon and Joe Hall (RO).*



*The Leicestershire Branch of the Richard III Society with Sally Henshaw and Richard Smith (RO).*



*Leicestershire Fieldworkers with Peter Liddle, Richard Neill, Maynard Davison, Margaret Grindall and Alison Skinner (RO).*



*University of Leicester stand with Janie Masegla, Jane Ainsworth and John Thomas (RO).*



*Janie Masegla of University of Leicester with a floor print of Ketton Trojan War Mosaic (RO).*



*Peter Liddle at the Leicestershire and Rutland Family History Society stand with Sue Lester and Linda Tyrell (RO).*



Sheila Sleath at the Elizabeth Heyrick Society stand (RO).



Sheila Sleath with Tracey Foster of Foxton Canal Museum (RO).



The Desford Heritage stand with Pat Crane (RO).



Foxton Canal Museum stand included a model and details of the inclined plane boat lift (RO).



The King Rota Project with Paul and Marrian Wigin. Rota is thought to have been an Anglo-Saxon lord, and the Project proposes that he may have had a fortress at Hambleton. (RO).



An early print of Oakham Castle Great Hall which was originally built between 1180 and 1190.

## The Moyses, the Tylers and the Grants of Exton

*Families who lived at Church Farm between 1780 and 1891*

Deborah Martin

*This is the story of three families who lived in what is now Church Farm, Exton, told across a century through a series of documents and newspaper articles, all of which are available in the public domain. Through access to local record offices and the internet, the fate of the farm and several generations of its inhabitants is revealed. Two documents give us the location of the farm, the 1807 enclosure map and a plan accompanying a sale document from 1866. We can connect the families to the farm using wills, newspaper articles, legal documents and letters. My interest was initially piqued by a newspaper article about bankruptcy and when I delved further, I uncovered the stories about the changing fortunes of those who lived at the farm.*

The story starts with the Moyses family. William Moyses was a farmer originally from Bourne in Lincolnshire. He and his wife Sophia had two living children, Catherine born in 1731 and Samuel born in 1736. At some point before 1734 the family came to Exton. We know this because their twins John and Mary were baptised and buried in Exton in that year.

On William Moyses' death in 1780, his son Samuel inherited all of his property. William's will states: *'Son Samuel Moyses is devised the estate at Saxilby and Freehold House at Bourne and land at Bourne and also all personal goods. If he is without issue these are transferred to my Grandsons, John and William Chapman'*.<sup>(1)</sup> The latter are the sons of Samuel's sister Catherine, both of whom were to predecease Samuel. Although the farm at Exton is not mentioned, a sworn statement dated 20th April 1827 by George Baker, a Yeoman of Exton, asserts that Samuel also inherited the farm and land in Exton: *'William and Sophia Moyses had 2 living children, Samuel and Catherine. Catherine intermarries a Baptist Chapman. William Moyses occupied a farmhouse, farmyard and outbuildings situated in Exton and also an enclosure adjoining and belonging and several pieces of arable and plough dispersed in open common fields of Exton. On his death all property was conveyed to his son Samuel who continued to occupy the above until enclosure. On such enclosure an allotment of land was given in lieu of the arable on plough also the farmhouse, farmyard, outbuildings and home close continued in his occupation with Henry Braunston. On Samuel Moyses' death everything mentioned above was bequeathed to his niece Catherine Adcock'*.<sup>(2)</sup>



Figure 1. Annotated extract from Exton Enclosure Map of 1807 showing Samuel Moyses' (Moyses's) Home Close (ROLLR DE3214/1216/1-8).

The 1807 enclosure map of Exton shows Samuel Moyses occupying the site of what is now Church Farm and Church Farm Close (Figure 1) along with several fields south of the village. It is assumed that this is the *'farmhouse, farmyard and outbuildings'* referred to by George Baker. On enclosure, Samuel was given a plot of land in compensation for the land he held in the Common Fields. The enclosure award made to Samuel Moyses on 15th April 1807 states: *'Award for plot of land in Empingham Field (29 acres, 1 rood, 26 perches) in lieu of his lands in Common Fields'*.<sup>(3)</sup>

In 1819, legal documents refer to the holdings as: *'Being all the Freehold messuages or tenements, Farmhouse, Yard, Garden, Orchard, Barn, Stable sheds, other buildings thereto adjoining and belonging, and several closes, plough or parcels of grassland adjoining called Home Paddocks comprising 7 acres all in Exton and now occupied by Samuel Moyses. Also the Awarded land from Enclosure occupied by the same Samuel Moyses and Henry Braunston'*.<sup>(4)</sup>

Samuel never married. He died and was buried in Exton on 10th February 1820.<sup>(5)</sup> In his will, dated 31st January 1820, he *'gives to his kinsman and heir Thomas Moyses of Swayfield, Lincs, lands in Lincolnshire... To his said Niece and housekeeper Catherine Adcock all his property and land in Exton where he currently resides. Gifts to George and Samuel Adcock, brothers of Catherine, £50.00 each. Sophie Walker, daughter of niece Lucy Walker and Thomas Walker £6.00 and thereafter per annum for her natural life £6.00. Sophie Wignall wife of Simon Wignall of London £50.00 annuity to be 'paid out of estate''*.<sup>(6)</sup>

Catherine Adcock was then the owner of what is now Church Farm. She was the granddaughter of Samuel's sister Catherine and her second husband Robert Abbott. As she is referred to as Samuel's *'niece and housekeeper'*, it is possible she was living with him.

In 1821, one year after Samuel's death, Catherine married Edward Tyler at Melton Mowbray. The marriage certificate shows Catherine as living in Exton and Edward Tyler as a watchmaker from Melton Mowbray, like his father Robert Tyler. They were married by licence as Edward was under 21 and needed parental consent. They had two sons, Robert Moyses Tyler born in 1823 and Edward Tyler born in 1826. <sup>(7)</sup>

A number of documents from 1827 seem to show Edward and Catherine attempting to either strengthen Catherine's title to the property or to transfer it to Edward. A bundle of papers entitled '*Evidences relating to the descendants of William Moyses of Exton, Yeoman - 1778 – 1827*' <sup>(8)</sup> appear to support Catherine's title to the land, as they include a copy of William Moyses' will, a family tree showing Samuel Moyses' relationship to William, various birth, marriage and burial certificates and an extract from the 1807 Enclosure Award identifying the land in question. This is further supported by the sworn statement of George Baker (noted earlier) in support of the pedigree.

A Marriage Settlement dated 9th May 1827 shows solicitors William Redifer of Stamford and William Gilson of Uppingham as trustees and Edward as a farmer of Exton, Rutland. The settlement refers to the holding in Exton devised to Catherine by Samuel as '*Messuage and land, Home Paddock, West Field, Exton*'. <sup>(9)</sup> At this time a Marriage Settlement was a method of either securing title to property or transferring the same. There were a number of stages and it is not clear from the documents that all the stages were completed. There is a six year gap between Edward and Catherine marrying and the initiation of the marriage settlement in May 1827. As Catherine died in November 1827, it is possible she was ill and the couple were attempting to put their affairs in order. When Edward married Martha Gould in 1832, both were recorded as widowed. <sup>(10)</sup>

A few years later, Edward's title to the estate appears to be in question. A letter dated 2nd October 1838 from Thompsons, solicitors of Stamford, to Richard Westbrook Baker (Steward to Lord Barham of Exton) advised, '*following correspondence with Gilson (Solicitor of Uppingham), Edward Tyler has no right to title until both his first born children come of age and can convey the property to Edward Tyler by sale*'. <sup>(11)</sup> This was followed by a letter dated 4th October 1838 from Richard Westbrook Baker to Messrs. Bridges and Mason, Solicitors, of Red Lion Square, London, summarising the evidence he has seen and suggesting '*they declare Edward Tyler's title as bad and to persuade him the best course of action is to ask Lord Barham to step in. Lord Barham would be most pleased to add this holding to his estate*'. <sup>(12)</sup>

It is possible that Catherine died before the marriage settlement was completed putting Edward's claim to the title in jeopardy. Edward took out a mortgage in 1839, borrowing £350 plus interest. He is the mortgager and a William Irving is the mortgagee. The documentation refers to '*Messuage now used as the Vine Inn and land (7a) in Exton and 30a in the West Field of Exton*'. <sup>(13)</sup> In 1842 Edward took out a Life Assurance policy and a further mortgage, increasing the mortgage total to £900. It appears that in addition to the £350 owed to William Irving, a further £350 is owed to a Henry Berridge of Preston. These mortgages are transferred to Richard Westward Baker and another £200 is lent to Edward Tyler. The property is now referred to as '*Farmhouse now used as the Vine Inn; Home Paddock and West Field, Exton*'. <sup>(14)</sup> The documents do not state why Edward borrowed so much money, but it is possible he was trying to hold onto the property.

In 1844, Edward passed his claim to his sons Robert and Edward. William Redifer and Catherine are now both deceased and William Gilson, the remaining trustee from the Marriage Settlement, has relinquished his claim. The '*Quitclaim*' dated 8th July 1844 refers to Edward Tyler as a '*victualler*' and refers to Catherine as dying before she had completed any of the legal documents to transfer all or part of the title to Edward. <sup>(15)</sup>

The situation seemed to be getting worse for Edward. In September 1845 he applied to the Rutland Petty Sessions to keep an inn at Exton, but it was refused. <sup>(16)</sup> Between July and October of the same year, a number of newspaper articles indicate that Edward was by now in serious debt and was on the verge of bankruptcy. A memorandum from William Gilson, who represented Edward's interests, lists the creditors as John Draper Mackinder of Oakham, a druggist, John Crowson of Oakham, an innkeeper, Martha Rawlings of Oakham, a widow and executor to the late Joseph Rawlings, and George Bishop of Melton Mowbray, a liquor merchant. One of the creditors, John Draper Mackinder, was appointed as assignee to the outstanding debt on 2nd July 1845. <sup>(17)</sup> The estate was put up for sale by public auction on 24th November 1845. The advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury* describes the sale as '*THE LIFE ESTATE and INTEREST of EDWARD TYLER, an Insolvent Debtor*' <sup>(18)</sup> (Figure 2).

It is unclear from the available documents if the estate is sold at this point, or if it is sold who the new owner is, but we do know that at some point between 1845 and 1851 Edward and his second wife Martha leave Exton. The 1851 census shows the couple as living at the Railway Coffee House, Stamford, and Edward as a coffeehouse keeper. <sup>(19)</sup> By 1861, the family had moved again and were living in Welford Road, Leicester. Edward's occupation is now given as '*retired farmer*'. He died in 1867 and is buried in the Welford Road Cemetery. <sup>(20)</sup>

By 1863, John and Emma Grant were the new occupants of what is now Church Farm. John's family were farmers from Empingham and their first child Herbert William was baptised in Exton in 1863. They have two more children: Mary Anna in 1865 and Frank Laxton in 1867. <sup>(21)</sup>

**EXTON, Rutlandshire.**  
**LIFE INTEREST in a FREEHOLD ESTATE.**  
 To be SOLD by AUCTION, by Mr. D. S. ROYCE,  
 At the George Inn at Oakham, on Monday the 24th day  
 of November next, at 4 o'clock in the Afternoon, subject  
 to such conditions of sale as shall be then produced,  
**THE LIFE ESTATE and INTEREST of ED-**  
**WARD TYLER, an Insolvent Debtor, now in his 45th**  
**year, of and in the under-mentioned FREEHOLD ESTATE,**  
 situate in the parish of EXTON, consisting of the following  
 particulars:—A Close, Piece, or Parcel of inclosed Arable  
 Land, containing Twenty-eight Acres or thereabouts, in  
 the occupation of Henry Clarke.  
 A Messuage or Farm-house, (formerly used as a Public-  
 house,) with the Yard, Garden, Orchard, Stables, and  
 Buildings thereto adjoining, in the occupation of Edward  
 Tyler and Samuel Smith.  
 Two Closes of Grass Land, adjoining to the Messuage,  
 called the Home Paddocks, containing (with the site of  
 the Yard, Garden, and Buildings) about Seven Acres (more  
 or less), occupied by Samuel Smith.  
 Also another Piece or Parcel of inclosed Arable Land,  
 containing by estimation Thirty Acres (more or less), also  
 in the occupation of Mr. Smith.  
 The above estate now lets for about 112*l.* per annum.  
 There is a Policy of Assurance effected with the Law  
 Life Assurance Office, dated 21st April, 1843, on the Life of  
 the said Edward Tyler, for 950*l.*, the annual Premium upon  
 which is 33*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*, which will be offered for Sale at the same  
 same Auction.  
 To view the estate, application may be made to the  
 tenants; and for further particulars, at my office.  
**H. HOUGH, Solicitor to the Assignee,**  
**Oakham, October 22d, 1845.**

Figure 2. The Freehold Estate later known as Church Farm was offered for sale by auction in 1845 (Stamford Mercury 24th October 1845).

**EXTON, Rutland.**  
**Valuable FREEHOLD and TITHE-FREE ESTATES.**  
 To be SOLD by AUCTION,  
 By D. S. ROYCE,  
 At the George Hotel in Stamford, on Friday the 13th day  
 of April, 1866, at Four o'clock in the Afternoon, in four  
 or such other lots as the vendor shall determine, and  
 subject to such conditions of sale as will be then and  
 there produced,  
**A Very valuable and compact FREEHOLD and**  
**TITHE-FREE ESTATE, consisting of about 72A. of**  
 productive Arable and Grass Land, together with a capital  
 Stone and Slated Farm Residence, with 2 Labourers'  
 Cottages adjoining; also suitable and convenient Farm  
 Buildings (part newly erected), situate in the parish of  
 Exton, and in the occupation of Mr. John Grant; also 7 stone  
 built and slated Tenements, with Yards, Gardens, and suit-  
 able Out-buildings, situate in the village of Exton, and in  
 the occupation of Mr. John Barnett, jun., baker, Mr. Chas.  
 Newey, tailor, and others; also, in 2 lots, 2 valuable old  
 Policies of Assurance in the Law and Equity and Law Life  
 Assurance Societies, for the sums of 950*l.* and 550*l.* respec-  
 tively, on a life now aged 65 years, together with the  
 Bonuses declared thereon.  
 The Estates may be viewed upon application to Mr. John  
 Grant, at the Farm house; and particulars with plan may  
 be obtained from the Auctioneers, Oakham; or from  
 Messrs. THOMPSON, PHILLIPS, and THOMPSON,  
**March 28, 1866. Solicitors, Stamford.**

Figure 3. Advertisement for the auction of Church Farm at the George Hotel, Stamford, on 13th April 1866 (Stamford Mercury 6th April 1866).

By the 1901 Census, Emma was living with her son Frank and his family. Frank is recorded as a 'Farmer' and Emma as a 'Retired Farmer', and the family were living at Church Gate (Holly Bank) in Exton. This is almost certainly Church Farm. In 1911 Emma is living with her daughter Mary and her husband William Straton in Leicester. William is recorded as a 'Bank Clerk' and the family are living at 'Burnside', St Philips Road, Leicester. By the time of her death in 1917, Emma had returned to Exton and was living with her eldest son, Herbert, at Brook Farm on the

However, the Grant family suffered a misfortune in 1864 when a fire broke out in the stackyard. According to the *Stamford Mercury*, it was a Sunday and 'it became known in the village church, where the service was being conducted at the time, that a fire was raging close by, the Hon. and Rev. Leland Noel, who was officiating, accompanied by the most of the able-bodied male part of the congregation, proceeded at once to the scene of the conflagration, and they rendered efficient service, but not before one barley stack, oat straw stack, a stack of clover and tares, and a hay-rick had been consumed'. Damages were quoted as £100, but John Grant was not insured. <sup>(22)</sup>

In 1866, the farm was again advertised for sale by auction (Figure 3), and the sale particulars show that John Grant was the tenant. An accompanying map shows the farm house, farm buildings, cottages and yards occupying the same site as on the 1807 Enclosure Map, They are now named Church Farm and Church Close. A further five fields south of Exton on the road to Whitwell are also included in the sale.

A note on the sale particulars states 'Lots 1-4 bought by Earl of Gainsborough for the sum of £5,520' and the farm now becomes part of the Exton Estate. <sup>(23)</sup>

More misfortune befalls the family in October 1867 when John Grant dies of tuberculosis aged just 33. The youngest child was only 5 months old so this must have been a difficult time for the family. John's will left his personal property and 'all my live and dead farming stock' to his wife, Emma, who remains in Exton and continues to farm, almost certainly at Church Farm, until 1891. *White's Directory* of 1877 records Emma as 'Farmer' and census records of 1871, 1881, and 1891 show Emma as 'Head of the Household' and 'Farmer'. The 1881 Census is more specific, describing Emma as 'Farmer of 75 acres employing 1 man 1 boy'. <sup>(24)</sup>



Figure 4. Annotated extract from the Ordnance Survey Series 1 map of 1866 showing the site of Church Farm (RO / Rutland County Museum).

Cottesmore Road.<sup>(25)</sup> Emma was 88 years old when she died and she is buried with her husband John in Exton churchyard. She left an estate of £224 17s 7d <sup>(26)</sup>, a considerable sum at the time.

The farm house is still owned by Exton Estate and the site of the farmyard with the associated buildings is now known as Church Close, opposite the entrance to Church Lane.



Figure 5. Church Farm farmhouse seen from Oakham Road in 2025  
(Google Earth).

#### References

ROLLR - Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland.

Newspaper extracts are from British Newspaper Archive online.

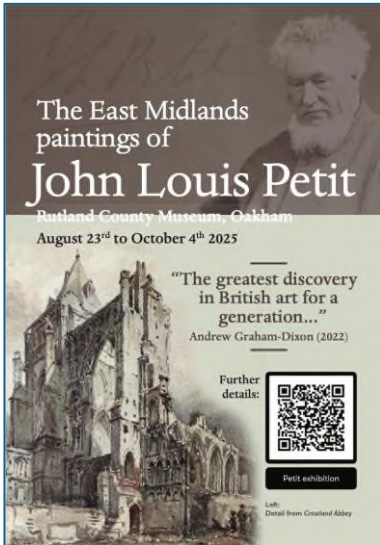
1. ROLLR DE3214/1216/1-8.
2. ROLLR DE3214/1216/1-8.
3. ROLLR DE3214/1216/1-8.
4. ROLLR DE3214/1219/1.
5. ROLLR Parish Registers.
6. ROLLR DE3214/1221.
7. ROLLR Exton Parish Registers.
8. ROLLR DE3214/1216/1-8.
9. ROLLR DE3214/1223/1-2.
10. ROLLR Parish Registers.
11. ROLLR DE3214/1225/1.
12. ROLLR DE3214/1225/1.
13. ROLLR DE3214/1226.
14. ROLLR DE3214/1227.
15. ROLLR DE3214/1228.
16. *Lincolnshire Chronicle* 5 September 1845.
17. ROLLR DE3214/1230/1-3.
18. *Stamford Mercury* 24 October 1845.
19. Find My Past Census Records.
20. ROLLR Census Records.
21. ROLLR Parish Registers.
22. *Stamford Mercury* 14 October 1864.
23. ROLLR DE3214/1242.
24. ROLLR Parish and Census Records.
25. ROLLR Parish and Census Records.

## Exhibition Review

### The East Midland Paintings of the Rev J L Petit

Rutland County Museum 23rd August to 4th October 2025

It was something of a coup for Rutland County Museum (RCM) to host the exhibition of the work of John Louis Petit (1801–1868) last autumn. Petit has been called ‘*Britain’s lost impressionist*’. Thanks to the determined enthusiasts of The J L Petit Society, Petit’s work and reputation are enjoying a spectacular revival, so much so that in 2022 the leading art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon referred to Petit’s rediscovery as ‘*the greatest discovery in British art of a generation*’.



Produced by The J L Petit Society, this landmark exhibition, *The East Midland Paintings of John Louis Petit*, aimed to bring Petit’s talent to a much wider audience. Situated in the RCM’s temporary exhibition space, it included some forty of his

paintings, grouped by region: Leicestershire and Rutland, Peterborough and Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire, and further afield including southern England, Wales and France.



*Oakham Castle and Great Hall (c1850)*  
(The J L Petit Society).

Among the 37 paintings depicting the East Midlands were three Rutland works: watercolours of Oakham Castle and Great Hall (c1850), the Buttercross in Oakham (1850) and the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Exton (1845). It also included a painting, *Lincoln Cathedral* (c1850s) by his sister, Emma Gentile Petit, and a small reproduction of her

line drawing of Trinity Bridge in Crowland. In addition, there was also a large screen with a selection of Petit’s paintings from his 1830s album and others that could not be hung due to space constraints. An exhibition case contained a first edition of his book, *Remarks on Church Architecture*, published in London by James Burns in 1841.



*The Buttercross in Oakham (1850)*  
(The J L Petit Society).

John Louis Petit was descended from a wealthy family with large landholdings in Staffordshire. He was the eldest son of John Hayes Petit, a clergyman and gentleman, and Harriet Astley, daughter of John Astley, a talented painter with a colourful reputation. John Louis inherited the Ettingshall estate from his father and the bulk of the estate of his uncle Louis Hayes Petit, barrister, politician and philanthropist. This formed a substantial landholding around Wolverhampton with his Bilson and Ettingshall estates in particular being rich in coal and ironstone.

John Louis Petit was ordained priest at Lichfield Cathedral in 1826 and served as curate at St. Michael’s in Lichfield, Staffordshire, and Bradfield and Mistley in Essex.

Artistically talented like his mother, grandfather and sisters, and independently wealthy, John Louis Petit retired from his full-time position as curate in 1834 to devote himself to his artistic and architectural interests. The result was his 1841 book, *Remarks on Church Architecture*, which included 300 of his own

illustrations and which established his reputation as a leading opponent of the Gothic Revival.

In *Remarks*, Petit argued strongly against the fashion for the unsympathetic church restorations that were part of the Gothic Revival from the 1840s. Inspired by the architects Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin, the Gothic Revival was driven by the Cambridge Camden Society, whose members felt the Church of England had fallen into a sorry state. The society hoped to restore the Church to its medieval splendour through a reform programme and a return to Gothic architecture, which they regarded as the most meaningful and appropriate form of architecture for churches. This resulted in post-medieval additions being ruthlessly stripped from some churches and alternations to others, including the *scraping* of original plastered church interiors.



*Church of St Peter and St Paul in Exton (1845) painted during the period when the church was being restored following the lightning strike of April 1843 (The J L Petit Society).*

Petit loved the authentic Gothic. He argued the Gothic Revival was inauthentic and ultimately doomed; he proposed there was beauty in all styles and originality came from building on the past, not harking back to it through pastiche. Petit's vocal opposition to the 'one correct style' of the Cambridge Camden Society led him to be elected as

a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and an honorary member of the Institute of British Architects.

As an artist and an architectural critic, Petit travelled widely around Britain, Europe and the Middle East with his sisters. His paintings were intended to illustrate his public lectures. They also formed the basis of the line drawings in his books: a watercolour took just a couple of hours while a line drawing required a couple of days. No works were intended for sale nor sold during his lifetime and, consequently, few are signed.

For art historians, Petit is important as a pre-impressionist, drawing on the golden age for British watercolours. He depicted everyday scenes with immediacy and atmosphere, creating an immersive feeling with visible brush strokes and a muted pallet.

For historians, Petit is important for his unsanitised, detailed depictions of a rapidly industrialising world against the artistic fashions of the time. For example, Petit's 1838 painting of *Springvale Iron Works, Bilston*, is regarded as the first artistic depiction of a blast furnace to scale, full of accurate detail such as tramway horses, workers' houses and the works including the cast houses, furnaces, engine house and chimney. This painting was not included in the exhibition, but a sketch of *Swithland Great Pit* (early 1830s) and paintings of the *Great Orme Mine* (c1853) and the *Lead Smelter at Stoney Middleton* (c1835) were.

Petit's watercolours of Rutland offer us a glimpse into a past that is relatively little recorded. The scenes are fleeting, detailed, and remarkably unchanged today. Sadly, most of Petit's paintings and his papers were lost following an oversight during a probate sale after the death of one of his heirs. Consequently, Petit's visits to Rutland remain a mystery and we can only speculate on what else he might have painted.

For me, this was the standout art exhibition since the L S Lowry retrospective, *The Loneliness of Lowry*, at the Abbot Hall Gallery in Kendal back in 2010. If you missed the exhibition or you would like to see more of Petit's works, there is a permanent exhibition of Petit's paintings of Lichfield Cathedral in the cathedral close (see the Cathedral website). The National Library of Wales also holds some of Petit's paintings. I would also recommend visiting the website of The J L Petit Society, and reading the books written by Philip Modiano and published by the society (<http://www.jlpetit.com>). A series of three or four lectures on the Gothic Controversy in the East Midlands is planned for this autumn on Zoom, and these will discuss Petit's work further. Several thousand of Petit's artworks are believed to still exist.

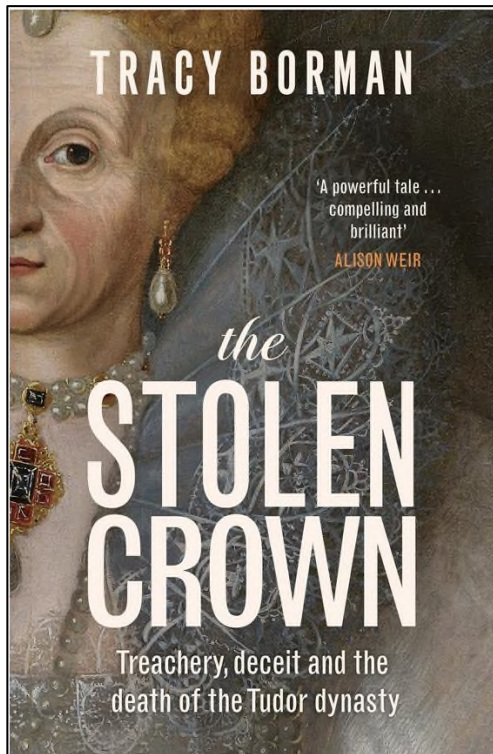
Richard Hunt

## Book Review

### **The Stolen Crown – Treachery, deceit and the death of the Tudor dynasty**

By Tracy Borman, Chief Historian for Historic Royal Palaces, Chancellor & Honorary Professor at Lincoln Bishop University.

Hardback published in 2025 by Hodder & Stoughton. 448 pages and 2 colour insets with 16 pages of illustrations.



Tracy Borman's book, *The Stolen Crown*, focuses on the end of the Tudor dynasty and the Stuarts' accession to the English throne. In interviews, Borman has said she was inspired to write this book by the findings of Helena Rutkowska, a PhD student at the University of Oxford and the British Library. Rutkowska's research has cast doubt on the generally accepted version of these events.

Until now, according to the accepted history, Queen Elizabeth dramatically relented on her deathbed in March 1603 and nominated King James VI of Scotland as heir to the English throne, after refusing to name a successor for more than four decades. This is what many of us were taught at school, a comforting resolution to the dangers inherent in a contested succession.

This version of events was based on the work of the antiquary, topographer and pioneering historian, William Camden. Camden was commissioned in 1596 to write the first history of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, *Annales: The True and Royall History of the Famous Empresse Elizabeth*. When Elizabeth passed away, Camden put his history aside, but he was commanded to resume writing it in 1608 by King

James, whose reign was in difficulties – and to include the succession. Camden's history was eventually published in Latin in instalments in 1615 and 1625. For 400 years now, Camden has been relied upon by historians: he is regarded as a meticulous historian because of his careful use of sources, access to state papers and unpublished letters, grasp of detail and rigorous drafting process.

Until now, the extent to which Camden censored the *Annales* to avoid upsetting his patron, King James, has been uncertain. Using transmitted light and advanced image processing, Rutkowska's research is recovering the original text on many pages that have been pasted over and rewritten. Significantly, this has cast doubt upon Camden's ultimate account of Elizabeth's final days.

In light of Rutkowska's findings, Professor Borman's highly readable, detailed and intriguing book examines the legal framework established by King Henry VIII, the contenders' claims, how Queen Elizabeth suppressed those competitors for her throne, and the dramatic events of March 1603 and their aftermath. The author shows Elizabeth did not nominate a successor by word, in a will or through an act of Parliament. Perhaps she knew King James was her ministers' preferred candidate, despite her many doubts over his shortcomings.

Reading this book, I was surprised by the number of its characters who were associated with Rutland, England's smallest county. These include Henry Hastings, 3rd Earl of Huntingdon, who arguably had the best claim to the English throne. Not a Rutland landowner, Hastings was Lord-Lieutenant of Rutland. His nephew, Francis, married Sarah Harington, sister of John Harington who was elevated as 1st Baron Harington of Exton for supporting King James' accession. William Cecil, 1st Baron Burghley, in turn, served Queen Elizabeth as her secretary, Lord Treasurer and Chief Minister. A Rutland landowner and the owner of Burghley House near Stamford, it was he who first commissioned Camden to write his *Annales*. His second son, Robert, smoothed the way for King James' accession as Elizabeth's chief minister in 1603. Robert Cecil later took the title Baron of Essendine, demonstrating his Rutland ties.

I wholeheartedly recommend this book to anyone who would like to know more about the succession and its contenders, and about those associated with Rutland who had cameo roles in these extraordinary events.

Richard Hunt

# Hensman, tailors of Uppingham in the nineteenth century

Sheila Sleath

The Rise and Fall of the Hopkins family, Tailors and Drapers of Uppingham in Rutland Record 45 featured two brass buttons that belonged to two families, Hopkins and Hensman, who traded as tailors in Uppingham during the nineteenth century. Hopkins' business thrived for over a century, Hensman's for roughly twenty-two years; the latter was ruined by the behaviour of a John Thomas Hensman, a descendent of a John Hensman who set up as a tailor in Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire, about 1830.



A brass button used by the Hensman tailors of Uppingham (author).

## John Hensman [1] 1795-1882

John Hensman [1], baptised in 1795 at Thorney, Cambridgeshire, was a resident of Pinchbeck in 1820 when he married Mary Alcock at nearby Spalding. Their first child Uriah was baptised at Thorney and the baptismal register gives John's trade as *tailor*. Two sons were baptised at Eye, Northamptonshire, before settling in Pinchbeck where five more children were baptised between 1832 and 1840. Sons John [2] baptised in 1826, and George William in 1840 became tailors.

Exactly when John [1] set up business in Pinchbeck is unknown but a newspaper advertisement placed in 1879 by his son George implies that it was established in 1830 (*Lincolnshire Free Press* 27th May 1879, p2).

John Hensman	45	Tailor	✓
Mary W <sup>e</sup>	40		✓
John W <sup>e</sup>	16		✓
Jeremial W <sup>e</sup>	11		✓
Letitia W <sup>e</sup>	5		✓
George W <sup>e</sup>	1		✓

Taken from the 1841 Pinchbeck census return. John Hensman [1], a tailor, his wife Mary and four of their children occupy a house in Knight Street. Sons John and George became master tailors.

The 1841 census return for Pinchbeck lists John [1], a tailor, living in Knight Street and when his son John [2] married Sophia Hardy in 1848, the newly-weds continued to live there. They were in Knight Street in 1851 and John [2], aged 24, was recorded as *tailor*. John and Sophia had two children born in Pinchbeck, John Thomas (1850) and Helena Sophia (1853).

Censuses show that John [1] in 1851 was living in Spalding and nearby Whaplode in 1861; his occupation was given as *tailor* and *tailor and woollen draper*, respectively. Listed in the households for both returns are his wife Mary and son George who in 1861 aged 20 was working as a tailor.



In 1866 John [1] acquired what is now 34 High Street East, Uppingham (arrowed on the above image). On the left is the entrance to Southwell's Yard (author).

By 1863 George was advertising to *PARENTS and GUARDIANS* for an *Apprentice or Improver*, his trade and address given as *tailor and draper, Pinchbeck, Spalding* (*Stamford Mercury* [hereafter *SM*] 13th February, p8); he appears to have taken over the management of his father's business that by 1851 had been run by his brother John.

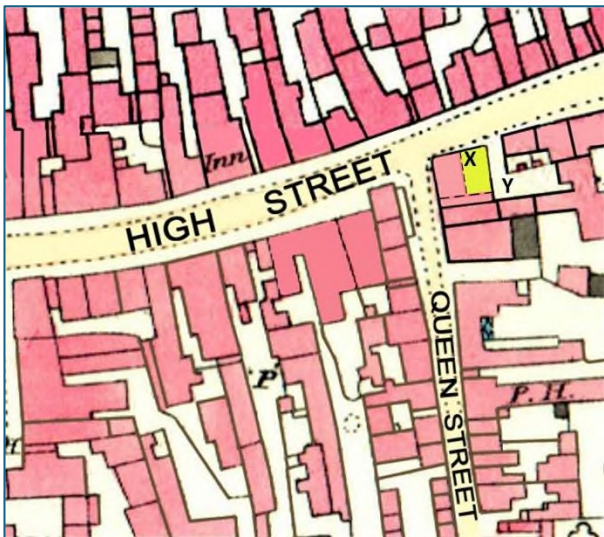
Although not proven, John [1], aged 68, may have left Whaplode about 1863 intent on setting up a new tailoring business to pass onto his son John [2]. It is thought that his son accompanied him in this venture, and tailoring businesses were soon established at Gretton, Northamptonshire, and Uppingham.

From 1865 to 1870 it is difficult to identify which John Hensman is referred to at these locations, but a possibility is that they both traded in Gretton before John [1] went to Uppingham. This is supported by Pinchbeck Electoral Registers for 1857, 1868, and 1870 to 1872.

An advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury* in 1865 (28th April, p8) names a John Hensman trading in Gretton; it stated that he immediately wanted a journeyman, and an apprentice who had served part of his time. In October 1865, a dismissed employee was reported to have stolen a pair of trousers from John; the court case was heard in January 1866, the thief being sentenced to eighteen months hard labour. On 31st July 1866, John [1] took copyhold tenure of property in Uppingham located at what is now 34 High Street East (*Uppingham-Rutland. Index of Copyholders Pt1, p1119*). He

established a new tailoring business on the premises, no doubt intending that, when it was up and running, his son John [2] would take over its management and he would then return to Pinchbeck.

John [1] may have held ownership of 34 High Street East until just before his death in February 1882; that same month his grandson John Thomas Hensman was admitted to this property.



The 1886 OS 2nd edition 25" map of Uppingham with the location of Hensman's residential and business premises highlighted yellow. X marks Hensman's shop and Y marks Southwell's Yard (Rutland County Museum).

he was living with son George and his family at *Perseverance Cottage*, located in Boston Rd, Pinchbeck. George had this house built in 1873 and the walls of the front room, which served as a shop, were *papered over with postage stamps* (*Lincolnshire Free Press* 12th November 1985, p13).

John [1] died 26th February 1882 aged 87 at Pinchbeck and a headstone to him and his wife Mary can be found in St Mary's churchyard.

### John Hensman [2] 1826-1897

John [2] baptised in 1826 at Eye was, by 1830, living in Pinchbeck with his parents John [1] and Mary. He became a tailor and married Sophia Hardy at Pinchbeck in 1848. Three years later his father was living in Spalding and it is

**SPALDING UNION.—To CONSTABLES and Others.**  
**ABSCONDED, from the house and services of**  
 His master, Mr. John Hensman, of Pinchbeck, near Spalding, tailor, to whom he was an Apprentice bound by the Guardians of the above Union, CHARLES GOTT, aged 18½ years, stands about 5ft. 5 in. high, has light hair, complexion, and eyes, and is rather high shouldered: he went away on Thursday the 4th August, and had on when he left a double-breasted black cloth surtout coat, silk waistcoat, light blue striped doeskin trousers, black silk necktie, black hat, and buttoned shoes, and took other clothing with him.  
 Whoever will give such information to the undersigned, or to the said John Hensman, as shall lead to the apprehension of the offender will be handsomely Rewarded, besides being repaid all reasonable expenses.—By order,  
 A. MAPLES, Clerk of the Spalding Union.  
 Spalding, 7th August, 1854.

The Spalding Union appealed for information on the whereabouts of absconder Charles Gott who had been bound as an apprentice to John Hensman [2]. (*Stamford Mercury* 11th August 1854, p1).

two children John Thomas aged 11 years, Helena Sophia aged 8 years and a tailor's apprentice.

By 1863 it is believed that John and his father John [1] were seeking business opportunities outside of Lincolnshire and these they found in Gretton and Uppingham (see above). John [1]'s business in Pinchbeck was now run by his son George.

In 1871 John [2], his wife Sophia and daughter Helena Sophia were living in High Street, Uppingham. John, working as a tailor, employed two men and two apprentices. Living with the family was a journeyman, who was John's assistant, and a tailor's apprentice. Although no trace has been found of John's son John Thomas, aged 20,

Advertisements in the *Stamford Mercury* in 1867 show that a John Hensman was trading in both Gretton and Uppingham. The first was for a man who has served part of his time for the business at Gretton (1st March 1867, p8) and the second was for a Youth as Improver for the business in High Street, Uppingham (5th July 1867, p8).

*Harrod & Co's Directory* for Uppingham in 1870 (p706) lists John Hensman as a tailor and woollen draper. Also listed are William and Benjamin Hopkins, successful and respected tailors and drapers trading from 16 & 18 High Street East. Although the business premises of Hensman and Hopkins were located very near to each other, John [1] must have felt that he had nothing to fear from this rival firm. No further connection with Gretton has been found.

As noted previously it is difficult to identify whether the John Hensman recorded at these two locations from 1865 to 1870 is John [1] or John [2]. Hopefully, further research will clarify this. What is clear is that in 1871 John [1] aged 76, had retired and was living in Pinchbeck and his son John [2] was living in Uppingham.

John [1]'s wife Mary died at Pinchbeck in 1877 and by 1881

he was living with son George and his family at *Perseverance Cottage*, located in Boston Rd, Pinchbeck. George had this house built in 1873 and the walls of the front room, which served as a shop, were *papered over with postage stamps* (*Lincolnshire Free Press* 12th November 1985, p13).  
 John [1] died 26th February 1882 aged 87 at Pinchbeck and a headstone to him and his wife Mary can be found in St Mary's churchyard.  
**John Hensman [2] 1826-1897**  
 John [2] baptised in 1826 at Eye was, by 1830, living in Pinchbeck with his parents John [1] and Mary. He became a tailor and married Sophia Hardy at Pinchbeck in 1848. Three years later his father was living in Spalding and it is thought that John [2] took over management of his father's tailoring business in Pinchbeck.

In 1851 John [2] aged 24 was living in Knight Street, Pinchbeck, recorded as a *Tailor employing 3 men*. In the household were his wife Sophia, his one-year-old son John Thomas, two tailor journeymen and apprentice Charles Gott aged 15. In 1854 Charles absconded from the home of his master taking with him stolen clothing. In February 1861 John was taken to court for refusing to instruct a John Burton until the termination of his apprenticeship; the apprenticeship indentures were cancelled and John was ordered to refund part of the premium he received with the boy (*SM* 8th February 1861, p6). In April 1861 John [2], aged 34, was still living in Knight Street, his occupation given as a master tailor and draper, employing two men and a boy; he was also a postmaster. The census lists his wife Mary, their

one assumes that he was working with his father at this date - John Thomas married in 1873. In *Barker & Co's Directory* of 1875 a John Hensman and a John Henry Hensman (the latter name given in capitals) are listed separately as tailors in High Street, Uppingham (p 279). It is assumed that John Henry was actually John Thomas, signifying that he had recently taken over management of this business; the fact that John Thomas was advertising in February 1874 for an apprentice may verify this assumption (*SM* 27th February 1874, p10).

By April 1881, 54-year-old John [2] and his wife Sophia had left Rutland and were living in Horse and Jockey Road, Pinchbeck. John was still working as a tailor. Sophia died at Pinchbeck in 1890 and John married widow Catherine Stanton at Gosberton, Lincolnshire, in February 1895. John [2] died aged 71 at Middlesex Hospital, London, on 30th March 1897 and Catherine in Lincolnshire County Asylum on 8th February 1912.

### John Thomas Hensman 1850-1916

John Thomas Hensman, tailor and woollen draper, was baptised at Pinchbeck in 1850 and he married Mary the second daughter of Uppingham baker Joseph Woodcock at the parish church on 30th January 1873. Of their five children, born between 1873 and 1881 at Uppingham, two died as infants.

Advertisements for general hands and apprentices placed by John Thomas during the 1870s indicated that the business was in safe hands. The 1881 Uppingham census lists him, aged 31, in High Street, with wife Mary (32), son Walter George (4), daughter Eva Mary (2) and two apprentices. Within the next four years the Hensman business was in trouble for John Thomas was convicted of assaulting his wife, put in prison and declared bankrupt.

He was arrested on 19th June 1885 charged with *threatening to pierce his wife Mary Hensman with six inches of steel, at Uppingham, on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1885*. He was granted bail and although a trial date was set on 2nd July, no trial took place and the case was dismissed (*UK, Calendar of Prisoners, 1868-1929*).

A DOMESTIC QUARREL AT UPPINGHAM.—THOS. HENSMAN, tailor, Uppingham, a gentlemanly-looking man, was charged by his wife with assaulting her, on the 23rd and 24th of July.—Defendant, for whom Mr. Tuck appeared, pleaded not guilty.—Complainant said she was the wife of defendant. On the 24th ult., he followed her out of the house into the yard, and struck her on the head. On the previous day he struck her, and knocked her head against a nail in the wall, and her head was hurt. This was after (she being washing) he had put a dustpanful of coal-dust into her washing water.—In answer to Mr. Tuck, complainant said defendant drove her out of the house. She did not strike, scratch, or pull his hair. He did not push, but struck her. She had left him several times, and had gone back at his wish.—Tom Washington Southwell stated that he lived next door to defendant. On the 24th ult., he saw defendant strike at his wife, and he shoved his fist partly through a window.—By Mr. Tuck: He was with defendant. He pushed her: he struck at her.—Mr. Finch: Was defendant sober?—Witness (aside, in a whisper): "I can't, I can't say that; no, I can't." (To Mr. Finch, aloud): "Soberish." (Laughter).—Defendant was fined 20/- and 13/6 costs, and informed by the Chairman that a re-committal of the assault would result in his being sent to prison; complainant was also informed that if her husband offended again, a judicial separation would be granted.

Threatening and violent behaviour towards his wife continued and on two separate days later that month John Thomas was summoned and fined for assaulting Mary. A detailed account is given in the *Grantham Journal* under the heading *A DOMESTIC QUARREL AT UPPINGHAM* (8th August 1885, p2). The Uppingham 1881 census listed Tom Washington Southwell as a witness in this case. As Tom had a butcher's shop next door to John Thomas' shop he was well placed to witness the attacks on Mary. John Thomas was fined and warned that a repetition of the assault would incur a prison sentence. Mary was informed that a judicial separation would be granted if her husband assaulted her again.

John Thomas ignored the court's warnings as he assaulted his wife again in August. He was committed to prison for 14 days and ordered to pay 10s costs or on default to be further imprisoned for seven days (*SM* 21st August 1885, p4). It is not surprising that he was declared bankrupt on 17th September 1885 (*SM* 2nd October 1885, p2). Household furniture and other items were sold on 5th October 1885 under a Deed of Assignment (*SM*

2nd October 1885, p5) and on 17th November 1885 an auction was advertised to sell *ALL THAT MESSUAGE, TENEMENT, or DWELLING-HOUSE situate in the High-street in Uppingham with the Outbuildings and other buildings ... thereto belonging ... late in the occupation of John Thomas Hensman, and on which a good Tailoring business has been carried on for several years* (*SM* 13th November 1885 p8). *The Leicester Chronicle* reported that this *large dwelling house ... sold for £350* (21st November 1885, p5).

The Hensman family left Uppingham to live in Nottingham and John Thomas at the time of the 1891 and 1901 censuses was working as a tailor. A new location had not changed John Thomas' behaviour; he was frequently drunk and continued to physically harm Mary. At her wits end, she eventually left him in September 1901 and applied for a separation order and maintenance; in 1902 John Thomas was charged for persistent cruelty towards his wife. In court Mary stated that her husband had ill-treated her for 23 years of their 28 years of marriage; he had also assaulted their children. A full account of this case can be read in the *Nottingham Evening Post* (1st January 1902).

No trace of John Thomas was found in 1911 but he died in March 1916 at Nottingham. Son Walter George married in 1901 and was killed in France in 1916. Mary and her daughters, who did not marry, continued to live in Nottingham. Mary died in 1926 aged 77, and daughters Ethel and Eva in 1958 and 1962, respectively.

## Book Review

### The Shakespeare Ladies Club: The Forgotten Women Who Rescued the Bawdy Bard

By Christine and Jonathan Hainsworth.

Hardback published in 2025 by Amberley Publishing.

288 pages & 39 illustrations, 26 in full colour.



When I was talking to members of the audience after my talk at the 2025 RLHRS Village Visit to Exton, I was delighted when a guest recommended this history, *The Shakespeare Ladies Club* by Christine and Jonathan Hainsworth.

As many of you will be aware, on 1st January 1596 the Lord Chamberlain's Men

gave a very early performance of Shakespeare's tragedy, *Titus Andronicus* – the first outside London – at John Harington's house at Burley on the Hill in Rutland, with the Bard likely in attendance. I was intrigued by the associations between Harington and the most prominent members of the Shakespeare Ladies Club (SLC), especially Susannah Ashley-Cooper, Countess of Shaftesbury, and her motivations for rehabilitating Shakespeare's reputation.

By the eighteenth century, Shakespeare's plays had fallen out of fashion. When theatres were reopened under King Charles II, public tastes were changing and what the authors describe as Shakespeare's '*eclectic mix of high-brow wit and low-brow smut*' had come to be regarded as old fashioned and even offensive. In fact, what had made the Bard's plays so successful, appealing to all ranks in society and attracting large audiences to open-air theatres such as the Globe, was proving their undoing. Consequently, even when Shakespeare's plays were performed, they often had been sanitised: amending or cutting scenes, deleting characters or introducing new ones, adding special effects, music and dancing and even rewriting tragedies to give them happy endings.

In the 1730s, the SLC's campaign to restore the Bard's reputation in reaction to the prevailing fashion achieved much. Shakespeare's plays made up an increasing proportion of performances at London theatre between 1737 and 1740. The Bard's plays that had been neglected since the reign of King James VI & I such as *Richard II* and *Twelfth Night* had been revived. Shakespeare had a statue erected in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey. So much so, that by the

time the actor David Garrick began to hog the limelight for his more realistic dramatic depictions of the male characters in the Bard's tragedies from the early 1740s, the SLC's objectives had largely been achieved and its '*Ladies of Quality*' were stepping back from their public activities.

In their remarkable book, the first devoted to the SLC group, Christine and Jonathan Hainsworth set out to revive the reputation of this short-lived group and raise the profile of its most prominent members: Susanna, Countess of Shaftesbury; Mary, Duchess of Montagu; Elizabeth Boyd and Mary Cowper, Baroness Walsingham. They were four well-connected, extraordinary women, who, '*outside pockets of academia, have been largely erased from popular culture*' in favour of the committee of eminent male family and friends whom the women had arranged to conduct business negotiations on their behalf: Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, the physician Dr Richard Mead, the poet Alexander Pope and author Benjamin Martyn.<sup>(1)</sup> This book motivated Westminster Abbey to update its memorial to the Bard in 2025.

This enjoyable, high-quality book was one of my favourites of 2025. The authors' strong narrative style carries the reader along without becoming ponderous or feeling superficial. It is enriched by character sketches, detailed observations, and discussions focusing on aspects of eighteenth-century society and culture, especially theatre, its patrons, actors and audiences.

It seems fitting that the revival of Shakespeare's reputation and plays in the 1730s was largely due to Susanna Shaftesbury. Susanna and her husband, Anthony, 4th Earl of Shaftesbury, were patrons of the arts and Patriotic Whigs, who romanticised sixteenth-century England, its greatest writer being the Bard. However, I wonder whether Susanna had a more personal motivation. Born into the Noel family, Susanna was John Harington's four-times great niece, and her childhood home was his former home at the Old Hall in Exton. Had stories of the Lord Chamberlain's Men's January 1596 performance echoed down the generations?

I wholeheartedly recommend this history to Bard enthusiasts and those interested in Georgian theatre, the ladies of the SLC and their legacy, complementing Gibson's history of the later Bluestocking Society.<sup>(2)</sup>

Richard Hunt

Footnotes:

- (1) Westminster Abbey (2025) *Abbey recognises forgotten role of The Shakespeare Ladies Club*. Online news article 11th June 2025.
- (2) Susannah Gibson (2024) *Bluestockings: The First Women's Movement*. John Murray.

## Heritage Open Evening at Rutland County Museum on Thursday 13th November 2025

An opportunity to discover the diverse range of Heritage activities and groups in Rutland.

It was organised by The Friends of Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle.

Photographs by Richard Hunt.



### Cottesmore History & Archaeological Group

Chris Donovan, John Meara, Val Drew, Pat Hart, Chris Whitton & Jane Greenhalgh.



### Friends of Rutland County Museum & Oakham Castle

Caroline Stark, Judy Geer & Lawrence Fenelon.



### Langham Village History Group

Gillian Frisby & Mike Frisby.



### Rutland Local History & Record Society

Ian Ryder & Paul Reeve.



### Rutland Aviation Society

Jeremy Hall.



### Rocks by Rail

David Atkinson and Andy Salmon with a model of Sundew, the World's largest walking dragline.

## Heritage Open Evening ...continued



### Rutland Local History & Record Society Archaeology Group

Adrian Arnold, Jane Greenhalgh, Carol Arnold, Jo Holroyd, Wendy Sanchez, Marion Drake, Linda Dalby & Liz Sanders.



### Uppingham Local History Study Group

Jeanette Smith, Hilary Crowden & David Acton.

Also in attendance at this event with a display were University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) and Classics for All. The representative from the Leicestershire and Rutland Portable Antiquities Scheme was unable to attend.

## Book Review

### Behind the lines along the Somme

The Diary of the Reverend Percy Lane Hooson, April to August 1917.

By Reverend Percy Hooson (Author), Ben Hooson and Cheryl Dobbs (Editors).

Available as a Kindle Edition price £5.00 from Amazon or as a paperback of 156 pages price £10.00 plus £2.50 P & P from Ben Hooson:

Email: [benwilliamhooson@gmail.com](mailto:benwilliamhooson@gmail.com)

Post: 20 Bramley Close, Bourne, PE10 9BD.

First published 2024 by Bourne & Easton Press. ISBN-13: 978-1068691515

### Behind the Lines along the Somme



The Diary of the  
Reverend Percy Lane Hooson  
April to August 1917

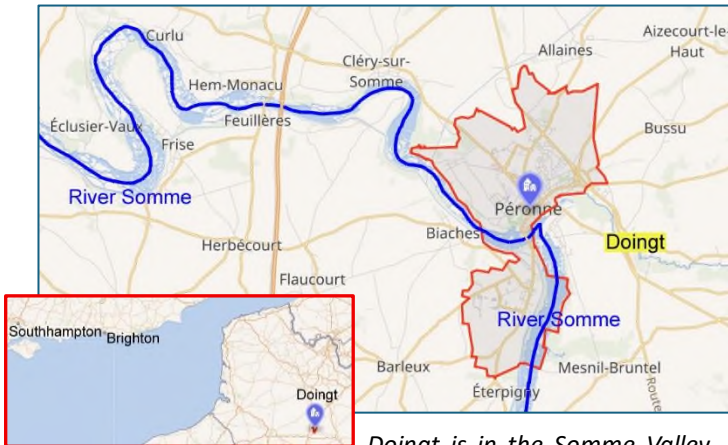
This is the account of Reverend Percy Hooson's four-month secondment as the superintendent of a Church Army hut at Doingt in northern France, told through the transcription of his diary by Cheryl Dobbs and an introduction with added notes by his grandson, Ben Hooson.

It records his experiences as a volunteer for the Church Army along the valley of the Somme, in France, which had been fought over with great loss of life a few months before.

Percy was Rector of Easton on the Hill near Stamford when he accepted the post and his diary begins on 18th April 1917. His four month secondment ended on 19th August when he returned home to Easton on the Hill. It was shorter than normal because of his concern for his first wife who was ill at the time. She died in 1920.

As well as being Rector of Easton, Percy was later chaplain to two local RAF airfields and Rector of Tinwell.

Throughout the diary, there are references to soldiers from Rutland that he met on his secondment in France, so the Rutland connection is quite strong.



*Doingt is in the Somme Valley, south-east of the small town of Peronne, a commune of the Somme department in Hauts-de-France in northern France (Edited from Wikipedia).*

The Church Army to which Hooson was attached in France was created three decades before the War by Wilson Carlile.

Carlile's organisation was committed to helping members of the forces during wartime. This was achieved through a network of about 2000 'huts' offering Christian ministry, moral support, food, shelter, warmth and a range of goods for purchase, including cigarettes. Many of their huts were located close to the front line.

Percy Hooson's ability to find soldiers, both alive and dead, from near his home in Lincolnshire and Rutland in the towns, villages, camps and cemeteries where he visited in 1917 is a striking aspect of his record.

The 'hut' in Doingt he was in charge of was actually a damaged but habitable dwelling which he converted into a church with a shop and a canteen. The church and most of the other buildings in the village had been reduced to rubble by the retreating German army a month before he arrived.



*Like most of the buildings, the Church in Doingt was reduced to rubble in 1917 by the German army (Wikipedia).*



*The rebuilt Church in Doingt (Google Earth).*

Artillery action from the Battle of Arras 30 miles to the north was always audible, and visible by night. The hardships of life behind the lines in 1917 included rats, lice, half-destroyed buildings, enemy aircraft, unexploded shells, and booby traps. Percy Hooson at least had the luxury of cleanliness thanks to his daily dips in the Somme and its tributaries.

He describes daily life as being religious services, troop movements, foraging, cooking, running a shop and, most importantly, talking to the men. As an obsessive walker, he explored the countryside where he was based, giving a vivid account of the battlefields, thick with weeds but still strewn with munitions, wreckage and corpses. This is where he gathered vegetables, and flowers from abandoned gardens to decorate his church.

After his return to Easton on the Hill, in the 1930s and 1940s, he finished his ministry at Tinwell church, just a mile down the hillside from Easton. He died in 1969.

A small crucifix salvaged from the rubble of the Somme battlefield church of Doingt and brought to England by Percy Hooson was placed in All Saints Church in Tinwell. More than a century later, on the initiative of a young Tinwell parishioner, it was returned to its original home, and this has given rise to a flourishing entente cordiale between Tinwell and Doingt.



*Father Jean Brunel with the crucifix, now back in Doingt Church (Chris Dodkin).*

Robert Ovens

## **‘I never expected to see my submerged house again’**

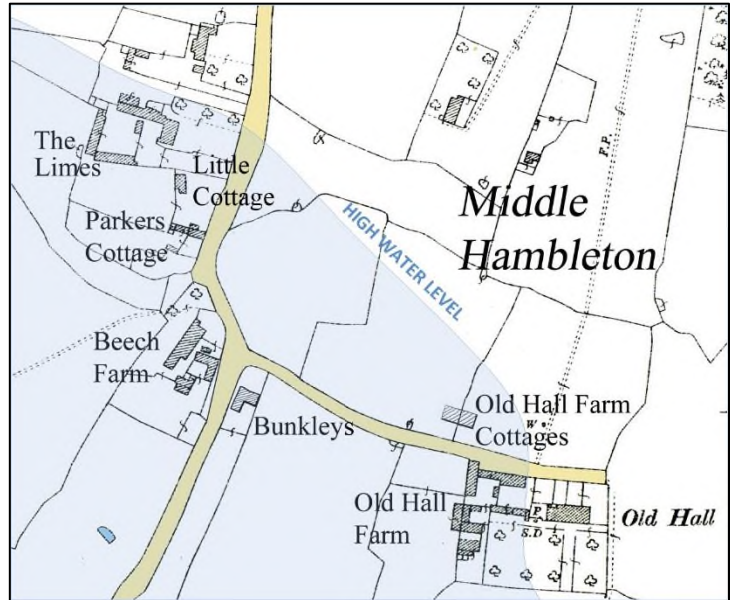
*Tim Appleton visits the site of his old bungalow, now normally below the surface of Rutland Water.*  
Robert Owens

When the land where Tim Appleton's home stood was flooded nearly five decades ago to create Rutland Water, he never expected to return to his house again.

Fifty years ago, in 1975, Tim Appleton came to Rutland to be the warden of the newly created Rutland Water Nature Reserve, and he and his wife moved into a little bungalow called ‘Bunkleys’ in Middle Hambleton, on the north shore of the south arm of Rutland Water.

By 1977, Empingham Reservoir as it was known then, was steadily filling the Gwash Valley and Tim could see the water creeping across the fields towards his home and he decided that it was time to escape.

The bungalow was built by Lady Periwinkle and Sir John Conant in 1967 to provide accommodation for the foreman of Old Hall Farm.



*This map of Middle Hambleton shows the buildings below the high water level of Rutland Water that were demolished (RO).*

The summer of 2025 was remarkable for the lack of rain and by August the water level in the reservoir was as low as anyone could remember. As a result, the foundations of houses at Middle Hambleton which were demolished in the 1970s for the construction of the reservoir were exposed.

In August, as part of a feature on the effect of the recent drought on reservoir water levels, BBC East Midlands Today reporter Victoria Hicks joined Tim Appleton to see the exposed building remains. In support of this, the Society was also invited to provide archive images of the lost homes, particularly The Limes, Parkers Cottage, Beech Farm and Old Hall Farm buildings, as well as Bunkleys. These had been collected during the research for *The Heritage of Rutland Water* which was first published by the Society in 2007.



*Bunkleys from the south-east (Tony Traylen).*

It was known as Bunkleys, after an adjacent field known as Bunklins, but within a few years it had fallen victim to the bulldozers constructing the new reservoir.



*When Rutland Water is at low level the foundations of Bunkleys are sometimes revealed. Old Hall, in the background, narrowly escaped demolition (RO).*



*Tim Appleton tells TV reporter Victoria Hicks ‘I never expected to see my submerged house again’ and why he had to leave due to rising water levels (East Midlands Today).*

## Martinsthorpe – A Tangled Tale

Paul Reeve

In 1789, the year of the French Revolution, John Mitford finalised a legal opinion dated 20th January about an issue at Martinsthorpe in Rutland. This opinion is preserved in John Caley's *A Feudal History of Rutland*.

Martinsthorpe is a small parish close to Manton but on the other side of the present main road from Oakham to Uppingham. If an issue did arise in 1789, John Mitford of Lincoln's Inn, Middlesex, was a good man to make sense of it. He was a barrister, later Solicitor General and Attorney General. He was ennobled as Baron Redesdale in 1803. The situation outlined by John Mitford was this.

Lord George Cavendish was Lord of the Manor of Martinsthorpe. He owned the advowson, the right to present a rector to the living of Martinsthorpe. Lord George was a brother of William Cavendish, 5th Duke of Devonshire. No rectors had been presented in recent decades and the last one, living far away, was thought to have died around 1739. There was a surviving receipt for £8 '*for the tithes of the sinecure of Martingthorp*'. John Mitford gave no further detail about this receipt.

Thinking the right of presentation had lapsed to the Crown, a Mr Johnson had recently applied to the Lord Chancellor and had been presented by him. Mr Johnson was Curate of Gargrave in Yorkshire from 1774, and schoolmaster there from 1775 (*Clergy of the Church of England database/CCEd*). Manton parish registers show him as Curate of Manton from 1783. After he died in 1799, his will identified him as Hugh Johnson of Uppingham, clerk.

There was only one inhabitant in the parish, an unnamed tenant. He was storing his *fewel* (fuel) in a building thought to have been a chapel and once used by the owners of a vanished mansion house. This aligns with current thinking, with the chapel a former part of Martinsthorpe House dismantled in 1755. The tenant's house was most probably the surviving building, Old Hall Farmhouse, thought to have been originally a service range supporting the main house. Nick Hill's article in *Rutland Record* 29 focusses on these different buildings, following an earlier article by Sheila Sleath and Robert Ovens in *Rutland Record* 14.

The newly appointed Rector of Martinsthorpe wished to hold a service there bringing with him enough people to form a congregation. The barrister posed two questions:

*What would you advise Lord George Cavendish to do?*

*Should the Tenant permit him to enter into this Old Chapel?*

John Mitford found it difficult to give a final opinion where the facts were not fully known. Lord George and his tenant had been in possession of the chapel with no service held there in living memory. The tenant might choose to oppose the entry of the rector to the building where the fuel was stored. Conversely, if there was a parish of Martinsthorpe, a rector duly instituted and inducted, and the disputed building was the parish church, then Mr Johnson would have '*a good Title to the possession of the Church, the Church Yard and Tithes*'. But these details would need to be verified in court.

There is no record of what happened next, but the situation evolved as follows. Lord George Cavendish sold the Martinsthorpe estate in 1808. Hugh Johnson remained Rector of Martinsthorpe and Curate of Manton until 1799 when he died following a riding accident. No more is known of the unnamed tenant. After the death of Hugh Johnson the next three Rectors of Martinsthorpe were all non-residents.

Joshua Flint 1800-1801, Jonathan Kendal 1801-1849 and George Quirk 1849-1895 were all presented by Dukes of Devonshire (CCEd).

### Joshua Flint

Joshua Flint's main living was at Clarborough, Nottinghamshire, in the gift of William Cavendish, 5th Duke of Devonshire. His short tenure at Martinsthorpe (CCEd) may have been a compliant arrangement with the 5th Duke in favour of the following rector.



*Martinsthorpe House which was dismantled in 1755 (G Herickx).*



*St Martins Chapel and Old Hall Farm at Martinsthorpe in 1839 (Uppingham School Archives).*

### **Jonathan Kendal**

This article is indebted to the historian Sarah Murden and her website *All Things Georgian* for detail about Jonathan. He was the nephew of the 5th Duke's agent and auditor. He had been apprenticed to his uncle, an attorney, in 1783 and had been admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1784. In 1793 he married Charlotte Williams in London. Charlotte was the 5th Duke's daughter from a relationship preceding his marriage to Lady Georgiana Spencer in 1774. Sometime after his marriage Jonathan moved from the law to become a clergyman. This career change allowed his father-in-law to present him as Rector of Martinsthorpe in 1801 and Rector of Barrowby, Lincolnshire, in 1802. It is unlikely that he spent much time at Martinsthorpe but he may have been there when 'a sermon was preached there on particular occasions about 1813' to secure possession of the rectorship (*Rutland Record* 14, 171). A proposed meeting to discuss commutation of the tithes of Martinsthorpe may have involved him personally. The meeting was announced by Jonathan and Catherine de Capell Brooke, landowner, and was to be held at the farmhouse at Martinsthorpe (*Stamford Mercury* 24th May 1844).

Jonathan lived a well-paid life at Barrowby and died there in 1849.

### **George Quirk**

George Quirk succeeded as Rector of Martinsthorpe in 1849, presented by William George Spencer Cavendish, 6th Duke of Devonshire. With a succession of church positions in Leicestershire, Bedfordshire, Lancashire (CCEd) and finally as Rector of Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight (*King William's College Register* 1905, 21), he can hardly have spent much time in Rutland. But he did come to Oakham more than once in 1852 to preach in the parish church at the time of Rutland Assizes. He preached as Sheriff's chaplain. The



*Martinsthorpe Chapel in a derelict state about 1900. This photograph clearly shows that it was once part of a larger building*

(Jack Hart Collection at Rutland County Museum ref 2002.6.1220).

*Stamford Mercury* of 27th February 1852, reported that the Sheriff was William de Capell Brooke. As mentioned above, his wife was the owner of the Martinsthorpe estate.

All was apparently quiet on the Martinsthorpe front until this quiet was rudely interrupted in 1870. The *Stamford Mercury* of 6th May 1870 recorded that the Bishop of Peterborough had been at Manton to perform confirmation. Manton was a small value living without a parsonage. The duties of Martinsthorpe fell upon the vicar. At the same time the non-resident Rector of Martinsthorpe enjoyed an income over £100. The criticism was no less severe for not being explicit.

The mills of God grind slowly and in 1882 the Rectory of Martinsthorpe was united to the Vicarage of Manton by order in council (*Rutland Magazine* V, (1911-1912), 227).

At Martinsthorpe, as far as one can see, George Quirk continued as titular rector until his death in 1895 (Longden 1941, XI 121). The parish registers of Manton show that church duties after 1882 were performed by a miscellany of vicars and curates together with ministers from outside the parish. When James Travis was appointed in 1894 he was Curate of Manton with Martinsthorpe. Any anomaly was on paper rather than in practice. From before 1882 until his death in 1895 (Longden 1941, XI 121) George Quirk lived in Lancashire and then on the Isle of Wight without any apparent involvement in Rutland affairs. In 1896 James Travis was advanced to Rector of Manton (with Martinsthorpe) and duty for the two parishes was now combined on paper and in practice. James Travis was locally resident as was his successor in 1900, C J B Scriven (*Rutland Magazine* V, (1911-1912), 229).

This has been a tangled tale. In 1789, almost by default, Hugh Johnson's appointment as Rector of Martinsthorpe was a workable solution to the Martinsthorpe problem. He could combine his duty as Rector of Martinsthorpe with his more substantial duties as Curate of Manton. When he died in 1799, there ensued a long period of non-resident Rectors of Martinsthorpe, until late in the nineteenth century.

Today Manton (with Martinsthorpe) is one of many parishes in an entity styled Rutland Water Benefice. The chapel at Martinsthorpe is long gone, leaving no easily discernible trace. But in recent times, Old Hall Farmhouse, the former service building for Martinsthorpe House, has been restored and inhabited.

### Acknowledgements

The writer is very grateful to Dr Hilary Crowden, Robert Ovens and Sheila Sleath for their help with this article.

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Many thanks to those who contributed to this issue of the Newsletter. Please contact me if you would like to contribute an article or suggest an idea for the next issue.

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