

# *Rutland Record 38*



*Journal of the Rutland  
Local History & Record Society*

# Rutland Local History & Record Society

The Society is formed from the union in June 1991 of the Rutland Local History Society, founded in the 1930s, and the Rutland Record Society, founded in 1979. In May 1993, the Rutland Field Research Group for Archaeology & History, founded in 1971, also amalgamated with the Society.

The Society is a Registered Charity, and its aim is the advancement of the education of the public in all aspects of the history of the ancient County of Rutland and its immediate area.

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No 38 (for 2018)*

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*Front cover illustration:*

Adèle d'Osmond, Comtesse de Boigne (after J-B Isabey, frontispiece of her Mémoires)

*Back cover illustrations:*

Scorched ironstone on the gable end of Ivydene Cottage, Belton (Robert Ovens / Sheila Sleath)

Adèle d'Osmond, Comtesse de Boigne

Lillie Beisiegel (Melanie Smith)

Bronze Age gold ring from Whissendine (Leicestershire County Council, licence CCby2.0)

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## Editorial: Remembering Anniversaries

Remembrance has figured large throughout 2018, and with good reason. Across Europe there have been many commemorative events honouring those who fell during the Great War, on whichever side of the conflict they were involved. In Britain in particular those symbolic fields of red poppies have spread far and wide, and in county after county our Lords Lieutenant have nurtured programmes of remembrance. Here in Rutland we have seen the updating and republication of George Phillips' *Rutland and the Great War*, first published in 1920 to honour not just those who died but all who participated, whether on active service or on the domestic front as the book amply demonstrates. If one were to single out any individual local aspect, it should perhaps be the contribution made by the Leicestershire Yeomanry, whose losses at Frezenberg on 13th May 1915 cost the regiment, and cost Rutland, so dear, as their memorial in Oakham Castle records and as is commemorated still at an annual parade in Leicestershire's Bradgate Park. Their service in the Great War echoed what they had achieved as volunteer elements of the Imperial Yeomanry in South Africa only fifteen years earlier – the detail is set out in Glenn Steppler's *Britons, to Arms!* (1992), which puts the local volunteer story into the national context, a story which was once related in a long-term exhibition at the Rutland County Museum.

But this is not all. At the Museum in 2018 there have been exhibitions to commemorate not just the Great War but also the centenary of the Royal Air Force and its association with the county through its Second World War airfields at Cottesmore, North Luffenham and Woolfox. At the Rutland Memorial Hospital the original elegant dedication plaque of 1924 remains on view by one of the wards and is listed in the Imperial War Museum Memorials register. The fight for women to win the right to vote on equal terms with men has also figured, a fight which reached into our county too, with meetings in Oakham and Uppingham recorded by local photographers.

Rutland has a long and interesting association with military matters, and not just because the county had to send a hundred sides of bacon to help feed the Earl of Derby's struggling army in Gascony in 1345 (Harrop (1999)). Like any other county, Rutland had its own regiment of militia who could help to keep the peace wherever they may have been sent, not to mention performing other valuable service as the account of the Belton fire of 1776 in this issue amply demonstrates. We should remember, too, that both the Earl of Winchilsea and Sir Gerard Noel were active participants in raising regiments, both regular and volunteer, around the time of the French Revolution, and that it is to Sir Gerard that we are indebted for the imposing riding school which he built opposite Catmose House in Oakham for his Rutland Fencible Cavalry in 1794–95 (Clough 1995).

A propos of which, there are other anniversaries to come in 2019: the sixtieth birthday of the Friends of Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle (as they now are), the half-century of the museum itself, and indeed our own fortieth if we count from the founding of the Rutland Record Society in 1979. We look forward to some less poignant commemorations in the coming twelve months.

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### Notes on Contributors

**Tim Clough** is the Society's Honorary Editor and an Honorary Member. He went to Uppingham School, and was Curator of the Rutland County Museum from 1974 to 2002. He has a degree in prehistoric European archaeology from the University of Edinburgh, and has written and edited many works on local history, archaeology and numismatics.

**Robert Ovens** lives in Lyddington, is Vice-Chairman of the Society and is editor of the Society's *Newsletter*. With Sheila Sleath, he was joint author of *Time in Rutland* and joint editor and compiler of *The Heritage of Rutland Water*, and with Elaine Jones joint author of *John Barber's Oakham Castle and its Archaeology*, all for the Society. He was also co-author of *Buildings and People of a Rutland Manor* for Lyddington Manor History Society, and researched the family history of Richard Westbrook Baker for *Improving Agriculture in Nineteenth Century Rutland* by Vanessa Doe, published by the RLHRS in 2018.

**Paul Reeve** retired from a career in Sales and Marketing in 2002. A member of the Rutland Local History & Record Society, he is a

past contributor to *The Heritage of Rutland Water* and to *Rutland Record*. He is a graduate of Brasenose College, Oxford, where he read French and German.

**Sheila Sleath** is a retired primary school teacher and lives in Rutland where she was born and bred. She is a member of the Society and has a particular interest in her own family history. With Robert Ovens, she was joint author of *Time in Rutland* and joint compiler of *The Heritage of Rutland Water*, both published by the Society.

**Malcolm Tozer** taught at Uppingham School from 1966 to 1989 before becoming a headmaster in Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire. He is the author of *The Ideal of Manliness: the legacy of Thring's Uppingham* (2015).

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The contents of *Rutland Record* reflect the views of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Society or its Editor.

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# The Belton Fire of 1776

ROBERT OVENS & SHEILA SLEATH



*The Eagleton Archive at ROLLR has a notebook entitled 'Account of the Belton Fire' which includes a note to the effect that the contents were copied from newspapers. They relate to the devastating fire which destroyed almost half of the village on Wednesday 29th May 1776. This inspired the authors, both born in Belton, to find out more and resulted in searches of microfilm of contemporary newspapers in local archives and on the British Newspaper Archive Online website. In all, more than 150 relevant reports, letters and advertisements were found. Family history research, access to deeds and other documents in local private ownership, and a survey of surviving evidence in the village have enabled the authors to compile a detailed account of the fire, prepare vignettes on those involved, and analyse the subsequent appeal for donations which, even by modern standards, was remarkably successful.*

Fig. 1. An eighteenth century leather fire bucket from Uppingham Church, possibly used at Belton (RCM L1981.60.7).

## Wednesday 29th May 1776

According to the weather journals of Thomas Barker, the eighteenth-century Squire of Lyndon Hall, the winter of 1775-76 had been particularly severe with more snow than for several years and with the sharpest frosts since 1740. February was stormy and wet, but by the spring it had become warm and dry, and it was even hot by mid-April. May was described as cool, with many northerly winds, and dry to the extent that rain began to be wanted (Kington 1988, 81-2). The *Northampton Mercury* of 3rd June 1776 confirmed that Wednesday 29th May was another dry day, but there was then a brisk breeze blowing from the south. On that day, as in many other south Rutland villages, the labourers of Belton would have been working in the fields and most of the farmers would have travelled to Uppingham to attend the regular Wednesday market. However, this seemingly normal day in Belton was to end in chaos and tragedy, with half of the village destroyed by fire (NM 3rd June 1776, 3).

## The Devastating Fire

The *Northampton Mercury* (3rd June, 3), the *Leicester and Nottingham Journal* (1st June, 4) and the *Stamford Mercury* (6th June, 3), all published detailed accounts of the fire. From these, it is clear that the fire started when, at about mid-day, a servant girl threw hot ashes out onto the dry litter in the yard of William Allin's house 'near the South end of the Town'. Within a short time, the litter had ignited and in turn set fire to nearby outhouses. Fanned by the brisk southerly breeze, the fire 'ragged with great fury', spreading to nearby outhouses. It soon 'communicated from the House first on Fire to the opposite Side of the Street, and

proceeding Northward consumed every Thing on both Sides', presumably referring to what is now Nether Street, 'most of the Buildings being thatched and dry'.

In less than one and a half hours, half of the village was in flames and in less than three hours, 27 houses (28 houses in the *Stamford Mercury* report), including four houses 'of some considerable Farmers' and five yards, as well as barns, stables, granaries and outhouses, had been destroyed, along with their contents. The only loss of life was one horse and several calves and pigs. 'The Scene of Horror and Desolation can scarcely be conceived...'. Although the fire was still burning at midnight the danger of it spreading had abated and no more buildings were lost, but nearly 170 villagers had been left homeless with no immediate means to support themselves.

Catastrophic fires involving many buildings were not uncommon at this time but fire-fighting methods and precautions were very basic. The only fire-fighting equipment in the village, if any, would have been a few leather buckets (fig. 1) and a thatch hook, or 'dragg', and these may have been kept at the church. However, there are no surviving church records of this time for Belton which might have confirmed this. The labourers were probably summoned from the fields by the ringing of the then four church bells backwards, a sequence of ascending notes, as a notice of danger, but there would have been little that they could have done to save the property affected. Although a few ponds can be identified in Belton, the earliest being 'Hinchley's [Inchley's] Close pond' circa 1853 (Broughton 2013, 22), there is no evidence of a fire pond, and the nearest water courses were too far away to be of any use. However, a 'Pool Close' is noted in 1786 (ROLLR DG7/1/79a) to the west of Old Hall, at



the junction of Loddington Road and Back Lane, but the significance of this is unknown. The only other source of water was the wells, but buckets of water from these would have been useless against such an inferno as this must have been. The only effective action would have been to use a 'dragg' to remove thatched roofs ahead of the fire to create fire breaks. There would no doubt have been some attempt to recover valued possessions and the scene would have been one of chaos and panic.

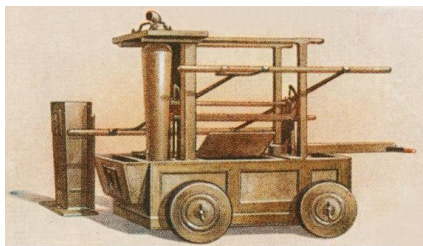


Fig. 2. A Richard Newsham fire engine, perhaps similar to the Uppingham machine (John Player 2/50).

A messenger was probably sent to Uppingham to inform the farmers of the tragedy although it is possible that they may have seen the smoke, or even heard the persistent ringing of the church bells. '... one Engine was procured from Uppingham' (fig. 2) – the town's first fire engine was purchased in 1735 at a cost of £31 7s 6d (Traylen 1982, 26). Drawn by horses, and probably on the back of a cart, it would have been some time before it arrived, even though the route would have been along the newly constructed Leicester to Peterborough Turnpike for most of the way. It is unlikely that this engine would have had any real effect in quelling such a fire, even if a suitable water source could have been found.

'The Rutland Militia, assembled at Oakham [for their annual training (LNJ 11th/18th May 1766, 1)], were sent for to assist in stopping the Flames...'. Again, it would have been some considerable time before they arrived and it is possible that by then the fire was well past its peak. The likely route taken from Oakham would have been via Pingle Lane (the modern Brooke Road – Clough 2016, 18,19), through Brooke, towards Lambley Lodge and 'over the Park Field along the Ancient course of the Road' and into Belton 'at the North east corner ... at the Poor Houses' (ROLLR EN/A/R6/1(DE2260)). Although this road today is Lambley Lodge Lane it is still referred to locally as Oakham Road.

The role of the Militia is described in the following:

*The Rutland Militia were of infinite Service on the above Occasion, as well in stopping the Progress of the Fire, as in taking Care of the Goods of such of the Inhabitants who could save any Thing; one Party being appointed by their Officers to that particular Service' (NM 3rd June 1776, 3).*

The scene is graphically described in 'Part of a Letter from Belton' in the *Leicester and Nottingham*

*Part of a Letter from Belton, dated Friday, May 31.*

*"Thank God! the Fire has entirely ceased. No Lives are lost, nor any Person hurt, except a few People a little burnt in afflicting to quench the Flames. There are in all 27 Families burnt entirely out; four Farm-Houses and five Yards totally consumed; not so much as a single Hovel-Post left unburnt. Some of these unfortunate Sufferers have not a Bed left, or even a Chair to sit down upon, or any even the least Household-Article.---Mr. Morris has been exceedingly kind to the Poor, having taken several of them to his own House at Loddington. My House has happily escaped; but to see the deplorable Condition of our Friends and Neighbours is truly distressing to a feeling Heart."*

Fig. 3. This extract from a letter by a Belton resident dated just two days after the fire provides important evidence (NM 3rd June 1776, 3).

*Journal* and the *Northampton Mercury* (fig. 3). This letter, written immediately after the fire, is important evidence as the author, although unnamed, would have had an accurate knowledge of the catastrophe. He wrote: 'My House has happily escaped: but to see the deplorable Condition of our Friends and Neighbours is truly distressing to a feeling Heart'.

A few days earlier, a fire at a farm at Buckwell End, near Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, consumed the house and outbuildings, 'the Assiduity of the Neighbours in stripping it, prevented its destroying the Malting, and doing more Mischief. --- This Disaster was occasioned by the Maid-Servant throwing some hot Ashes among the Straw in the Farm-Yard' (NM 3rd June 1776, 3). Nine years later, in very similar circumstances, another fire was started at the Crown Inn, Biggleswade, by a servant 'throwing some hot Ashes into the Yard', which 'consumed near 200 Dwellings' (NM 20th June 1785, 3). Following its report on the Belton fire, the *Northampton Mercury* included:

*The late melancholy Catastrophe by Fire, ... occasioned thro' Negligence of Servants; --- for their Use and Benefit only we have selected the following Extract from the Act of Parliament, shewing the severe Penalties they are subject to for any such Calamity which may happen by their Carelessness or Neglect. 'If any menial or other Servant, through Negligence or Carelessness, shall fire or cause to be fired any Dwelling-House or Out-House, and be convicted thereof by Oath of one Witness, before two Justices, he shall forfeit £100, to the Church-wardens, to be distributed amongst the Sufferers by such Fire; and if he shall not pay the same immediately, on Demand of the Church-wardens, he shall be committed by the said Justices to some Work-House or House of Correction for eighteen Months, there to be kept to hard Labour. 6 Ann, c.31. f3. (NM 3rd June 1776, 3).*

No details of the identity or fate of the servant girl who accidentally started the Belton fire have been found.

### The Immediate Sustenance of the Indigent Poor

Many of those affected by the fire would have lost everything and there was an urgent need to raise funds to help them. As reported in the *Northampton Mercury*, (10th June 1776, 2) this was quickly organised by William Kemp (see below): *'For the immediate Sustenance of the indigent Poor, any Contributions will be received by Mr. Kemp, at the Hall-House [now known as Old Hall] in Belton'*. Within a short time, the *'Neighbouring Gentlemen and Clergy'* had *'collected their respective Parishes'* and over £600 had been donated. There is no surviving record of how this was spent or who benefited. Although it appears to have been entirely separate to the advertising campaign entitled *'To the Charitable'* which started in the local newspapers on 13th July, it did point out the means by which further funds could be raised to pay for the rebuilding of houses and provide compensation for other material losses.

### William Kemp

In 1776 there were two William Kemps living in Belton: William I, born in 1705, the son of William and Elizabeth, and his nephew, William II, born in 1738, the son of William I's brother Edward and sister-in-law Sarah. William I was married to Susannah and their daughter Elizabeth was baptised at Belton in 1737. William II married Ann Box of Ayston in 1799 and their only daughter, Mary Ann, married John Eagleton in 1817. In Belton church there are memorials to both Williams and their wives, and to John and Mary Ann Eagleton.

The Earl of Winchilsea's Rentroll of April 1750 (ROLLR DG7/1/74) shows that William Kemp I, who would by then have been 45 years old, rented the majority of the Earl's estate in the parish of Belton. Succeeding rentals reveal that a William Kemp continued this tenancy right through to 1793 and, although not specified in the early rentals, a survey of the Winchilsea estate in 1786 identifies *'The Manor house with the Outbuildings Yards & Gardens'*, as well as land, being tenanted by a *'W<sup>m</sup> Kemp'* (ROLLR DG7/1/79a). It is likely that it was William I who tenanted the Hall-House at this time. He died the following year and, at some time, certainly by 1790, William II had taken over the tenancy (ROLLR DG7/1/95).

An advertisement *'To the CHARITABLE'* ends with *'Benefactions are also still continued to be received by Mr. WILLIAM KEMP, at Belton'* (SM 12th September 1776, 3). This confirms a William Kemp's (almost certainly William I) leading role in the management of the appeal fund. Neither William I nor William II received money from the appeal fund, suggesting that the houses they owned or tenanted were unaffected by the fire.

### The Appeal Fund

An appeal for funds for the relief of the sufferers was duly organised by the *'Neighbouring Gentlemen and Clergy'* who had formed themselves into what we might nowadays call an appeal management committee, many of whom, we are assured by later advertisements, were at the scene of the fire. But before the start of an advertising campaign, the organisers were careful to warn the public about imposters and sharpers.

### Imposters and Sharpers

Public appeals such as this were liable to false claims and those in charge were careful to warn donors. A week after the fire, an announcement, *'LOSS by FIRE, at BELTON, in Rutland; A CAUTION humbly addressed to the Humane and Charitable'* was placed in local newspapers. It gave details of the fire and then said:

*A proper and just Estimate of the Loss cannot be made in the present State of Confusion and Distress: --- And as Charity and Benevolence are the Characteristic and Honour of this Country, to prevent the Well-disposed from being imposed upon by Persons no way concerned with the Loss,*

*The PUBLIC are hereby informed - That just Estimates will be taken as soon as possible, under the Care and Inspection of the neighbouring Gentlemen, who were present on the Occasion; and proper Persons will be duly appointed by them, to go round and collect the Country. Therefore any Persons who shall come, under Pretences of suffering by this Fire, without such Recommendations, may be deemed Imposters and Sharpers (NM 10th June 1776, 2).*

Similar notices were published in respect of other fires, for example:

*LOSS by FIRE. ELIZABETH BERRIDGE, of Twyford in Leicestershire, takes this Method of acquainting the Public, that by their Kindness and Humanity, she has received nearly the Sum she lost by the late Fire at Twyford: - And does not mean to collect any more. The Intent of this Advertisement is to prevent any Imposters from making Use of her Name, and under that Pretence collecting the Country' (LNJ 3rd August 1776, 3).*

### The Appeal Committee

This committee consisted of the following *'Neighbouring Gentlemen and Clergy'*, listed in the order in which they appear in newspaper advertisements:

**Charles Morris** of Loddington Hall, Leicestershire, *'was universally esteemed as a worthy, upright, impartial, and active magistrate for the county of Leicester'*. His wife was known in Loddington and the neighbouring villages *'for her benevolence to the poor, her kind attention to the sick and afflicted'* (Nichols 1800, 330). Her kindness was extended to those who suffered by the Belton fire. Charles Morris died in June 1798 aged 71.

**George Bridges Brudenell** of Ayston Hall was Equerry to George II from 1746 to 1760 and MP for Rutland and Stamford for several years between 1754 and 1790 (History of Parliament Online). He subscribed £20 for the relief of the poor in Rutland in 1795 (*SM* 14th Aug 1795, 2), their plight brought about by the scarcity of corn that year. He died in 1801 aged 75 and memorials to him and his family are in Wardley Church.

**Thomas Vowe** was descended from a long line of ancestors who lived at Hallaton, Leicestershire. He died in 1785 and his slate memorial in the church states that ‘*He served his Majesty with honour: as a Cornet of Horse, in that glorious Continental War ... which was terminated by the Peace of Paris in 1763*’ (Nichols 1798, 605).

**John Fenwicke** was rector of Hallaton, Leicestershire, from 1760 to 1789. He died in 1789 and a memorial tablet in the church reads that he was a man ‘*of whom it may truly be said, that he fulfilled the duties of a man and a Christian*’ (Nichols 1798, 604).

**Edward Cheselden** of Somerby, Leicestershire, was a descendant of a long line of Rutland gentry. By the end of the 15th century, the family seat had moved from Uppingham to Ridlington. Here the family lived until members dispersed to Braunston, Manton and Ridlington, and to Somerby in Leicestershire (*Rutland Record* 8 (1988), 266). Little is known of this Edward, but an Edward, possibly his son, married Elizabeth Dickinson at Belton in 1793.

**John Simpson** of Launde Abbey, Leicestershire, was a Leicester banker who had purchased the Abbey in 1763. He was ‘*Treasurer to the Society for the Relief of the Prisoners, confined in our County [Leicestershire] Gaol*’ (*LNJ* 17th Aug 1776, 3), and was High Sheriff of Leicestershire in 1775.

**Henry Boulton** of Uppingham was born in 1728 at Moulton, Lincolnshire. His son John and wife Mary (*née* Preston) were buried at Uppingham in 1763 and 1779 respectively. Henry returned to Moulton where he died in 1788.

**Henry Sheild** of Preston was born in the village in 1727. He lived here with his wife Mary and their sons Henry and Thomas. He was Sheriff of Rutland in 1768 and died at Preston in 1792, followed by his wife in 1793.

**Thomas Barker**, the eminent weather observer, became the new squire of Lyndon Hall on the death of his father in 1759. He was appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Rutland in the same year and was a Governor of Archdeacon Johnson’s Foundation for the schools and hospitals at Oakham and Uppingham (Kington 1988, 11). His daily weather records were to become widely recognised in Britain as an authoritative reference. In 1795 he was chairman of the ‘*SUBSCRIBERS for the RELIEF of the POOR of the County of RUTLAND*’ and he subscribed ten guineas to the fund (*SM* 7th August 1795, 2). He died in 1809 and was buried at Lyndon.

**Needham [Nedham] Cheselden** of Manton, an important member of the local gentry, was Sheriff of Rutland in 1780. He married Jane Slater at Manton in 1799. He was buried at Manton in 1826 aged 81.

**John Freer** lived in Oakham with his wife, Ann, and the parish registers record that seven of their children were baptised at Oakham Church. He was a titheable landowner and appears in the *Universal British Directory* of 1791 amongst the town’s gentry (Clough 2016, 41, 91). He donated one guinea in 1795 towards the relief of the poor in Rutland (*SM* 7th Aug 1795, 2). He was Sheriff of Rutland in 1779 and died in 1806.

**James Dashwood** was rector of Allextion, Leicestershire, from 1771 until 1802. As curate, he signed the Belton register from 1773 until 1778, except for the year of the fire when it was signed by Matthew Slye. James collected contributions of £5 2s 6d in Allextion and £7 5s in Skeffington for the Belton fire appeal.

**Jonathan Bramston** of Uppingham was an attorney, and at some time he was Steward of the Rectory Manor of Uppingham (*inf.* Peter Lane). As Clerk of the Meetings he signed the notice on 1st May 1776 announcing the training of the Rutland Militia at Oakham on the 20th of that month (*LNJ* 11th and 18th May 1776, 1). He is also noted in the accounts of the Belton Poor Close Charity when he charged £7 7s 0d in July 1784 for preparing a deed for the appointment of new trustees (ROLLR DE2810/14).

**Robert Hotchkin** of Allextion, Leicestershire, and also of South Luffenham, was brother to Thomas Hotchkin (1729-74) who had inherited the South Luffenham seat from his father (Palmer 2008, 313-14). Thomas had no children and left his estate to his nephew John (1768-89), Robert’s son. On John’s death the estate reverted to his father. At some time, Thomas rented the hall-house at Allextion where he died in 1774 and the announcement of his death in the *Stamford Mercury* (4th August 1774, 3) states that he was ‘... (*brother to Robert Hotchkins [sic], Esq; of South Luffenham in the County of Rutland*) ...’. Exactly why Robert was stated as being of Allextion in 1776 is unknown. Robert became Sheriff of Rutland in 1777 when he was living at South Luffenham. He died at Stamford in 1796.

**Matthew Slye** signed the 1776 Belton register as curate. He was married to Mary and three of their children were baptised in the village between 1775 and 1780. He became vicar of Weston by Welland, Northamptonshire, in 1777.

### Church Brief or Newspaper Campaign?

Up to this time, the traditional method of collecting funds for the relief of sufferers following a disaster was by means of a ‘*Church Brief*’. It was a royal warrant issued under the control of the Church authorising a collection for a charitable cause. Details were read out at Sunday services and collections made either at the church door or house to house. This method had been used for many years but it was often abused and often ineffective. By the time of the Belton fire the organisation of briefs had been passed over to private companies whose fees often accounted for a major portion of the funds raised. They were finally abolished in 1828.

There is no evidence that the ‘*Church Brief*’ system



was considered in connection with the Belton fire. Instead, the organisers decided to raise the money through advertisements in local newspapers, including the *Stamford Mercury*, the *Leicester & Nottingham Journal* and the *Northampton Mercury*. These advertisements began 'To the Charitable' and indicated that the early success of local collections had 'by that Means pointed out a Mode by which the Whole of the Contributions will come to the Sufferers, without charge or Deduction' (NM 29th July 1776, 1).

## To the CHARITABLE.

**A**N exact Estimate having been taken, as near as can be, of the Loss by the late dreadful Fire at Belton, in Rutland, by which TWENTY-SEVEN DWELLING HOUSES, besides outhouses, barns, corn-stacks and hovels, were reduced to Ashes, and most of the Household Furniture and Effects, belonging to the unhappy Sufferers were destroyed:

It appears that the total Loss amounted to the Sum of FIVE THOUSAND AND TWENTY POUNDS, to the Ruin of many Families, unless raised up by the Hand of Charity.

The Neighbouring Gentlemen and Clergy have humanely collected their respective Parishes, and by that Means pointed out a Mode, by which the Whole of the Contributions will come to the Sufferers, without Charge or Deduction. The same benevolent Assistance is humbly requested from the rest of the Gentlemen and Clergy.

Fig. 4. Advertisement calling for donations  
(SM 26th Sept 1776, 4).

## The Advertising Campaign

The first advertisement headed 'To the Charitable' was published in the *Leicester & Nottingham Journal* on 13th July and continued every week until 19th October. It was only included in the *Northampton Mercury* on 22nd and 29th July and in the *Stamford Mercury* from 12th September until 24th October (fig. 4).

The sums raised were to be paid into the hands of bankers Richard Gravat at The Crown, Fleet Street, London, Mr Bently, and Hodges and Co at Leicester and Abel Smith at Nottingham; attorneys Mr Smyth at Northampton and Mr Roberts at Kettering; Rev Mr Moore at Peterborough, Rev Mr Farrer at Harborough, Alderman Hopkins at Stamford, Mr Robert Stafford, grocer, at Huntingdon, William Wood, bookseller at Lincoln, Messrs Garnars at Grantham, Thomas Thorpe, merchant of Spalding, Boaz Baxter, of Helpringham, near Sleaford, Mr Metherringham of Friestone, William Inchley and Francis Kemp, both of Belton and Mr Bramston of Oundle (NM 29th July 1776, 1).

Authority to make collections was given at the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire Summer Assizes. The first notice regarding this appeared in the *Northampton Mercury* on 29th July, and then almost continuously every week until the end of October. A similar notice for the Leicester Assizes was published in the *Leicester & Nottingham Journal*, the first being

on 3rd August. No similar notice has been found in respect of the Rutland Summer Assizes, which were held at Oakham on Friday 19th July 1776 (NC, 29th June 1776, 1). At the same time, the organisers published a notice advising the public that any interest accruing from the collections would be added to the fund.

The following farther COLLECTIONS have been received, for the Relief of the Poor Sufferers by the late Fire at BELTON, in RUTLAND:

	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward	2318	13	3
Mrs. Gardiner, of Thunderidge-Bury, Herts.	1	1	0
Collected at Hathern, by the Rev. Mr. Middleton.	2	14	0
Thorp-Acre, by ditto.	0	5	0
Edward Hartopp, Esq;	5	5	0
By the Rev. Mr. Bently, from Hemmington and Lockington.	3	0	0
By the Rev. Mr. Edwards, from Barrow-upon-Soar.	5	7	3
A Gentleman Unknown.	1	1	0
Mr. Isaac Carter, Leicester.	3	3	0
By Mr. Cook, from Edith-Weston	16	6	6
By the Rev. Mr. Griffin, from Stoke, in Northamptonshire.	4	14	3
By ditto from Brampton, Northamptonsh.	3	13	6
Charles Heslinge Esq; Nolsley.	3	3	0
By the Rev. Mr. Jackson, from North-Luffenham,	33	12	6
Richard Welby, Esq;	4	15	0
By Mr. Jackson, from Duddington, Northamptonshire.	5	4	0
By the Rev. Mr. Bailey, from Seaton, Rutlandshire.	14	8	0
Mr. Pank Medmore.	1	1	0
By the Rev. Mr. Myers, from Uffington, in Lincolnshire.	17	2	0
By the Rev. Mr. Wotton, from Barrowden, in Rutlandshire.	10	5	6
By ditto, from Wakerly, Northamptonsh.	4	6	6
By the Rev. Mr. King, from Ketton, Rutlandshire.	8	10	0
From the Corporation of Stamford, the farther Sum of	6	11	0
By the Rev. Mr. Reid, from Dean, Northamptonshire.	6	5	0
By ditto, from Deanthorp.	1	4	6
By ditto, from Corby.	3	16	11
A Person Unknown.	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2486</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>

Fig. 5. List of donations (LNJ 28th Sept 1776, 3).

## The Donations

Lists of all donors and their donations were published every week in the *Leicester & Nottingham Journal* (fig. 5) from 20th July to 9th November together with the running total. The *Northampton Mercury* only printed lists of collections in Northamptonshire. These contributions came not just from the official

collectors but also named individuals and anonymous donors. There were no lists of donations published in the *Stamford Mercury*.

The vast majority of donations came from Rutland and its bordering counties. Individuals and collections in 40 Rutland parishes donated a total of £874 18s 10d to the appeal fund, including £100 each from George Brudenell Esq of Ayston and the Earl of Gainsborough of Exton Hall, and £50 each from Thomas Noel Esq of Exton and Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Bt, of Normanton Hall. Other notable donors were Robert Hotchkin Esq of South Luffenham (£21), Thomas Barker Esq of Lyndon Hall (£5 5s) and Sir Charles Halford, Bt, of Edith Weston Hall (£5 5s). The residents of Belton donated £21 12s 4d, including £15 6s 4d collected by William Inchley.

In Leicestershire, individual donations and collections from 169 parishes, together with Leicester Town and the Corporation of Leicester, contributed a total of £1,111 14s 1d to the appeal fund. The Corporation of Leicester's donation was reported as follows:

*Yesterday at a Common Hall, specially held for the purpose, the sum of Forty Pounds, was subscribed by the Corporation of this Borough, towards the relief of the unfortunate Sufferers, by the late dreadful Fire at Belton: - And on Tuesday next, at 9 in the morning, the Mayor has requested the favour of the Clergy, Gentle-men, Parish-Officers, &c. to meet him at the Change, in order to make a Collection throughout the Town, for the same laudable purpose (LNJ 17th Aug 1776, 3).*

The collection was duly carried out during the following week and the amount raised, £201 10s, was included in the published list of donations on the 24th August, along with a note stating:

*Several Gentlemen in Leicester, being from Home when waited on, it is most humbly requested on the part of the Sufferers, that their intended benefactions may be left with any of the Bankers specified to receive the same. - And as thro' the hurry necessarily attendant on making such a Collection, some Ladies and Gentlemen may have been omitted, their indulgence is hoped, and their Contribution desired to be left as above (LNJ 24th August 1776, 4).*

The Leicester collection eventually amounted to £209 9s. Other notable donations from Leicestershire included £31 10s collected by the Rev Mr Fenwick of Hallaton, £23 10s collected by the Rev Mr Healy, of Loddington, £10 10s from the Earl of Harborough of Stapleford Hall, £10 from Shuckburgh Ashby Esq of Quenby Hall, £5 5s from Cosmo Neville Esq of Neville Holt, £5 5s from Mr Heycock of East Norton Hall and 5s donated by 'Master' Morris, presumably the son of Charles Morris of Loddington Hall.

In Northamptonshire, 42 parishes and two individuals donated a total of £564 19s 3d to the appeal

fund and in Lincolnshire, 39 parishes and five individuals donated a total of £354 14s 9d, including £138 14s 9d collected by Stamford Corporation. There were single donations from Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Nottinghamshire and two from London. One of the London donations was reported separately in the *Northampton Mercury*: *'A few Days ago, Mr. Wood, Bookseller, of Lincoln, received a Parcel by the London Coach, containing an anonymous Letter, with four Guineas inclosed, and four Pair of neat Leather Breeches, for the Sufferers by fire at Belton' (NM 11th November 1776, 3).*

The remainder of the donations to the fund were from 42 individuals whose locations were unknown, including six 'Persons Unknown', one of which was £100, and 'A Stranger'. The overall total raised was £3,391 10s 7d.

It is interesting to note that the residents of Belton contributed to appeals in respect of fires in other local villages. For example, *'RICHARD WRIGHT, Weston-on-the-Welland, the County of Northampton, (Sufferer by Fire) returns his sincere Thanks to a generous Public for the following Sums, which have been gratefully received by him'*. The total of £50 18s 9d from 25 individuals and parishes included £1 4s from Belton (NM 10th May 1794, 1). Earlier, Belton residents contributed £4 4s to a collection which raised £257 17s 10d for the relief of sufferers following a fire at Ashley, Northamptonshire, in 1785 (NM 20th June 1785, 2).

### The Distribution of the Appeal Funds

An early estimate indicated that the total loss was near £15,000, but after a further and perhaps more detailed estimate had been made this was reduced to £5,020. By 28th September half of this amount had been received and the men concerned with the Collection announced that as soon as £3,775 had been collected they would not solicit any further contributions, even though this was well short of the estimate (LNJ 28th September 1776, 3). Advertisements 'To the CHARITABLE' continued to be placed in local newspapers which included an assurance to *'the Publick, that the Money shall be distributed with the strictest Attention to the Proportion of the Sufferers ... Benefactions are also still continued to be received by Mr. WILLIAM KEMP, at Belton' (SM 17th October 1776, 4).*

At the beginning of November, five months after the fire, the following announcement was made:

*It is with Pleasure we can inform the Charitable that the different Sums already collected for the Sufferers by the late FIRE at Belton, in the County of Rutland WILL BE SUFFICIENT; and that, so soon as an exact Account can be made out, it shall be laid before them; and we beg Leave to return our most*

hearty Thanks on their Behalf (NM 4th November 1776, 2).

It was repeated in the same newspaper a week later.

A further public announcement was made praising those who gave so generously:

*The very extraordinary subscription collected for the relief of the sufferers by this calamity, cannot fail of impressing every reader of this paper, with the highest opinion of the humanity and benevolence of the inhabitants of this part of the kingdom, who have so generously assisted the distressed, done Justice to their own feelings --- and whose bounty and liberality will be held out as an example to the kingdom, whenever such a like unhappy distress should happen (LNJ 9th November 1776, 3).*

In July 1777, those in charge of the appeal placed an advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury* (24th July 1777, 4) and other local newspapers reporting that the greater part of the funds raised had 'been properly applied, and what remains in Hand is designed for those who have not finished their Buildings'. A further advertisement in November 1778 stated how the total of £3391 10s 7d was allocated (fig. 6), with any surplus to be distributed amongst the poor of Belton (NM 30th Nov 1778, 1).

But this was not the end of it. One of the Sufferers, John Loake of Belton, wrote a letter of complaint to the *Stamford Mercury* in October 1779 voicing his concerns about the estimates made and the distribution of the funds (see below, p349).

### The Course and Spread of the Fire

An extract from the anonymous letter from Belton dated 31st May 1776 in the *Northampton Mercury* (3rd June, 3) (fig. 3) provides some interesting facts about the fire. The correspondent was obviously a resident whose home was not directly affected by the inferno. He reported that: '*There are in all 27 Families burnt entirely out; four Farm-Houses and five Yards totally consumed; not so much as a single Hovel-Post left unburnt.*'

In Belton at this time, the farmhouses and many of the other buildings would have been built of ironstone. Most of those that were thatched and in the path of the fire would have been completely destroyed, leaving only the walls standing. It could be assumed that the five yards 'totally consumed' were farmyards, but they could in fact also refer to a group of houses sharing a common yard. Either may have contained humble dwellings with ironstone, mud or timber walls, and their thatched roofs would be perfect for sustaining the inferno, especially when fanned by a brisk breeze. Within the yards there would also have been timber huts, small barns and open-fronted sheds for sheltering animals and for storing tools – any open-fronted buildings would

WE, whose Names are under-written, having examined the Account of the Money received and paid for the dreadful FIRE which happened at BELTON, in RUTLAND, May 29th, 1776, do hereby return Thanks, in the Name and Behalf of the Sufferers, to the kind CONTRIBUTORS, for the very liberal Assistance they have given, by which we have been enabled properly to compensate the respective Losses of those who were reduced to the utmost Distress from that alarming Visitation; and the following State of the Money received, and the Application of it, is submitted to them:

RECEIVED,		£.	s.	d.
By various Collections,		3391	10	7
PAID.		£.	s.	d.
How far 1572l. 17s. 1d.	Thomas Elmes,	395	9	11
	William Allen,	339	13	10
	Thomas Burbridge,	194	8	7
	Richard Goodwin,	170	5	10
	Edward Kemp,	159	9	5
	Thomas Goodliffe,	99	10	4
	George Smith,	29	11	8
	Henry Branston,			
	Thomas Thorpe,	184	7	6
	John Draycots,			
For Goods, 1621l. 17s. 11d.	John Leake,	82	3	0
	William Allen,	223	0	0
	Jane Lenton, Widow,	173	17	6
	John Allen,	145	10	5
	Edward Kemp,	267	13	11
	William Cleypole,	107	10	0
	William Inchley,	103	10	0
	William Ogden,	56	11	0
	John Allen, Carpenter,	27	8	6
	Thomas Goodliffe,	14	4	6
	Thomas Croden,	41	14	4
	John Kemp,	34	5	2
	Francis Kemp,	16	19	0
	Thomas Spendlow,	13	17	7
	John Spendlow,	25	8	8
	Edward Moore,	34	4	7
	Robert Hill,	19	4	10
	John Watkins,	14	10	0
For war. Articles 192l. 8s. 5d.	John Turner,	17	19	8
	Henry Branston,	13	8	6
	William Tarry,	21	11	10
	John Hill,	15	19	3
	Mary Ruddle,	20	10	10
	Fifty-three Sufferers,	130	14	10
	Bread, Meat, Cloaths,			
	and Bedding,	28	5	9
	Help at the Fire,	13	8	0
	Taking the Estimate,	17	2	9
For war. Articles 192l. 8s. 5d.	Lost by Light Gold,	5	15	4
	Expences,	75	14	0
	Printing,	52	2	7
Balance,		3387	3	5
		4	7	2

£. 3391 10 7

The Remainder of which, after the Expence of Advertising is paid, will be distributed amongst the Poor of the said Parish.

G. B. BRUDENELL,	JO. FREE,
THOMAS BARKER,	THOMAS VOWE,
JOHN FENWICHE,	CHAS. MORRIS,
H. BOULTON,	ROB. HOTCHKIN,
NEDHAM CHESelden,	MATT. SLYE,
JO. BRAMSTON.	

Fig. 6. List of beneficiaries (NM 30th Nov 1778, 1).

neatly fit in with the description 'not so much as a single Hovel-Post left unburnt'. Within the farmyards, large amounts of combustible material, including carts, stacks of hay and straw and possibly piles of timber, would have been ideal fuel to feed the fire.

The same edition of the *Northampton Mercury* reported that: '... near 170 Persons (Men, Women and Children) [were] left destitute of Subsistence, without a Habitation, or knowing where to lay their Heads'. It is safe to assume that the number of families and homes burnt out is correct since the information came from a



local resident, presumably with first-hand knowledge of the calamity, just two days after the fire. Although the population of Belton in 1776 is unknown, it was probably very close to that of 1795 when it consisted of 80 men, 86 women, 114 boys and 135 girls, a total of 415 (ROLLR DE3214/12376/11). The people who were made homeless by the fire therefore represented about 40% of the village population.

Unlike many other estate villages in Rutland, there are no known mid-18th century maps of Belton which might help with the location of individual houses lost in the fire, many of which were tenanted properties. However, extensive research, involving documents in private ownership, the enclosure schedule of 1794, the appeal fund accounts, Winchilsea estate rentals and a survey of scorched ironstone on surviving property, has provided the positive identification and location of some of the affected dwellings. In particular, it is known that the fire started at or near what is now known as Ivydene Cottage 'near the South End of the Town' (NM 3rd June 1776, 3) and extended to a house at the north end of the village 'burnt down in ye late Fire' (ROLLR DG7/1/14b/2).

Whilst the present open area at the centre of the village may be considered as a fire-break, there are no surviving maps which might confirm that this was the situation before the fire. It seems certain that the fire spread northwards from building to building along what is now Nether Street under the influence of the brisk southerly breeze, but the central area may also have contained stacks of hay and straw, timber hovels and other combustible materials. These considerations have enabled the probable course and spread of the fire to be plotted on the 1886 Ordnance Survey 25" map of the village (fig. 7). The published accounts of the appeal fund, showing how the money was used 'properly to compensate the respective Losses of those who were reduced to the utmost Distress from the alarming Visitation' (NM 30th Nov 1778, 1) have been

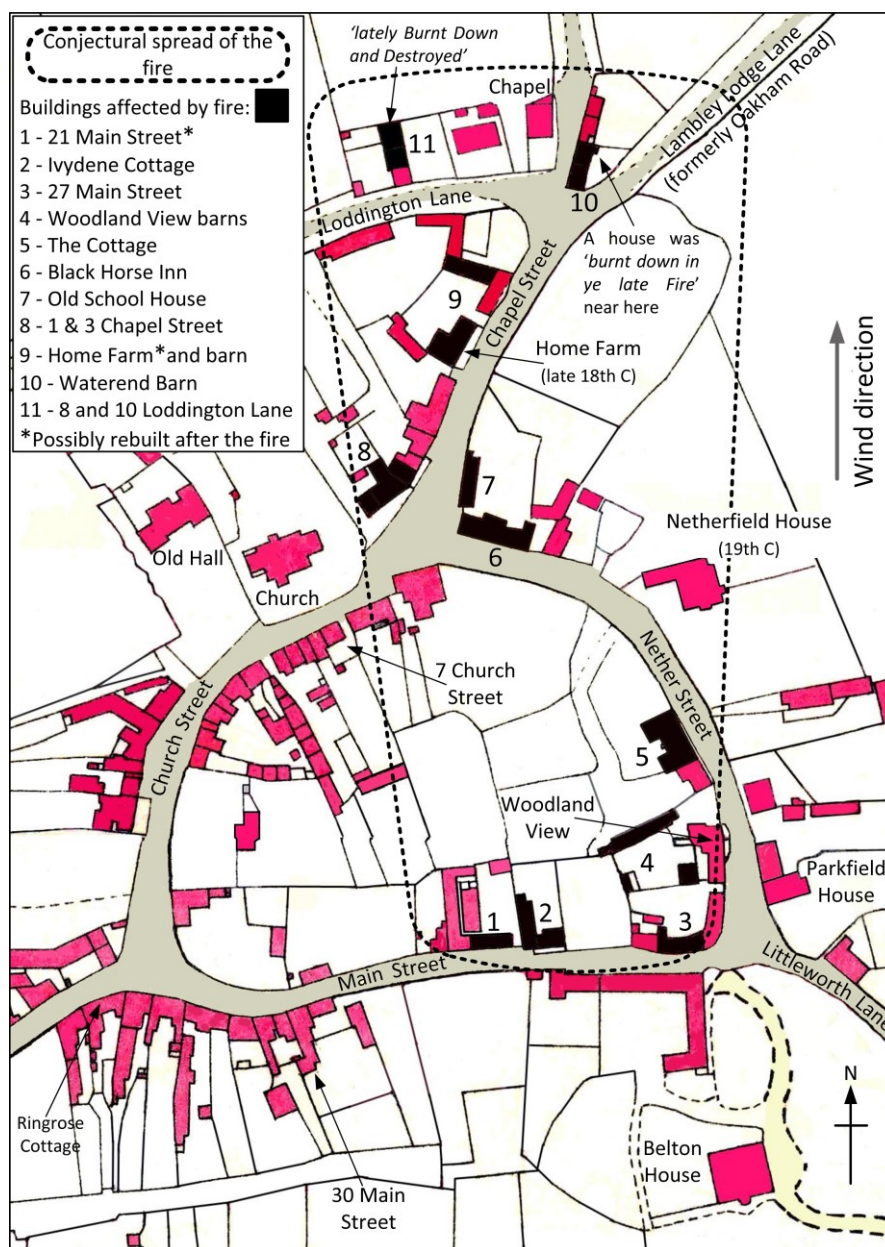


Fig. 7. Plan showing the conjectural course and spread of the fire, based on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map of 1886.

of particular help in attempting to track the course of the fire. Persons named in these accounts were compensated for either 'Houses' or 'Goods', but no further guidance is provided on the interpretation of these categories. 'Houses' probably included associated outbuildings such as stables and barns, but for the purposes of this article the authors have concentrated on the more identifiable living accommodation. 'Goods' would include any personal property within the home such as household items, including furniture, cutlery, crockery, bedding and clothing, and outside possessions which may include livestock, farming equipment, timber and stock-in-trade.

#### Those Compensated for Houses

Ten home owners, Thomas Elmes, William Allen,



Fig. 8. Extensive area of scorched ironstone on the west gable end of Ivydene Cottage, 23 Main Street (authors).



Fig. 9. 21 Main Street, rebuilt with early bricks on scorched ironstone walls (authors).

Thomas Burbridge, Richard Goodwin, Edward Kemp Thomas Goodliffe, George Smith, Henry Branston, Thomas Thorpe and John Draycots (mentioned in that order) received a total of £1,572 17s 1d from the fund in compensation for houses severely damaged or lost. Since there were 27 affected houses but only ten recipients of compensation, some of the individual amounts must have covered for more than one house. However, this detail is not provided in the accounts. Branston, Thorpe and Draycots are bracketed together and allocated a single amount for all three. Creating profiles of these men has been difficult and less than half give any hint of where their property was located.

#### Thomas Elmes

A complete mystery. It has not been possible to link him to Belton either as a resident or absentee property owner, yet he received £395 9s 11d, the highest amount for houses from the fund. He received no compensation for goods, probably confirming that he was an absentee landlord.

#### William Allen (Allin)

The *Stamford Mercury* is the only newspaper which identifies the occupant of the house where the fire started: ‘... a shocking fire broke out at the house of Mr. William Allin, of Belton, in Rutlandshire ...’ (SM 6th June 1776, 3). William Allen received £339 13s 10d for houses from the fund, the second highest amount after Thomas Elmes, and £223 for goods, both amounts suggesting that his property suffered a great deal of damage. There are substantial areas of scorched ironstone on the original walls of the house and former out-buildings of Ivydene Cottage, 23 Main Street (fig. 8 & 13), and this may be the reason why this particular house, ‘near the South End of the Town’ (NM 3 June 1776, 3) has traditionally been identified as being the source of the fire. It is certainly possible that the fire could have started here or close by. A large area of scorched ironstone on the west wall of Ivydene Cottage (fig. 8) suggests that a former building abutting it had also suffered intense heat. This may have been attached to the adjacent 21 Main Street which at some time has been rebuilt with early

bricks on the original ironstone base, almost certainly as a result of fire damage (fig. 9). Consequently, either 21 or 23 Main Street could have been the source of the fire and the residence of William Allen. This may have been William Allen, who was baptised in May 1723, believed to be the eldest son of William and Alice Allen. William, a yeoman, married Mary Cotton of Houghton at Belton, seven months before the fire and two of their daughters, Eleanor and Alice, were baptised at the village church.

#### Thomas Burbridge

Loddington Parish Registers indicate that Thomas Burbridge [Burbidge, Burbage], who received £194 8s 7d for a house or houses from the Belton fire fund, lived at Loddington. The fact that he received no compensation for loss of goods is confirmation that he was not a Belton resident. There is nothing to indicate the location of his property in Belton or who his tenant or tenants were, but they may have been included in the list of those who received money for goods.

Thomas married Mary Smith of Ridlington in 1734 and their son Charles, baptised at Loddington in 1747, may have inherited his father’s property in Belton in 1786. The schedule of the Belton Enclosure Award of 1794 (ROLLR EN/A/R6/1(DE2260)) names a Charles Burbage as being awarded a small parcel of land in Belton on the parish boundary with Loddington.

#### Richard Goodwin

A Richard Goodwin, a Loddington miller, received £170 5s 10d for a house or houses from the appeal fund. He married Elizabeth White at Loddington in 1742 and they had at least one child, Sarah, baptised the following year. Documents (in private ownership) suggest that in 1770 Richard Goodwin mortgaged property in Belton which occupied the site where 2, 4 (Arbutus House), 6, 8 and 10 Loddington Lane now stand. Previously there had been a barn on this site but by 1741 it had been converted into a dwelling. Henry Lenton, a Belton horse dealer, provided the mortgage. A Release dated 10th October 1776, drawn up after Henry Lenton’s death, reveals that ‘the said Messuage Cottage or Tenement hath Together with the out Buildings been lately Burnt Down and Destroyed and Consequently not worth the Principal money and Interest now due...’ and that Richard Goodin [Goodwin] was ‘...



*unwilling to Repair the said Messuage ... without first having a Release from the said Jane Lenton and her son William and Heir'. The Release confirmed that neither Jane Lenton, her son William 'or either of their Heirs Executors or Administrators shall not or will at any Time hereafter have Claim Challenge or Demand any Dower Estate Right Title or Interest either in Law or Equity of in to or out of the said Premises...'. Having obtained this Release, Richard Goodwin could rightfully claim money for a house burnt down on 29th May 1776. The 'lately Burnt Down' cottage was rebuilt and survives today as two cottages at 8 and 10 Loddington Lane, thus providing important evidence of the extent of the fire.*

### Edward Kemp

Baptised at Belton in 1709, the son of William and Elizabeth. He married Sarah Ward at Stamford Baron in 1737 and they had five sons who were all baptised at Belton church. Two of Edward's sons, Francis and John, were like himself, amongst those 'Sufferers' affected by the fire of 1776. Edward's brother, William I, was an early co-ordinator of the appeal fund.

Edward received £159 9s 5d for a house or houses and £267 13s 11d in compensation for loss of goods. It is interesting to note that out of those who received money for goods the amount allocated to him was of the highest value. This implies that the house he occupied and possibly others rented from him must have been close to the path of the fire. Although it is known that descendants of this Kemp family owned what is today Parkfield House in Nether Street from the mid-1850s until 1919 (documents in private ownership), no earlier references have been found to suggest that they were the owners in 1776. There is no visual evidence to suggest that the fire spread eastwards to this property. From what we know of Edward Kemp, he would have lived in a substantial property. This may have been on the site where Netherfield House, now Rutland Manor, stands today. An annexe to this house has a quantity of recycled scorched iron-stone in its walls.

Edward had been a churchwarden for at least seven of the years between 1742 and 1760. He died aged 67 six months after the fire, in December 1776. When his wife Sarah was buried in 1804, she was recorded in the parish register as '*relict of Edw<sup>d</sup> Kemp Gent*'. There is a memorial to them in Belton church (fig. 10).

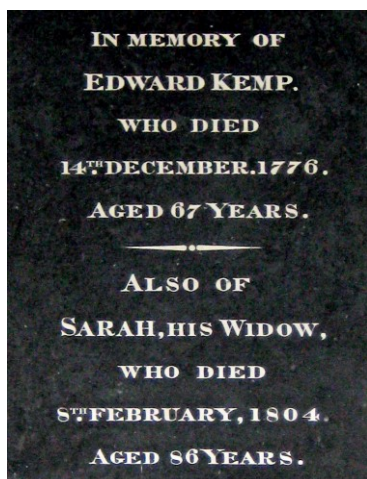


Fig. 10.  
Memorial to  
Edward and  
Sarah Kemp.

### Thomas Goodliffe

The son of William and Elizabeth (*née* Godfrey), he was baptised at Belton in 1722. He married Ann Curtis of Lyddington in 1754 at Wardley and of their five children, Thomas, William, Elizabeth, Ann and Sarah, only Thomas was baptised at Belton. Thomas senior received £99 10s 4d for a house or houses, and £14 4s 6d for goods from the fire fund.

Waterend Barn, 1 Lambley Lodge Lane, has a date-stone placed high in the south gable with initials T<sup>G</sup> A over 1758, which almost certainly stands for Thomas and Ann Goodliffe. This may have been located very close to one of the properties destroyed by the fire – a property possibly owned by Thomas Goodliffe. A recent owner of Waterend Barn noted that '*the [north] end wall contained charred wood and the whole gable was built of brick then rendered*' (*inf.* Audrey Walker). The external face of the east wall of this property also has an area of scorched ironstone. The Winchilsea Estate rentals in 1783 place an earlier house in the vicinity of this location '*burnt down in ye late Fire*' (ROLLR DG7/1/14b/2) (see below).

Thomas was living at Lambley Lodge when his son Thomas was born in 1756 (Goodliffe family history online), suggesting that Waterend Barn was rented. He probably received money for goods because he was storing some of his farming equipment there. He '*was a noted Yeoman of the old type, stout and sturdy, a vigorous muscular man .... Tales were told of him and his great strength of limb ...*' (ROLLR DE7196). He was still living at Lambley Lodge when he made his will on 15th September 1800 (TNA PROB 11/1517/149). Ann (Anna on her headstone) Goodliffe died in 1798 and her husband Thomas in 1810. Thomas reached the age of 88. Their headstone survives in Belton churchyard.

### George Smith

A George Smith received £29 11s 8d from the Appeal Fund for a house of unknown location, but no money for goods. This suggests that his house was rented to tenants and that he lived elsewhere in the village.

Ringrose Cottage, 18 Main Street, has a date stone with G<sup>S</sup> I over 1744. These are almost certainly the initials of George and Isabel (*née* Hackney) Smith and the house was probably built by George. They were married in 1737 at Weston by Welland and their son George was born there in 1739. They then moved to Belton where five more children were baptised between 1742 and 1752. Isabel died at Belton in 1765 followed by George in 1781.

Their son, George, was living with his second wife Mary and their family in Belton at the time of the fire. This George rented a blacksmith's shed on the waste from the Earl of Winchilsea in 1784 and when he was buried at Belton in 1786 he was described as a 'salter', one employed in salting fish or meat to preserve it for human consumption. His widow was renting '*An House upon the Waste*' in 1786 (ROLLR DG7/1/79a), but the actual location of the waste is not known. Mary died at the age of 77 in 1821. Which George received money from the appeal fund is unknown, but as neither received money for goods it is assumed they

were not living in or near to the path of the fire.

### Henry Branston, Thomas Thorpe and John Draycots

Three Belton residents, Henry Branston (Braunston, Branson), Thomas Thorpe and John Draycots (Draycott, Draycote), were bracketed together in the published accounts and they received a total of £184 7s 6d compensation for 'Houses' (NM 30th November 1778, 1). A letter to the *Stamford Mercury* from John Loake, dated 12th October 1779 (SM 14th October 1779, 4), throws some light on this curious entry in the accounts. He wanted to know why 'two poor Mens Names to be set down [were] paid upwards of £170 for a Loss of Buildings by Fire, that actually had no Buildings burnt at all, but were two Paupers, and had constant Relief from the Parish for several Years before the Fire'. He also wrote: 'How came the Loss of two Parish Houses to be set down at upwards of £170 when the same were built new in the Year 1765, at the Parish Charge, by the Overseers of the Poor, and now stand charged in the Parish Books at £11 18s 8d'. No responses have been found in answer to John Loake's questions (see also his entry below under *Those Compensated for Goods*).

This was a well-informed statement from John Loake because, as Overseer of the Poor in 1780, he would have had full knowledge of the circumstances of the poor in the village (ROLLR DE2810/14). There are no surviving records before 1780 to confirm who these two men were, but the later accounts reveal that Thomas Thorpe received financial support from Belton Poor Close Charity from 1783 to 1785, and from 1793 to 1798. John Draycots received charitable support from 1781 up to his death in 1801.

Thomas Thorpe and Alice Walls, both of Belton, were married in 1758 and two of their children were baptised at Belton, Elizabeth in 1759 and Mary in 1762. Thomas was buried at Belton in 1802 and his widow in 1817. John Draycots was baptised at Belton in 1721, the son of Thomas and Sarah. He married Sarah Rawlins in 1744. Following her death in 1755 he married Elizabeth Lewin in 1758. John died in 1801 and his widow, Elizabeth, in 1809. Although it is not known where these two families lived in 1776, 'Thos Thorpe' and 'John Draycote' were tenants of the Earl of Winchilsea ten years later, each living in one of '6 Tenements upon the Waste' (ROLLR DG7/1/79a).

Although a Henry Branston received funds from the Poor Close Charity on many occasions after 1781 and a Henry (possibly the same Henry) and his wife Ruth were recorded as being paupers when their son William was baptised in 1787, it is believed that the Henry referred to in the accounts was an earlier member of this family - either the Henry married to Elizabeth Randol or their son Henry who in 1742 had married Mary Ogden, a member of a respected farming family. It is this latter Henry Branston who is believed, and possibly most likely, to have received money for 'Houses' and £13 8s 6d for goods. This Henry died in 1778 and his widow in 1795. It is not known where Henry Branston lived in 1776.

From the limited information available it seems possible that it was Thomas Thorpe and John Draycots, who were making claims for houses they didn't own.

### Those Compensated for Goods

The total handed out for goods was £1,621 17s 11d. This was divided amongst 23 named people and 'Fifty-three Sufferers'. The largest handout was to Edward Kemp who received £267 13s 11d, and the smallest was £13 8s 6d to Henry Branston. Four of the men who received money for houses were also compensated for loss of goods. They were William Allen, Henry Branston, Thomas Goodliffe and Edward Kemp. Those who received the most compensation for goods had connections with farming and it is likely that some of them occupied one of the 'Yards totally consumed'.

The 53 unnamed sufferers received a total of £130 14s 10d for 'Goods', an average of £2 9s each. These 'Sufferers' are considered to be those who needed immediate financial help, many of whom may have been the poor who probably lost some or all of their meagre possessions as a result of the fire.

### John Loake

Baptised at Desborough on 12th May 1721, the son of Thomas and Elizabeth. He married Jane Talbot (*née* Goodliffe), a widow, at Belton in April 1758 and a Settlement (in private ownership) reveals that 'Thomas Goodliffe, gent', married to Martha, settled several properties and lands within the parish of Belton on John Loake and his wife, Jane, who was Thomas' daughter. John Loake had sold most of these by 1779. He acquired Woodland View, 8 Nether Street, in 1775 and is believed to have been living there in 1776. Of his two daughters, Martha married [the Rev] George Gill of Market Harborough in 1788, and Jane married John Hollingsworth of Oakham in 1791. Martha's wedding announcement in the *Stamford Mercury* described her father as 'an opulent farmer and grazier' (SM 18th April 1788, 3).

As John Loake did not receive money from the appeal fund for a house or houses it appears that his home was saved from the ravages of the fire, although the southern half of Woodland View seems to have been built with a large quantity of recovered scorched ironstone. John Loake received £82 3s for goods from the fund, quite a large sum of money at that time. This was probably for goods stored in the buildings in the yard. The walls of these buildings have fire-damaged ironstone.

John Loake questioned the estimates of the fire losses and was greatly troubled by the way the money had been distributed, implying fraudulent deeds. His letter outlining his concerns was published in the *Stamford Mercury* on 14th October 1779 (page 4). Amongst the issues raised he questioned whether the people who made the estimates were 'proper persons', who had chosen them and 'if they were proper Judges why did not their first Estimate stand, which no Doubt was the truest'. He not only questioned the handouts given to two poor men, as noted above, but also the amounts given to men that had 'Estates and great Property' who were paid 'more

than their real Loss'. He additionally stated that amounts were set down more than was actually paid. He ended his letter, 'if the Gentlemen that have published their Names to the Distribution, would take the Trouble to enquire into the whole Truth thereof, they will soon find out how and by whom they have been misled, and let be publicly known the Man that has misled them, - It was promised by the first Advertisement, that a true Account of the Distribution Money should be laid before the Publick, but such Publication thereof was neither true nor perfect. Therefore it is to be hoped the Gentlemen will not let charity, the Glory of this Land, be wounded and die, for Want of laying the whole Truth before a generous Publick'.

The fact that this letter was written more than three years after the fire and a year after the accounts showing how the funds were distributed, is indicative of John Loake's unease and it is unfortunate that no responses to his letter have been found. It appears that the allocation of the funds had caused much ill feeling within Belton.

John Loake and his wife were owners of the rectory from 1779 until 1794 (*VCH Rutland* II, 31) and John was Overseer of Belton's Poor Close Charity in 1780 (ROLLR DE 2810/14). He subscribed, from at least 1785 until his death in 1790, to the *UPPINGHAM ASSOCIATION, For the Prosecuting of FELONS*, a sure sign that he was of an upright character (*SM* 1785 & 1787-1789). He is described as 'gent' in the 1790 entry for his burial in the Belton Parish Registers. His wife Jane was buried in 1799 and their slate headstone is in Belton churchyard.

#### Jane Lenton (widow)

Jane Lenton, who received £173 17s 6d for goods from the appeal fund, the third largest amount, was the widow of Henry Lenton, gentleman and horse dealer of Belton. No record has been found for the burial date of Henry, but a Release (in private ownership) dated 10th October 1776, states that he was '*lately Dead Intestate*'. The Lentons may have been living at the former Black Horse Inn, 1 Nether Street, in 1776, as her son Henry, also a dealer in horses, was publican of this hostelry in 1788 (*SM* 12th September 1788, 2). The rear of this former inn and its extensive outbuildings show much evidence of scorched ironstone which is indicative that they were affected by the fire. Bearing in mind the trade being carried out in these premises, it is not surprising that Jane Lenton received such a large amount for goods from the fire fund.

Jane (*née* Knap) married Henry Lenton at Belton 4th June 1745 and eleven of their children were baptised at Belton church between 1747 and 1767. Their eldest son and heir, William, was a horse dealer who, in 1776, was living in Middlesex. Jane was buried at Belton on 10th June 1778, five months before the appeal accounts were published in the local newspapers. Her name was included as a widowed recipient.

#### John Allen (Allin)

The John Allen, who received £114 10s 5d for goods, may have been the son of William and Alice Allen and brother of William Allen whose house was reported to be the source of the fire (*SM* 6th June 1776, 3). John



Fig. 11. An area of scorched ironstone on the south gable end of The Cottage, Nether Street (authors).

was baptised in 1733 and when he married Elizabeth Gillson of Preston in May 1771, his occupation was recorded as 'farmer'. As he did not receive compensation for houses, he may have lived in rented property, possibly belonging to his brother and close to the source of the fire. John died in 1808, and his headstone is in Belton churchyard.

#### William Cleypole (Claypole)

A farmer who received £107 10s for goods and occupied what is now The Cottage, 6 Nether Street, from 1772 until at least 1791. In 1772 the house was conveyed by Dorothy Roberts of Glaston to Robert Sherard, 4th Earl of Harborough (ROLLR DE2374/16/4). However, there were two William Cleypoles, father and son, living in Belton in 1776, and it is not clear which one received the compensation. William senior married Alice Banes, of Lyddington in 1736, and was buried at Belton in 1784. Their son, William junior, married Anne Wade at Deene in 1767. One or both of these men were churchwardens and son William is recorded as making a subscription of 5s to the fund set up for the '*RELIEF of the POOR of the County of RUTLAND*' (*SM* 14th August 1795, 2). There are slate memorials in Belton churchyard to William junior, who was buried in 1796, and his mother Alice who was buried in 1797. William Cleypole did not receive compensation for houses from the fund. Consequently, the lost goods he claimed for were probably destroyed in the yard to the west and south of the farmhouse. The south gable end of this house shows signs of considerable fire damage (fig. 11), possibly as a result of a fire in an attached building, and also possibly indicating the probable point at which the fire crossed to the other side of Nether Street, consuming '*every Thing on both Sides*'. The Earl of



Harborough is not among those who received compensation for houses and this may suggest that this house was saved because it had a slate roof.

### **William Inchley**

Collected £15 6s 4d in Belton (*LNJ* 21st Sept 1776, 4) as one of the two local collectors for the fire appeal. The location of William's house is not known, but he was given £103 10s in compensation for lost or damaged goods in this catastrophic event.

In 1789, William Inchley was party to a lease in which he was described as a grazier (ROLLR 2D31/396). Four years later a '*NOTICE to CREDITORS and DEBTORS*' in the *Stamford Mercury* (11th October 1793, 1) states that he was a '*Dealer in Horses*'. In 1795 he donated 10s 6d to a fund set up for the '*RELIEF of the POOR of the County of RUTLAND*' (*SM* 14th August 1795, 2), probably a sign of a compassionate nature. An auction of his stock, implements of husbandry, household furniture and butchers' utensils '*FOR THE BENEFIT OF CREDITORS*', was held on his premises in Belton on 5th October 1798. This auction consisted of '*thirty-three fat Oxen and spayed Heifers, in Lots; sundry Ricks of new Hay, with a Stump or two of old Hay; one Draught Horse and Cart, and Tackling thereto; a lot of Ash Poles and Fire Wood; several Feather and Flock Beds, and Bedsteads; Bureau and Book-Case, almost new; and other Articles of Household-Furniture, too tedious to mention in this Advertisement*' (*NM* 29th September 1798, 1). A slate headstone in Belton churchyard records that he died on 7th January 1813 aged 70 and that his wife, Ann, died on 28th February 1812 aged 65.

### **William Ogden**

Members of the Ogden family are recorded in the Belton Parish Registers from the early half of the 17th century. The William Ogden who received £56 11s for goods from the fund, was probably the William who was baptised at Belton in 1707. All the surviving children of William and his wife Elizabeth would have been adults at the time of the fire in Belton. William was buried in 1788 at the age of 81. There is no information regarding the location of William and Elizabeth's home, but documents (in private ownership) state that their son Valentine, baptised at Belton in 1742, and grandson Henry, both farmers, were living at what is now 30 Main Street in 1827. However, this house is almost certainly well outside the area affected by the fire.

### **Thomas Croden**

In 1765, John Allen, a carpenter of Belton, negotiated a mortgage with Thomas Croden, a butcher of Stockerston, Leicestershire, for a cottage (now 8 and 10 Loddington Lane) and its associated close in Loddington Lane (documents in private ownership). It is understood that a John Allen, who was a carpenter, lived in this cottage at the time of the fire (see below). Thomas received £41 14s 4d from the fire fund for goods, suggesting that he had moved to Belton by 1776, but it is not known where he was living. He is recorded in the *UK Register of Duties Paid for Apprentices' Indentures, 1710-1811* (TNA IR 1) as being a master butcher with apprentices John Hayes in 1779 (piece 61) and Joseph Seaton in 1783 (piece 31). Thomas Croden and his wife, Sarah, were buried at

Belton in 1788 and 1804 respectively.

### **Edward Moore**

Received £34 4s 7d for goods from the fire appeal fund. He may have married twice, firstly to Ann Spendlow in 1755 who died in 1765, then to Elizabeth. A daughter, Elizabeth, was baptised at Belton to Edward and Elizabeth in July 1766. Edward was a tailor and his apprentices were John Cunnington in 1785 (TNA IR 1, piece 63), Thomas Branston in 1782 (TNA IR 1, piece 35) and William Billing in 1794 (TNA IR 1, piece 36). Edward was buried at Belton in 1813 aged 82 and Elizabeth his wife was buried two years later. The will of Thomas Goodliffe of Lambley Lodge, dated 3rd December 1810, reveals that his '*messuage or tenement in Belton*', possibly Waterend Barn of today, was '*late in the tenure of Edward Moore*' (TNA PROB 11/1517/149), probably establishing that Edward was living in the area affected by the fire.

### **John Allen, carpenter**

The Allen family can be traced back in Belton to the mid-seventeenth century and a direct descendant, John Allen, carpenter, received £27 8s 6d for goods from the appeal fund. In 1741, his father, Francis Allen, also a carpenter, left a dwelling house in Loddington Lane and two closes to John in his will. This house, now 8 and 10 Loddington Lane, is thought to have been occupied by the Allen family in 1776. The house was '*burnt down and destroyed*' in 1776 (documents in private ownership) and must have caused great distress as John had lost not only his home but probably his tools and his stock-in-trade. John had apprentices John Riley in 1755 (TNA IR 1, piece 20), John Marshall in 1756 (TNA IR 1, piece 20) and William Issett in 1759 (TNA IR 1, piece 22). He died in December 1776.

### **John and Thomas Spendlow**

Received £25 8s 8d and £13 17s 7d respectively for the goods they lost in the fire. Members of this family had been living in Belton from 1719, but it is difficult to determine with any certainty the relationship between John and Thomas. They may have been father and son, or brothers, and it has not been possible to establish where they lived.

### **Francis and John Kemp**

Francis Kemp, baptised 1746, and John Kemp, baptised 1751, the sons of Edward and Sarah Kemp, received £16 19s and £34 5s 2d respectively for goods lost in the fire. Neither was married at the date of the fire and it is possible that they were living with their parents at this time or farming in their own right. Francis Kemp, along with William Inchley, also of Belton, was named in the advertisement '*TO THE CHARITABLE*' (*SM* 12th September 1776, 4) which informed the public that donations for the relief of sufferers could be handed to them. Unlike William Inchley, there is no record of any donations being handed to Francis Kemp.

Francis Kemp was a grazier and his will, dated 1823, indicates that he owned and occupied the house known today as Ivydene Cottage, 23 Main Street (NRO *Rutland Wills* book 2, 195). This building and the adjoining properties, now known as 19 and 21 Main Street, were in Kemp ownership from 1850 until they were sold in 1919

(documents in private ownership). The 1886 and 1904 Ordnance Survey 25" maps of the village show a large open area fronting Main Street to the east of Ivydene which, before being developed in the 1960s, belonged to Ivydene Cottage. This may have been the site of a Kemp residence in 1776. The cottage next door but one to the east of this plot, 27 Main Street, and the former outbuildings of Woodland View which front onto Main Street, show evidence of scorched ironstone. Deeds (in private ownership) indicate that these buildings may have belonged to John Loake in 1776.

Francis married Eleanor Godfrey in November 1776 and they had seven sons and three daughters, all of whom were baptised at Belton. Francis died in 1826 aged 79 and Eleanor in 1833 aged 84. Their headstone survives in the churchyard. John married Ann Ward of Belton in 1785 and their four children were baptised at Belton church. John died in 1796 and his wife Ann in 1805. Her slate headstone is in the churchyard.

#### **William Tarry**

Received £21 11s 10d for goods lost in the fire. He was probably William, the son of Temperence Terry of Hambleton, who was baptised in 1742. According to Hambleton Churchwardens Accounts (ROLLR DE2209/51), William was hired by John Billington of Belton in 1752 to live with him for a year with a promise that he would be paid 2s at the end of this time. He married local girl Mary Barratt in 1771 and raised a family in Belton, but it is not known where they lived. Of their six children baptised at Belton, daughter Ann and son John were given pauper burials in 1789. If William did receive this compensation from the fire fund, it is curious that he needed handouts from the Poor Close Charity (ROLLR DE2810/14) every year from 1787 until his death at the age of 91 in 1832. His wife, Mary, died in 1797.

#### **Mary Ruddle**

A feoffment of 1798 (in private ownership) between a John Ruddle, a servant, and an Elizabeth Hill, indicates that Mary Ruddle may have owned and lived in part of the house known today as 7 Church Street or very nearby. Mary received £20 10s 10d for goods, thus providing further evidence that the fire extended to this part of the village. There is no noticeable evidence of burning on the exterior walls of this row of houses in Church Street, suggesting that only the outhouses and hovels to the rear may have suffered fire damage or may even have been demolished to create a fire-break. Little information has been found regarding Mary Ruddle other than she was probably the Mary Bayley who married John Ruddle in 1757. The baptisms of four of their children are recorded in the Belton Parish Registers.

#### **John and Robert Hill**

Belton parish registers record Hill family members from as early as 1633. The Robert Hill who received £19 4s 10d from the fire appeal fund was possibly the son of Robert and Mary Hill who was baptised in February 1731. Robert was a blacksmith and prior to 1793 he is thought to have lived in the vicinity of the former Black Horse Inn, now 1 Nether Street, or perhaps in one of the cottages in Chapel Street to the east of the churchyard

(documents in private ownership), all of which were in the assumed path of the fire as it spread in a northerly direction. John Hill, who may have been Robert's brother, and also a blacksmith, received £15 19s 3d from the fund. John died in 1785 and Robert died two years later. The Belton Enclosure Award of 1794 mentions a blacksmith's shed belonging to the Earl of Winchilsea '*bounded on the North and part of the East by a Messuage and Garden belonging to the said William Kemp and on all other parts by the Town Street of Belton*' (ROLLR EN/A/R6/1(DE2260)). This was probably John and Robert Hill's workshop.

#### **John Turner**

John Turner of Belton, married Ann Ratt of Preston at Barrowden in 1752. They raised their family in Belton and they appear to have been living in the vicinity of the former Black Horse Inn (documents in private ownership). John received £17 19s 8d for goods lost in the fire. He also received money from the Belton Poor Close Charity in 1786 and continued to do so annually until the year of his death in 1803 aged 76 (ROLLR DE2810/14). John's wife, Ann, died in 1801.

#### **John Watkins**

Received £14 10s for goods from the appeal fund. Married Elizabeth Popple at Belton in 1766. It is not known where John and Elizabeth lived in 1776. Their son Matthew was buried in 1788. John received money from the Belton Poor Close Charity from 1786 until his death (ROLLR DE2810/14). Elizabeth, John's wife died in 1792 and John in 1806 aged 70.

Mary Popple, the daughter of a William and Jane Popple and possibly the niece of John Watkins, was baptised at Belton Church on the day of the fire by the curate Matthew Slye. The entry in the Parish Registers may have been an afterthought as it is squeezed between the baptism entries of Thomas Branson in March and Sarah Ogden in October. This was an entirely understandable omission on a day that created such havoc in the village.

#### **Further Evidence**

Although the above vignettes help in determining the course and spread of the fire, additional evidence comes from the survival on other houses of scorched ironstone, which due to its iron content, has an intense red colouration.

On the north-facing rear elevation of 1 Chapel Street, there is a defined band of red ironstone under the eaves (fig. 12). This is the characteristic result of heat from a burning thatch being more intense on the north side due to the wind blowing from the south. A large area of scorched ironstone is also evident at the rear of 3 Chapel Street.

The late 18th century Home Farm, 9 Chapel Street, was possibly rebuilt after the fire. Such remains as survive of its former barns have some scattered scorched ironstone. This supports the assumption that the fire, having raged northwards along Nether Street, spread to buildings in Chapel Street and then headed





Fig. 12. Scorched ironstone under the eaves at the rear of 1 Chapel Street (authors).

towards Loddington Lane, where it is known from a Release (in private ownership) that a house was '*Burnt Down and Destroyed*' (see Richard Goodwin above). The combination of rising hot air from the burning houses and a brisk breeze from the south would carry fragments of burning thatch and other inflammable material in a northerly direction, so igniting tinder-dry thatches in its path as the fragments descended. A further consequence was that houses with slate roofs were probably saved. However, careful interpretation of such evidence is necessary as buildings exhibiting fire damage may have suffered at another time.

An advertisement in July 1777 indicates that some of the buildings had by that time been rebuilt or repaired: '*... there has been in the Whole more than THREE THOUSAND POUNDS received, the greater Part of which has been properly applied, and what remains in Hand is designed for those who have not yet finished their Buildings*' (SM 24th July 1777, 4). However, although the names of those who received money for houses is known, there are no known surviving records, except for 8 and 10 Loddington Lane, which might positively identify which buildings were actually repaired or rebuilt on their original plots. It would be an opportunity for owners to reassess their needs and plan for the future, not necessarily in Belton. Stone was a valuable building material and any recovered from demolished property would certainly have been reused in repairing and erecting other buildings. This may explain why a number of buildings in Belton, particularly Woodland View, Netherfield House (Rutland Manor) and The Cottage, all in Nether Street, and 1 and 3 Chapel Street have what appear to be scorched stones scattered in their external walls.

There are a number of examples in Belton where it is evident that bricks have been used to repair stone buildings, and this is particularly obvious in the former outbuildings of 1 and 8 Nether Street and 9 Chapel Street, all of which are within the assumed

course and spread of the fire. However, confirmation that these repairs are actually as a result of the 1776 fire requires a more detailed study.

More positive evidence comes from Ivydene Cottage, 23 Main Street, which was almost certainly the source of the fire. The remaining ironstone, particularly on the east elevation of the attached former barn, now living accommodation, exhibits a deep red colouration, a clear sign that it has been subject to intense heat (fig. 13).

The upper courses of this wall have been replaced using bricks, and this would have been carried out as part of the restoration work just after the 1776 fire. It is highly likely that these bricks were made in the Belton brickyard which is referred to by John Judd. Although long since abandoned when he visited it to study the strata and fossils in the quarry before 1875, he states that it produced bricks from the bed of blue clay exposed below the Marlstone rock bed (Judd 1875, 64 and 71). '*The most likely site [for a brickyard] would have been the steep valley of the stream which runs under the bridge at the bottom of Oakham Hill, now called Lambley Lodge Lane. The small hill to the north of this bridge was known as Bricket Hill*' (Walker 2015, 19). Further evidence of a late 18th century local brickyard comes from an advertisement for an auction at '*the House of Mr. HENRY LENTON, in Belton*' on Monday 15th February 1790 which also offered for sale '*any Quantity of BRICKS, from One to Eighty Thousand, at £1. 5s, per Thousand*'. Enquiries were to be made of '*J. Crutchley, of Burley*', steward of the Winchilsea Estate (SM 12th February 1790, 1). It is suggested that such a large quantity of bricks must have been made locally.

Three houses within the path of the fire, Ivydene Cottage in Main Street, the Old School House in Chapel Street and Waterend Barn at the junction of Lambley Lodge Lane and College Farm Lane, all have surviving charred beams internally, possibly as a result of the fire. Other evidence of the fire may exist within these and other buildings.

The Estate Records of the Finch Family of Burley on the Hill have helped to identify another area in Belton affected by the fire of 1776. A note in a rent roll refers to '*5 small Tenements built on L<sup>d</sup> W<sup>s</sup> [Lord Winchilsea's] Freehold where a house stood before at the Towns end*', the rental for which was to commence at Michaelmas 1781 (ROLLR DG7/1/14a/28). These were built '*for the habitation of poor Widows*' and the rental was paid by the parish of Belton. In the rent rolls for the year ending at Ladyday 1783, these tenements are recorded as being '*built on Ground belong<sup>g</sup> to L<sup>d</sup> W<sup>a</sup> a Freeh<sup>d</sup> burnt down in ye late Fire*' (ROLLR DG 7/1/14b/2). The survey of Lord Winchilsea's Estate in Belton in 1786 (ROLLR



Fig 13. The east elevation of the former outbuildings at the rear of Ivydene Cottage, with the upper courses replaced by early bricks (authors).

DG7/1/79a) placed these houses, now a total of six, 'upon ye Waste', but the associated map is missing. However, the schedule of the Enclosure Award of 1794 includes references to the poor houses 'at the North East corner of the Town of Belton' (ROLLR EN/A/R6/1 (DE2260)), located on the piece of land between Lambley Lodge Lane and College Farm Lane where Waterend Barn and another house stand today. The rentals state that this was 'where a house stood before at the Towns end' which was presumably the house destroyed by the fire.

Although there is no surviving map showing the layout of Belton before the fire of 1776, it can be seen from the Ordnance Survey 25" map of 1886, allowing for houses known to have been built after the fire, that there are large open areas either side of Nether Street and in the centre of the village, possibly the sites of pre-1776 houses.

## Conclusions

The appeal to help those who suffered as a result of the fire of Belton in 1776 was undoubtedly a highly organised and successful campaign, although there was some dissatisfaction with the distribution of the money. The Belton burial registers show that most of the resident sufferers named in the accounts remained in the village and some of their headstones are in the churchyard. However, what really happened to most

of the 'near 170 Persons left destitute' immediately after the fire is not known. Some will have sought temporary accommodation with relatives, friends or compassionate neighbours in the village or elsewhere until more permanent homes could be found, and others perhaps moved into empty barns. All we do know is that Mr Morris took 'several of them to his own House at Loddington' (NM 3rd June 1776, 3). There are no reports indicating the extent of the work needed and actually carried out to restore the village to normality.

The notebook entitled 'Account of the Belton Fire' (ROLLR DE2158/14) notes that it was 'Copied [sic] from Papers lent by Mr Hollingsworth May 18<sup>th</sup> 1848'. It is interesting that this notebook is in the Eagleton family archive, and it would presumably have been John Eagleton, then living in Belton House, who copied the papers lent by Mr Hollingsworth. John Eagleton married Mary Ann, the only daughter and heir of William Kemp II, in 1817. This William was the nephew of William Kemp I, the probable co-ordinator of the fire appeal fund.

The Mr Hollingsworth noted above, was John Loake Hollingsworth, the grandson of John Loake and the son of John and Jane Hollingsworth (née Loake). At the age of 15 Jane, like her parents, would have witnessed the fire. Her father had presumably saved the newspapers which reported the event, the appeal campaign and the accounts. Jane died in 1821 and the newspapers must have been passed on to her son (John Loake Hollingsworth).

That these newspapers had been kept by John Loake is indicative of their importance to him at the time. Interest in the disaster was evidently still alive seventy-two years after the event. Both John Eagleton and John Loake Hollingsworth, through their family and local connections, would have known a great more about the fire and its consequences than we do today. In particular, they would have been able to confirm which William Kemp was the co-ordinator of the appeal, where people lived and the true course of the fire.

It is hoped that this article will arouse interest in this catastrophe and that further research will provide the answer to John Loake's desire 'of laying the whole Truth before a generous Publick'.

## Postscript - An Example to Others?

Nearly nine years later, the organisers of a disaster appeal at Thrussington, Leicestershire, appear to have taken a lead from Belton's experience. Here, on 11th April 1785, '... fourteen Dwelling-Houses had been burnt to the Ground; eighteen Families bereaved of their Habitations; and seventeen of those Families reduced to Beggary'. A meeting on 18th April

announced that a committee would be formed consisting of 25 'gentlemen' and 14 members of the local clergy (SM 29th April 1795, 3). Of these, Edward Cheselden, Charles Morris and John Simpson had served on the Belton committee, and 'Mr. Braunson, Attorney at Law, in Uppingham' was one of those nominated to receive collections. The

committee's task was to receive and distribute the funds '... in such a Manner and Proportions as they shall judge most equitable and beneficial'. The estimate of the loss amounted to £3,253, but £1,912

of this was the '*Property of Persons of ample Fortune and therefore Foreign to the Consideration of the Meeting*', thereby avoiding one of John Loake's criticisms of the Belton campaign.

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### Abbreviations

LNJ *Leicester & Nottingham Journal*  
 NC *Norfolk Chronicle*  
 NM *Northampton Mercury*  
 SM *Stamford Mercury*

ROLLR Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland  
 NRO Northamptonshire Record Office  
 RCM Rutland County Museum  
 TNA The National Archives

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## Madame de Boigne and George Finch, Earl of Winchilsea – with a nod to Marcel Proust

PAUL REEVE

*The article begins with Marcel Proust in the early twentieth century. It travels back to the American War of Independence, the French Revolution, a Scottish cricket match in 1785 and Christmas at Burley in 1789, and forward to the building of the Eurostar terminal at St*

*Pancras railway station. The principal protagonists are Marcel Proust, novelist, Madame de Boigne, writer of memoirs, and George Finch, Lord Winchilsea, of Burley in Rutland. Proust's thoughts on reading and history add a further dimension to the narrative.*



Fig. 1.  
Marcel Proust.

Marcel Proust (1871–1922) (fig. 1) is a French writer best known for his novel *In Search of Lost Time* or *Remembrance of Things Past*. But he also wrote a number of articles and occasional pieces including a short item entitled *Days of Reading (II)*. This second item can be found in English translation in *Days of Reading*, published by Penguin Books (Proust 2008, 99–107).

In *Days of Reading (II)* Proust praised the memoirs of Madame de Boigne (*Mémoires de la Comtesse de Boigne née d'Osmond*). These memoirs, or *Tales of an Aunt*, took him back to the time of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, but what made them particularly interesting for Proust were his personal connections with Madame de Boigne. As a young man he had known Madame de Boigne's niece, the Duchesse de Maillé, and his parents had often dined with Madame de Boigne's nephew Rainulphe, the last of the family line, to whom the memoirs were addressed. Indeed, the effects of Proust's parents had included letters and a photograph from that time (Proust 2008, 105–06).

Adèle d'Osmond, Comtesse de Boigne (fig. 2) was born in 1781 at Versailles and died in 1866. Her full maiden name was Charlotte Louise Éléonore Adélaïde d'Osmond. Before the French Revolution she grew up in a palace milieu where her mother, Éléonore (*née* Dillon), was a lady-in-waiting to one of

the daughters of Louis XV. During the worst of the revolutionary troubles her parents, with Adèle, sought refuge abroad, partly in England. She eventually returned permanently to France in 1804. So Madame de Boigne's life encompassed Louis XVI and the *ancien régime*, the French revolution and exile, Napoléon Bonaparte, the succeeding kings Louis XVIII, Charles X and Louis-Philippe, and finally the time of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte. In the 1830s and 1840s she became famous for her salon in Paris. When she died, her memoirs, although known to exist, were thought too sensitive to bring out at the time and were not published until 1907–08, long after her death, and have since passed through many editions (eg de Boigne 1971).



Fig. 2. Adèle d'Osmond, Comtesse de Boigne, after a miniature by Jean-Baptiste Isabey, from the frontispiece of her *Mémoires*.

Readers may wonder about the connection between Madame de Boigne and Rutland. To understand this, they must persevere until the end of chapter 3 in the first volume of her memoirs (de Boigne 1971, 73–4; and see Appendix). Here she wrote about her first refuge in England in 1789, when she spent Christmas at Burley on the Hill, Rutland – she was just eight years old. Although she wrote ‘Burleigh’, she clearly meant Burley as her mention of Lord Winchilsea as host confirmed. She noted the palatial hospitality of Burley, albeit slightly diffidently as she was used to the splendour of Versailles. She added that on several occasions she had met Lady Charlotte Finch, Lord Winchilsea’s mother and governess to the royal family (for whom see Bennett 2008), together with the three youngest royal princesses, namely Mary (b1776), Sophia (b1777) and Amelia (b1783): she doesn’t seem to have liked them, especially when Amelia, who was in fact even younger than Adèle, called her ‘little thing’. No record has been found of the royal princesses coming to Rutland, and the wording makes it most likely that she met them at Lady Finch’s apartments in St James’s Palace. But it certainly suggests the social access enjoyed by the young Adèle d’Osmond and her family. At the time, George Finch, 9th Earl of Winchilsea and 4th Earl of Nottingham, who was 37, was Lord Lieutenant of Rutland and also a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, a courtier in the household of George III.



Fig. 3. The mansion of Burley on the Hill, by J P Neale, engraved by H Winkles.

As for the great house at Burley on the Hill, this was Lord Winchilsea’s country residence. While he inherited the earldom of Winchilsea from his uncle in 1769, he did not also inherit the extensive Winchilsea properties in Kent which passed to a brother of the late earl. Burley was the palatial country house built by the 2nd Earl of Nottingham and if Lord Winchilsea wished to entertain Adèle d’Osmond’s family in the country at Christmas, then Burley it would have to be.

Curiously, what integrates Adèle’s visit to Burley with other visitors there in the later 1780s is the extent

to which they recall his involvement in the American War of Independence and his return via Portugal and France, in the years 1779 to 1782 – we recount the details of this episode below. As will become clear, to fully understand the context it is helpful also to recall that Adèle’s mother’s maiden name was Dillon and that earlier Dillon family members from Ireland, with their strong Jacobite leanings, had taken distinguished service with the King of France rather than remain in or return to Ireland (Holohan 1989).

George Finch matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford in 1767 and graduated Master of Arts in 1771, so he was still an undergraduate when he inherited the Winchilsea title. He travelled widely in the 1770s and these journeys may be dated from letters between him and his family among the Finch manuscripts (DG7 Bundles 31–33), held at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR). He went to Scotland in 1771 and to Ireland in 1775. He made an extensive Grand Tour in the years 1772 to 1774 which took him to France, Italy, Constantinople, Tunis and Minorca. In 1776 he sailed to North America as a private citizen (ROLLR DG7 33/11), during the American War of Independence, leaving England in July and returning in December of that year.

In October 1779 he was listed as the first of two Majors in the newly formed 87th Regiment of Foot (*The Scots Magazine*, October 1779, XLI, 575). On 17th January 1780 a letter from the War Office advised his promotion to ‘Lieutenant Colonel in the Army during the Establishment of the 87th Regiment of Foot’ (ROLLR DG7 33/40). He saw service in the Caribbean and in New York where he became seriously ill in late 1780. He was forced to return to Europe, initially to Lisbon, and did not arrive in England until 1782. The *Stamford Mercury* of 6th June 1782 reported that on 30th May he had attended his first Royal Levée since his return to England. Again, a more detailed chronology and itinerary of the period autumn 1779 to mid-year 1782 may be derived from Finch family correspondence (ROLLR DG7 Bundle 33).

For Lord Winchilsea the remaining years until 1789 did not have the intensity of travel and the military risks of the previous few years, but they were not without their problems. In 1789 he stood as second to Colonel Lennox in the latter’s duel with the Duke of York, one of the king’s sons. In doing so, he attracted the pronounced displeasure of the Prince of Wales (Raikes 1857, III, 52).

In the spring of 1788 the Duke of York had come to Burley to enjoy the hunting as a guest of Lord Winchilsea. This was reported in the *Stamford Mercury* on 28th March and 4th April, and in *The*



*World* on 4th April. These accounts gave anecdotal details of the hunting but also of the guests in Lord Winchilsea's party. As well as the Duke of York, they included two Mr Damers, Colonel St Leger, Mr Conyers, Lord Cathcart and Mr Graham.

One of the two Mr Damers was almost certainly the Hon George Damer, later 2nd Earl of Dorchester. He was a friend of the royal family but, more relevantly, he had been Lord Winchilsea's fellow officer in the 87th Regiment of Foot. Both had been appointed Major at the same time, although Lord Winchilsea had the seniority – by a day (Army List 1780, 164). Also in 1779 Anthony St Leger was appointed Colonel of the 86th (Rutland) Regiment of Foot (ibid, 163), raised by Charles Manners, 4th Duke of Rutland, just as Lord Winchilsea was appointed Major in the 87th, but he had died in 1786, so the Colonel St Leger who was one of the hunting party was very probably his brother Colonel Barry St Leger although it is difficult to be certain of this. The 86th and 87th Regiments were amongst those raised to serve during the American War of Independence, and both were disbanded in 1783 at the end of hostilities.

There is no such uncertainty about Mr Conyers, Lord Cathcart and Mr Graham, who were all clearly connected to Lord Winchilsea's illness and recovery in Portugal in 1781. When news of Lord Winchilsea's arrival in Portugal and of his severe illness reached England, his mother Lady Charlotte Finch with his sisters Mrs Sophia Feilding and Miss Henrietta Finch travelled to Lisbon to see him (ROLLR DG7 33/57). They sailed towards the beginning of April 1781 and were escorted by John Conyers of Copped Hall in Essex, nephew of Lady Charlotte Finch and cousin to Lord Winchilsea. On 30th March 1781 the Prince of Wales wrote to his brother Prince Frederick:

'We heard very bad accounts of poor Winchilsea who was arrived at Lisbon. Lady Charlotte Finch, her two daughters & John Conyers set out directly to see him, but since they are gone we have heard much better tidings of him wh. promise a speedy recovery. I hope he will soon recover, for a more truly worthy, honourable man I believe does not exist' (*Correspondence of George, Prince of Wales*, 1963, I, 54–5).

On arrival in Lisbon Lord Winchilsea was accompanied by William Paine, an American loyalist doctor who had crossed the Atlantic with him. Dr Paine kept a journal of his journey and attendance on Lord Winchilsea (Paine 1781). This journal, held by the American Antiquarian Society, recorded that Lord Winchilsea was helped by the Portuguese royal family and the royal establishment. A draft account at the end of the journal, prepared by Dr Paine for Lord Winchilsea, referred to payment for the use of the royal barge and for assistance by the Queen's servants.

But Lord Winchilsea's letter to his mother on 20th February 1781 revealed that he was especially grateful to Mr Graham for the solicitude he showed him (ROLLR DG7 33/59 1-2). Mr Graham can readily be identified as Thomas Graham (1748-1843), later to be ennobled as 1st Baron Lynedoch (fig. 4). He was accompanied by his wife, the Hon Mrs Graham, who was famously beautiful. Her portrait by Gainsborough is held by The National Gallery of Scotland. She was born Mary Cathcart, the daughter of the 9th Baron Cathcart, and she and her husband were travelling privately, accompanied in Lisbon by a Miss Cathcart.

The National Archives of Scotland hold among the Lynedoch papers Mrs Graham's journal for part of 1781 (MS 3628) together with extracts from a journal kept by Lord Winchilsea's sister Sophia Feilding (MS 16045). These sources relate that the Grahams and Lord Winchilsea and his family spent much time together on excursions and socialising. Sophia Feilding's journal for Saturday 5th May 1781 noted that, together with Mr and Mrs Graham, she had visited the house of Sir John Hort, the Consul-General at Lisbon. They had breakfasted there and walked in the garden (Feilding 1781, 21-22).

William Schaw Cathcart, Mrs Graham's brother, 10th Lord and later 1st Earl Cathcart, who was also at Burley in 1788, had not been among the party in Lisbon. However, he had served with distinction as a British officer in the American War of Independence.

After some time in Lisbon Lord Winchilsea was well enough to move to Caldas da Rainha, a spa town favoured by the aristocracy, 80 km north of Lisbon. Mrs Feilding's journal detailed that they left Lisbon on Monday 14th May 1781 at 2pm, travelling initially on the Queen's barge (Feilding 1781, 32). Letters dated at Caldas and sent by Lady Charlotte to Mary Hamilton and/or Miss Goldsworthy, sub-governesses to the young royal princesses in England, gave further detail (papers of Mary Hamilton, John Rylands Library, GB 133 HAM). On 23rd June 1781 Lady Charlotte wrote that Lord Winchilsea, although improved, was still weak and unable to walk far (GB 133 HAM 1/12/29). In her letter of 4th July 1781 she reviewed different ways of returning to England, a British packet boat, a neutral ship or an overland journey of two to three weeks (GB 133 HAM 1/12/32). In a third letter, dated 27th July 1781, Lady Charlotte wrote that Lord Winchilsea had celebrated the King's birthday at Caldas with dinner, a band, and dancing, albeit he had been unable to take part in the dancing (GB 133 HAM 1/12/33). The time was coming to leave Portugal.

On Sunday 17th June his sister Sophia had left first from Lisbon on the *Mercury* packet ship with fellow passengers Mr and Mrs Graham and Miss Cathcart. They came up with the *Cicero*, a 200-ton,

16-gun American privateer, sailing out of Beverly, Massachusetts (Howe 1922, 379), and were captured after a long chase in the evening of Saturday 23rd June. Captain Hugh Hill of the *Cicero* was a privateer ‘...of immense size, muscular beyond the common, courageous almost to rashness, courteous to the fair sex and not burdened with scruples...’ (ibid, 349). Mrs Feilding and her party were disembarked the following Tuesday evening at Vigo in north-western Spain and were given accommodation described as very dirty (Feilding 1781, 64-69).

On 28th June 1781 Sophia Feilding wrote as a prisoner at Vigo to her daughter in England. She had been treated very well and had dined with the local governor and met Captain Hill (GB 133 HAM 1/7/5/11). This may have partly compensated for her accommodation, which her mother described on 4th July as ‘a miserable house which is little more than a barn’ (GB 133 HAM 1/12/32). Mrs Feilding waited, together with the Grahams, for the permits needed to leave. She made her way back to Caldas overland.

A note written by Sophia stated that she sailed home from Lisbon in the *King George* packet, arriving at Falmouth in September 1781 (ROLLR DG7 33/57). So with these shared experiences, there was much for Mr Graham and Lord Winchilsea to reminisce about at Burley in 1788.



Fig. 4. Thomas Graham, Baron Lynedoch, depicted in a coloured etching by an unknown artist, 1816 (© National Portrait Gallery, London, inv no D8695).

By way of aside, this was not the only occasion on which Lord Winchilsea had been reunited with Mr Graham and the Cathcart family. On 3rd September 1785 there took place at Schaw Park, Alloa, in Scotland, the residence and estate of Lord Cathcart, what is claimed to be the first cricket match in Scotland of which recorded details survive. The match was contested over four innings between a side captained by the Hon Colonel Talbot and one led by the Duke of Atholl, married to a sister of Lord

Cathcart. The Duke of Atholl’s side, including Lord Cathcart, the Hon Mr Cathcart and Lord Winchilsea, lost to Colonel Talbot’s side which included Thomas Graham and R Graham (*Northampton Mercury* 8th October 1785) – Lord Winchilsea’s keen interest in cricket and his place in the early history of the game are well known. Schaw Park, the residence, has since been demolished but the cricket match was commemorated in a painting of Lord Cathcart and his family at Schaw Park by the Scottish artist David Allan.

There was a strong personal element to these reunions between Lord Winchilsea, Mr Thomas Graham and his Cathcart relatives. This view is reinforced by the *Stamford Mercury* of 15th May 1789, which reported that Mr Henry Finch was to be the Vicar of Greetham in Rutland and Mr Cathcart was to be the Vicar of Ravenstone in Buckinghamshire. The Hon Archibald Hamilton Cathcart was the younger brother of the 10th Lord Cathcart and his presentation to the living of All Saints Church at Ravenstone was in the personal gift of Lord Winchilsea. It is possible that the young Reverend Cathcart had both a cricketing and an ecclesiastical pedigree as he may well have been the Hon Mr Cathcart who played cricket with Lord Winchilsea in September 1785 before he was ordained deacon in 1786 (theclergydatabase.org.uk). At all events, the church at Ravenstone containing the family mausoleum of the Finch Earls of Nottingham was close to Lord Winchilsea’s heart.

Returning to Lord Winchilsea’s sojourn in Portugal, we find that towards the end of 1781 he was sufficiently recovered to undertake his return journey to England overland. His party must have travelled from Lisbon via Madrid. Mrs Graham’s journal recorded that she and her husband were joined in Madrid in mid September by Lord Winchilsea, Lady Charlotte Finch and Henrietta Finch. In the Spanish capital the two parties were able to dine together and to make joint excursions (Graham 1781, 25).

By November 1781 Lord Winchilsea was in Bordeaux. He wrote to his mother on 2nd December from Toulouse to say that he had left Bordeaux on 29th November. His mother and Henrietta had left Bordeaux before him. After their departure he had met the Bishop of Blois who had given him a number of introductions, to the Archbishop of Toulouse, the Bishop of Béziers and the Archbishop of Narbonne (ROLLR DG7 33/64).

The introduction to Arthur Richard Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne, paid the richest dividend when Lord Winchilsea arrived in Montpellier. He was lucky to find any accommodation at all as the States General of Languedoc were then in session there.

Lord Winchilsea explained, writing to his mother on 20th December from Béziers, that it had needed a preliminary visit to Montpellier to find suitable accommodation for his party and that of Mr Graham (ROLLR DG7 33/65).



Fig. 5. Portrait of Monseigneur Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne, undated and by an unknown artist (© Jean Lepage, Palais-Musée des Archevêques de Narbonne, inv no 15.1.1).

As it turned out, Archbishop Dillon (fig. 5) was president of the States General of Languedoc (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition). Further letters dated 4th and 12th January 1782 reveal that the archbishop was extremely civil to him and Lord Winchilsea was constantly a guest at the archbishop's house (ROLLR DG7 33/68 and 33/69). The archbishop had a further mention in letters to his mother on 4th March 1782 when Lord Winchilsea wrote that, after he had been to Lyon, he planned to visit the archbishop's chateau near Compiègne in northern France (ROLLR DG7 33/73). This was the chateau of Hautefontaine where the archbishop lived in great style, rather than in his diocese. The chateau actually belonged to his niece and no evidence has been found to show that Lord Winchilsea achieved that visit. He finally reached England in May 1782.

The ultimate link in this slender chain is that Adèle d'Osmond and Archbishop Arthur Richard Dillon were related through Adèle's mother, whose maiden name was Dillon. They were distant relatives, but the

relationship was strong enough for the archbishop to take Adèle's parents under his wing during the early part of their marriage (de Boigne 1971, I, 33–4). They stayed at the chateau of Hautefontaine and the archbishop features at several points in Madame de Boigne's memoirs. It seems improbable that the d'Osmonds and their daughter could have stayed with Lord Winchilsea at Burley without their mutual interest in Arthur Richard Dillon emerging.

Madame de Boigne's memoirs gave no details of her stay with Lord Winchilsea – indeed, without this passing reference we would never have known about it. She believed she had a good command of English as a young child but acknowledged that conversational phrases could elude her. Lord Winchilsea in turn had some facility with French. As an undergraduate he spent a year in Nice where he travelled with his mother to recuperate from illness (ROLLR DG7 31/74 and 31/75). Nice was then part of the Kingdom of Savoy. During his grand tour he travelled extensively in France. So it is not surprising that he reported to his mother from Lyon on 18th April 1782 that he could easily understand the actors at the theatre (ROLLR DG7 33/77). While in Lyon he met Grand Duke Paul, later Paul I Emperor of Russia, and his brother in law the Duke of Württemberg, with their wives and retinue. Paul was travelling as Le Comte du Nord and conversation with his party would surely have been in French (ROLLR DG7 33/79).

Lord Winchilsea's library at Burley gave a further perspective on his familiarity with the French language. A listing of books made by Lady Charlotte Finch in 1800 (ROLLR DG7 Inv 5) included a number of French authors, among them Molière, La Fontaine and many volumes of Madame de Sévigné's letters from the seventeenth century, and from the eighteenth century works by Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau. Not everyone reads all the books in his library any more than many readers manage the almost one thousand pages of Madame de Boigne's memoirs or the *circa* three thousand pages of *In Search of Lost Time*. Certain of Lord Winchilsea's French authors may even have been there in translation. Nevertheless the impression given by Lord Winchilsea's letters is that he had a reasonable grasp of French.

Adèle d'Osmond returned to France with her parents in early 1790 but then endured a further period of exile, not returning to France until 1804 (de Boigne 1971, I, 74 and 144). For the second period of exile, some of it spent in England, no further meetings with Lord Winchilsea have been traced.

Her relative Arthur Richard Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne followed a similar path into exile in



1791. He went initially to Koblenz in Germany and then found his way to London. He was accompanied by his widowed niece Madame de Rothe. He was part of a large number of French émigrés who sought refuge in England, including many bishops and prominent churchmen. When the French government and Pope Pius VII reached agreement (the *Concordat*) in 1801 about the future relationship between the papacy and the French government, Archbishop Dillon did not return to France. He was one of thirteen bishops in England who declined to resign their sees in the aftermath of the *Concordat* and among the more senior among them (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edition; de Boigne 1971, I, 135–6).

So he was still in London when he died in 1806, his niece and companion having died a little before. ‘His funeral obsequies were celebrated at the chapel in Little George-street, where the service was performed by the Bishop of Rodez in the presence of several of the royal family and nobility of France: and his remains were afterwards removed to Pancraschurch-yard’ (Lysons 1811, II part II, 624). The churchyard of Old St Pancras church was a favoured burial site for Roman Catholics at this time.

Archbishop Dillon and Lord Winchilsea may have met in London or elsewhere, but no evidence has emerged to support this. However, Madame de Boigne’s memoirs made clear that, when in England, her parents were in touch with the archbishop. They were aware of his position concerning the *Concordat* and the non-resignation of his see. On the day of his niece’s funeral the archbishop came to lunch with Madame de Boigne’s parents, indicating a degree of intimacy between the archbishop and his Dillon relatives. Curiously, he recalled on that day his quarrels and reconciliation with Voltaire and quoted at length from one of Voltaire’s works, *La Pucelle* (de Boigne 1971, I, 136–7).



Fig. 6. The Hardy Tree in Old St Pancras churchyard.

The archbishop might have lain peacefully in Old St Pancras churchyard but for the upset caused by the Midland Railway in the 1860s as the track was laid through the churchyard area to reach the new St Pancras station. Graves were disturbed and grave-stones were moved. The young Thomas Hardy was involved in the project while working for the architect Arthur William Blomfield, later knighted. This type of disturbance was evoked in the poem ‘The Levelled Churchyard’, written some time later, which begins:

O passenger, pray list and catch  
Our sighs and piteous groans,  
Half stifled in this jumbled patch  
Of wrenched memorial stones!

We late-lamented, resting here,  
Are mixed to human jam,  
And each to each exclaims in fear,  
‘I know not which I am!’

The ‘Hardy Tree’ in the churchyard surrounded by displaced gravestones (fig. 6) may not be specifically tied to Hardy but serves as a reminder of the upheaval caused by excavation and exhumation in the building of the new railway.

When the Burdett-Coutts Memorial Sundial was erected in Old St Pancras churchyard and unveiled by Baroness Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts in 1879, it recorded Archbishop Dillon as one of the eminent persons buried there. It is a Listed Building, a memorial to people whose graves were disturbed or destroyed or could no longer be located because of the earlier engineering work (historicengland.org.uk, listing number 1113250).

Archbishop Dillon ‘slept on’ until building work for the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link at St Pancras again disturbed Old St Pancras churchyard. During the associated archaeological investigation his body was found in a lead lined coffin identified by an accompanying engraving. Sources do not agree on the time of discovery (*circa* 2002–03). The archbishop’s remains were first sent to East Finchley Cemetery in London (Bingham 2017). But in 2007 the body was finally returned to France and was buried with honour and dignity in Narbonne Cathedral (<https://stpancras.com/history/decay-and-restoration>).

In his article about reading, Proust opened by commending the merits of the telephone, its ability to transport one immediately to another person and another place quite different from one’s immediate surroundings. If no such conversation were possible, one could always dip into the Memoirs of Madame de Boigne (Proust 2008, 99–103).

At the end of the article he wrote that his reading of Madame de Boigne’s Memoirs, interacting with his acquaintance with her descendants, ‘weaves a tissue

of frivolities, yet a poetic one, for it ends as the stuff of dreams, a slender bridge thrown between the present and an already distant past, and which joins life to history, making history more alive and life almost more historical' (Proust 2008, 105–06). With the benefit of hindsight and of his other writing, we understand the importance Proust attached, less to the mere enumeration of history and more to our reaction to it. Our reaction is a creation in its own right and defines our individuality.

The present article does not aspire to be a poetic creation but nevertheless it does aim to be more than

a tissue of frivolities. In its discursiveness it follows in the footsteps of Proust, who wrote that our musings about history and the past are seductive and have the power to divert us from our original task. In his article on his reading of Madame de Boigne's *Memoirs* he had actually written something quite different from what he had originally planned, which was an article on 'Snobbery and Posterity'. To resist the siren temptations of such musings and to keep to the plan, it was necessary to say, as one might to the operator on the telephone exchange, 'We are talking, do not cut us off, mademoiselle!' (Proust 2008, 106–07).

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### Appendix

The final two paragraphs of chapter 3 of Mme de Boigne's memoirs read as follows:

*Nous allâmes passer les fêtes de Noël chez le comte de Winchilsea, dans sa belle terre de Burleigh. Il me semble que toute cette existence était très magnifique, mais j'étais trop accoutumée à voir de grands établissements pour en être frappée.*

*La mère de lord Winchilsea, lady Charlotte Finch, était gouvernante des princesses d'Angleterre. Je vis les trois plus jeunes chez elle plusieurs fois. Elles étaient beaucoup plus âgées que moi et ne me plurent nullement. La princesse Amélie m'appela little thing, ce qui me choqua infiniment. Je parlais très bien anglais, mais je ne savais pas encore que c'était un terme d'affection.*

In fact, Princess Amelia was even younger than the eight-year-old Adèle, but it would not be surprising if her childhood memories were a little adrift as to their relative ages.

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# Thring's 'favourite wish': Uppingham High School for Girls, 1888-1893

MALCOLM TOZER

*Uppingham High School for Girls was founded by the sisters Mary and Lillie Beisiegel, the daughters of a master at Uppingham School, in 1888 at a time when high schools for girls were being established throughout England to provide an academic education for girls from middle-class families. With strong support from masters at Uppingham*

*School and from professional families in the town and surrounding villages, the school grew steadily in size and reputation in its early years. Uppingham High School suffered a change in fortune when, for personal reasons, the sisters relinquished their association with the school and the new owners were unable to build on their work.*

The *Stamford Mercury* for Friday 21st October 1887 carried a new advertisement under the heading 'Uppingham', thus:

MISS BEISIEGEL, late of Newnham College, Cambridge, is going to OPEN, in January next a SCHOOL in Uppingham for the Higher Education of Girls. With this School will be combined a "Kindergarten", under a specially-trained Teacher. ... For Testimonials and Prospectus apply to "Sunny Bank," UPPINGHAM.

The announcement, however, was overshadowed by events at the boys' boarding school in the town where its famous headmaster, Edward Thring, was close to death. He had been taken ill during the school's chapel service the previous Sunday and all week his doctor had fought to save him as he lay in School

House. He died on the day after the publication of the advertisement, on Saturday 22nd October 1887. Was Uppingham High School for Girls, with its Kindergarten, to have been his next educational initiative?

Thring's diary for the last months of his life survives in the Uppingham School archives but it makes no mention of Uppingham High School. This is not surprising because the pages are dominated by worries over his younger son's engagement and eventual marriage to an Italian lady that threatened to tear apart the family – the parents knew little about her background and had never met her – and, deepening his woes, the school trustees were unwilling to guarantee the 65-year-old headmaster a proper pension on his eventual retirement, thus threatening the family's long-term security.

Two later publications, however, do point to Thring's involvement in the enterprise. The first is another advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury*, on

EDUCATIONAL.

## HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS, UPPINGHAM, RUTLAND.

**Patrons.**

<p>The Right Rev. Bishop MITCHINSON, D.D., Sibstone Rectory, Atherstone.</p> <p>The Venerable the Archdeacon of OAKHAM, The Rectory, Uppingham.</p> <p>The Rev. Canon WORDSWORTH, Tynham Rectory, Wareham.</p> <p>Lady CARBERRY, Glaston House, Uppingham.</p> <p>Mrs. EDWARD THRING, Uppingham.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mrs. COMPTON, Brooklands, Uppingham.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Late Patrons.</b></p> <p>The Late Rev. Canon YATE, Uppingham Rectory.</p> <p>The Late Rev. R. J. HODGKINSON, Trowell Rectory, Notts.</p>	<p>The Rev. Sir J. H. FLUDYER, Bart., M.A., Ayston Hall, Uppingham.</p> <p>The Rev. E. C. SELWYN, M.A., Head Master of Uppingham School.</p> <p>Mrs. HASLAM, The Lodge, Uppingham.</p> <p>Mrs. EVRS, King's Hill, Dursley.</p>
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**Principal - Miss BEISIEGEL,**  
*Late of Newnham College, Cambridge.*

*Honour Diplomas:—Women's Higher Examination, Cambridge; Cambridge Senior, etc.*

This School has for its object the promotion of the Higher Education of Girls, and is conducted on strictly modern principles.

Miss Beisiegel is assisted by Miss L. A. Beisiegel (Honour Certificate Senior Local Cambridge, etc.), and competent visiting masters.

The School course includes General English Subjects, Mathematics, French, German or Latin, Class Singing, Class Drawing, Drilling, and Needlework.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

## HIGH SCHOOL for GIRLS, UPPINGHAM.

(Continued).

**TERMS, PER ANNUM.**

Daily Pupils, over 14 years of age	...	18 guineas.
" Pupils, under 14	"	15 "
" Pupils, under 12	"	12 "
Boarders, over 14 years of age	...	60 "
" under 14	"	50 "
" under 10	"	30 "

## KINDERGARTEN.

**TERMS, PER ANNUM.**

Kindergarten Class...	...	8 guineas.
Transition Class	...	10 "

A small charge per term is made for materials.

*Miss BEISIEGEL possesses testimonials from—*

<p>The late Rev EDWARD THRING, M.A., Head Master of Uppingham School.</p> <p>Miss CLOUGH, Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge.</p> <p>Mrs. BADHAM, Principal of the Girls' Collegiate School, Folkestone.</p> <p>Mrs. NORTH, High Street, Uppingham.</p> <p>Miss GOODWIN, Rose Castle, Carlisle.</p>	<p>Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Principal of Handsworth Ladies' College, Birmingham.</p> <p>Miss BAIN, Head Mistress of the High School, Carlisle.</p> <p>Mrs. BADHAM, Girls' Collegiate School, Folkestone.</p>
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*In addition to the Patrons and Patronesses, references are also kindly permitted to—*

The late REY. EDWARD THRING, shortly before his death, strongly advised Miss BEISIEGEL to open a High School for Girls in Uppingham (a favourite wish of his for some years) and promised her all his powerful support and assistance.

*Further Particulars on application.*

Fig. 1. Uppingham High School for Girls advertisement in Deacon's directory, 1890.

28th March 1890, where Miss Beisiegel claimed that the school 'was opened by the advice of the late Rev. Edward Thring'; the second is in a two-page advertisement in the 1890 edition of *Deacon's Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire Court Guide and County Blue Book* (fig. 1) where she stated that 'The late REV. EDWARD THRING, shortly before his death, strongly advised Miss BEISIEGEL to open a High School for Girls in Uppingham (a favourite wish of his for some years) and promised her all his powerful support and assistance.' The latter also included Miss Beisiegel's statement that she possessed a testimonial from Thring. Miss Beisiegel's assertion that the founding of the girls' school in Uppingham was 'a favourite wish of [Thring's] for some years' does indeed match the headmaster's interest in the higher education of girls and women. He traced it back to his meeting with the children's author, Juliana Horatia Ewing, in 1885 – 'It is curious how Mrs Ewing's life and meaning has set me going on all this woman's work' (Thring, Diary, 24th Feb 1887).

The Thrings had two sons and three daughters: Gale (born in 1854), Sarah (1856), Margaret (1858), Herbert (1859) and Grace (1866). The two sons were educated at their father's school – Gale, 1865–74 and Herbert, 1870–79 – and progressed to university, Gale to Trinity College, Cambridge, and Bertie to Hertford College, Oxford. His three daughters, in common with most girls of their social standing, were educated at home, in their case by Prussian and Swiss governesses. Once adult, Sarah and Margaret remained at the school and assisted with the domestic arrangements in two of the boarding houses. Grace (fig. 2) was the most independent, adventurous and intelligent of the Thring children and it was her good fortune that the intellectual awakening of her late teens coincided with her father's new concern with 'going on all this woman's work'.



Fig. 2. Grace Thring in 1880 aged 14. (Uppingham School Archives).

Juliana Ewing (fig. 3) and her mother, Margaret Gatty, edited and contributed to *Aunt Judy's Magazine* which, from 1866 to 1882, acted as a Victorian equivalent to BBC Television's *Blue Peter*.



Fig. 3. Juliana Ewing.

Each issue comprised serial stories, biographies, historical narratives, nature studies and the like, all tailor-made for a young readership, together with occasional campaigns to encourage the donation of tiny sums to endow Aunt Judy cots at the Hospital for Sick Children in London's Great Ormond Street. Thring's mother had sent five-year-old Margaret a copy of *Aunt Judy's Tales* in 1863 and the children subsequently subscribed to the *Magazine* from its birth three years later. When Margaret complained that an issue contained no story by Mrs Ewing, Thring helped her to write a letter to the author. She replied with a short story composed especially for Margaret; this led to correspondence between headmaster and author that lasted over fifteen years and saw her nephew come to the school. Thring and Mrs Ewing met just once, in 1885 when the author lay dying, and then he returned to Somerset a few days later to preach the funeral address at the village church in Trull. It seems likely that she had opened Thring's eyes to the new reality, that a woman could forge a professional career and become financially independent without losing any of the feminine qualities that Victorian society demanded of her.

The few schools for girls that existed when Thring's elder daughters were young neglected academic subjects and physical exercise in favour of stylish accomplishments; by the 1860s, however, many middle-class parents wanted to do better by their daughters. They were supported by the findings of the 1868 Taunton Commission: in a side-effect of the examination of endowed grammar schools for boys which led to Thring hosting the first Headmasters' Conference at Uppingham in December 1869, the commissioners were highly critical of girls' education. The result was that new day schools for girls were founded to provide a rigorous academic education, beginning in London and then extending to most major cities. The first was North London



Fig. 4. The Rev Edward Thring (centre) with the Conference of Headmistresses at Uppingham in 1887 (Uppingham School Archives).

Collegiate School, founded in 1850 by Frances Mary Buss; the term ‘collegiate’ was used to distinguish the new schooling from that provided by ‘home-based’ governesses. The first girls’ boarding school, Cheltenham Ladies’ College, followed three years later; Dorothea Beale became its principal in 1858. Thring’s role in the founding of the Headmasters’ Conference naturally led to his interest in the creation in 1874 of the equivalent for girls’ schools, and in June 1885, just a month after Mrs Ewing’s death, he invited the headmistresses to bring their 1887 conference to Uppingham (fig. 4).

Thring also corresponded from 1870 with Frances Kingsley, the widow of Charles Kingsley. Their letters talk of her husband’s ‘strong feeling for Uppingham and the work here’, and she sent him an autographed copy of Kingsley’s *Brave Words to Brave Soldiers*. By the 1880s, Mrs Kingsley was living in Leamington Spa where her daughter, Rose, had founded the Leamington High School for Girls in 1884. Two years later, in September 1886, Thring was invited to the school’s Speech Day where he presented the prizes and gave an address. This is the first occasion when Thring promoted careers for women. He told the girls:

*Your professional work needs a few words. For you will all have professional work, some, what everybody calls professional, as teachers, as nurses, as managers of various kinds; others, again, as daughters, or wives, have household duties as their professional life. ... The strong interest I feel in woman’s true mission as a worker, and not a toy, has brought me here to-day. ... God created women to work. She must, therefore, be trained to work (Thring 1887, 83–100).*

The following autumn he gave a similar address to the girls of the High School in Worcester where Alice Ottley had served as headmistress since the school’s founding in 1883.

Thring now had the bit between his teeth and in a series of addresses in the last years of his life he championed the cause of female education: lecturing public-school Old Boys in London in 1885; writing to teachers in Minnesota the following year; and in March 1887 addressing the young women of Newnham College in Cambridge about the importance of teaching as a career. A select few women had been able to receive a university education, if not university degrees, with the foundation of Girton and Newnham Colleges at Cambridge (1869 and 1871) and Lady Margaret Hall and Somerville College at Oxford (1878 and 1879). Then, in 1878, the University of London was the first to accept women on equal terms with men and to award degrees to female students. Teaching was one of the few professions open to women, though their status was much lower than that of their male counterparts, and in the following decades the new girls’ public schools and high schools appointed young mistresses from the universities.

As a preliminary to the conference of the Association of Headmistresses, Miss Buss visited Uppingham in November 1886. Thring’s diary records his admiration:

*She is an able woman, and well up in the whole educational movement. I was immensely pleased at her saying that I was the first man who had acknowledged them as fellow-workers, and that when my invitation to the mistresses to hold their conference at Uppingham came before the committee, they were silent and speechless, so*



*much were they struck by the public recognition (Diary, 23rd Nov 1886).*

After his Cambridge address in March 1887, Thring visited both North London Collegiate School and Cheltenham Ladies' College, telling their teachers that women must 'do something to reform our wretched Education (so called)' (Diary, 8th May 1887). Fifty-nine headmistresses attended the Uppingham conference in June that year, where they were welcomed warmly and entertained magnificently by the boys, masters and their wives. In his address, Thring told them

*The hope of teaching lies in you. Yours is the power. ... Both because the rough, instrumental work of the world is done by men, whilst the fine and delicate life-power, with its influence on life, is done by the women; and also because you are fresh, and enthusiastic, and comparatively untrammelled (sic), whilst we are weighed down by tradition, cast, like iron, in the rigid moulds of the past, with still heavier chains of modern improvement imposed by present law on our life (Thring 1887, 180).*

Grace, Thring's youngest daughter, had accompanied her father to Cambridge, staying with the Vice-Chancellor in St John's and dining in Trinity with some young men while Thring sat on High Table. She wrote about the trip in a gushing twelve-page letter of 13th March 1887 to Thring's eventual biographer, George Parkin: 'Everything went off swimmingly. They have elected him one of the university preachers for next year, so I hope I shall go again, if not before' (Canadian National Archives 4 – 915a-1, copy in Uppingham School Archives). Her sister Sarah then had the treat of the Cheltenham visit, where she was conducted around the school by Miss Beale, and their aunt Anna shared the North London trip, including dining with Miss Buss. No doubt the opinions of his three ladies on the virtues of female education were now having an effect on Thring, and well before the Uppingham conference. It therefore comes as no surprise that when, in the wake of the conference, Miss Beale asked Thring to allow one of his daughters to visit Cheltenham and Miss Buss offered to take Margaret with her on a winter holiday to Rome, Thring responded positively: 'I am very anxious that they should see and know more of this great movement and get intimate with open leaders among women, and so are they ... It is such a great thing for them to get with such a working, able, set' (Diary, 15th June 1887). Thring's death a few months later, however, saw the postponement of the first and the cancellation of the second. But seeds had been sown.

Edward and Marie Thring had been slow to appreciate what education could do for their daughters, and indeed how a girls' school in the town could help to

attract masters with daughters to teach at Uppingham School, but their colleagues and friends, Georg and Sarah Beisiegel, were not. Beisiegel had joined Thring's staff in 1860 from Coblenz in Prussia to teach gymnastics and music, giving the school forty-two years of loyal service. He married Uppingham-born Sarah in 1862. Their three surviving children – Mary, Lillie (fig. 7) and Karl – were similar in age to Grace, the girls slightly older, Karl a little younger. At some stage between the 1871 and 1881 censuses, the family moved from Preston, just outside Uppingham, to Sunny Bank, a mansion at the end of the Stockerston Road that leaves Uppingham to the west (fig. 5).



Fig. 5. Sunny Bank, Stockerston Road, Uppingham.

Mary, Lillie and Karl enjoyed equal educational opportunities. Karl joined Uppingham School as a day boy in 1883, had a successful career, and progressed to Selwyn College, Cambridge. He served as an assistant master at Crewkerne Grammar School for a least a decade before returning to Uppingham prior to 1900 to become proprietor of a laundry on the Ayston Road. Mary and Lillie went as boarders to Handsworth Ladies' College near Birmingham, with Sophia Hawthorn, the daughter of the Uppingham bookseller, as a fellow pupil – the school opened in 1872, occupying several buildings around Villa Road in Handsworth, and in 1881 there were thirteen boarders aged 13 to 17. May Pinhorn, later a nanny, claimed that the school was run by 'two awful old hags' but this did not prevent the scholarly Edith Saunders from laying down the foundations of a career as an eminent plant geneticist. The school also served the sisters well, both securing their Honour Certificate in the Senior Local Cambridge examinations, and in 1882 Mary entered Newnham College in the company of another Handsworth girl, Jane Bragge. Lillie went home to Uppingham at about the same time. Mary left Newnham in 1884, after gaining her Women's Higher Education Diploma and

distinctions in the College of Preceptors' examinations, to take up an appointment as an assistant mistress at Devonport High School for Girls in the most westerly of the three towns that comprise modern-day Plymouth. The school had been founded in 1875 and, on reaching ninety pupils, it had recently moved to purpose-built accommodation in the new middle-class area of the Albert Road (its full title was Devonport, Stoke and Stonehouse High School for Girls; it survived until 1895). Three years later, and with three years' teaching experience under her belt, Mary took the Uppingham gamble.

Her new school was not the first for girls in Uppingham. Miss Jemima Adams founded an Academy for Young Ladies in the mid-1850s, first on the south side of High Street West and later in the Market Square (*inf* Peter Lane). It had closed by 1861, however, when she leased the building to Thring's school. A National School had been established in the town by 1817 (*Digest of Parochial Returns*, 742) but it is unlikely that it was ever attended by children of professional families. Their sons would probably have attended Uppingham School or, from 1869, Robert Hodgkinson's Lower School on the Stockerston Road, and their daughters would either have been educated at home, like the Thrings, or sent to boarding schools, like the Beisiegels. Thring accepted boys from age 9 until 1869 when he raised the entry age to 13. Younger boys then went to the Lower School.

Uppingham High School for Girls opened on 28th January 1888 in rented accommodation on High Street West, just to the west of the aptly-named Gamble's Yard – now Sheild's Yard. Number 38 today is home to a firm of architects. The timing seemed auspicious for high schools were opening

across the country to meet the new demand; there were already seven in Northampton, two in Leicester, and one each in Kettering, Peterborough, Stamford and Thrapston. Mary, aged 25, and her kindergarten teacher, Aldyth Jurnell, aged 34, lived on the premises and supervised the few boarding pupils; Lillie remained at Sunny Bank. As well as the testimonial from Thring, Mary also received written support from her Headmistress at Handsworth, Mrs Ellen Kirkpatrick, and the Principal at Newnham, Miss Anne Clough, as well as two other headmistresses and some ladies in Uppingham. Fees were advertised on a sliding scale: from 8 to 18 guineas a term for day pupils, depending on age, and from 30 to 60 guineas for boarders: boarders had to be aged 10 or older. These fees were comparable to those charged at girls' schools in nearby towns, whereas the termly fees for Uppingham boys were higher: £35 for young boarders at the Lower School and £40 day or £110 boarding for those aged 13 and over.

Only one other school in *Deacon's Directory* (1890) boasted a kindergarten, Lyndhurst in Leicester. Here Mary, with her German ancestry, was well up with the fashion. Friedrich Fröbel's kindergarten movement, which advocated natural development and spontaneity in the training of young children, had been popular in Prussia since 1837. Liberals escaping to England after the 1848 revolution established the practice in their London communities but it was only now that his child-centred theories were becoming more widely appreciated, in marked contrast to the rigid teaching practised in the elementary schools. Thring, of course, would have approved. Mary and Lillie taught the older girls a range of subjects including divinity, English, history, geography,



Fig. 6. The site of the High School for Girls in High Street West, Uppingham.

mathematics, French, Latin, singing, drawing and needlework. Masters from Uppingham School also did some teaching, a practice that was also adopted for the boys at the Lower School: Charles Rossiter for art, Heathfield Stephenson for games and Paul David for music. It is likely that the girls had occasional use of facilities at Uppingham School, but not when the boys were around! These would seem to include the art room, music rooms, playing fields and the School-room for Speech Day.

The sole written evidence found to date to trace the development of the school are seven press reports in the *Stamford Mercury* and the *Grantham Journal*, most often to describe the annual speech day. In its first year the school comprised two Kindergarten classes and Forms I, II and III for pupils aged 8 to 16. The identity of prize-winners reveals that a mixture of age and ability decided each pupil's form placement, with the highest form containing a range from ages 12 to 16. In addition to prizes for the top of each form, subject prizes were awarded in English, mathematics, music and drawing. Other subjects taught in this first year were divinity, history, geography, French and Latin. Stephenson had started a cricket club, loaning equipment from his sports outfitters just across the High Street, and all the children were involved with charitable work; knitting and netting to produce clothing for distribution at Christmas to poor families in the town. At the start of the Speech Day celebrations, pupils of all ages presented a programme of recitations and musical items. In her report to the assembled parents, benefactors and supporters, Mary ended with these words:

*I feel I cannot let this opportunity pass without alluding to him, who was taken away from us before the School was opened, whose kind and uncalled for interest in my welfare throughout my whole life was culminated by his staunch support of my project at the outset, and his cordial promise of every assistance that lay in his power to make it a success. Though unable to fulfil that promise literally, yet the knowledge of having Mr Thring's sympathy and goodwill has encouraged me to go forward, and make my work such as he would have approved of; while his life has given me an example which I may, though feebly, endeavour to imitate.*

Responding on behalf of the parents, Samuel Haslam, housemaster of The Lodge, congratulated Mary and her teachers on the good start that had been made. He could vouch for his daughters being very happy there – 'the greatest punishment was to be obliged to stay away from School'.

After a successful two terms, Mary had the confidence to advertise the school in a national newspaper, *The Times*, on 26th July 1888:

UPPINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL for GIRLS,  
under distinguished patronage, including that  
of the Head and Assistant Masters at  
Uppingham School – BOARDERS can be  
RECEIVED next term; also, at reduced fees, a  
few Pupils {daughters of clergymen and  
professional men} who are anxious to prepare  
for exams. Apply to the Principal,  
Miss Beisiegel.

Edward Selwyn had succeeded Thring as Uppingham's headmaster in January that year. The text of the advertisement suggests that his three-year-old twins, Edward and Mary, were in the Kindergarten.

The school's 1889 Speech Day was held on 30th July, the day before Uppingham School's, and presumably capitalised on the increased social cachet. The gentry were certainly out in force as supporters. The briefest of reports in the *Grantham Journal* noted that the pupil roll was now 32, an increase of nine over the year. The form structure remained unchanged although Form III now gained upper and lower divisions. Older pupils had been entered for the examinations set by the College of Preceptors and the successful but unnamed candidates were awarded their certificates. The College was a professional organisation for teachers founded in 1846; in the 1850s it became the first body to set public examinations for 'middle-class schools', examinations that were recognised for entry to the universities and the professions.

A fuller report for the following year's Speech Day on 31st July gives a vivid picture of the occasion, held in a 'double room' within the school that had been 'prettily decorated with flowers'. The girls sat on a platform at one end of the room, looking 'very nice and cheerful in their white dresses'. Parents, supporters and guests – headed by Lord and Lady Carbery of Glaston House – sat in the body of the room. Carbery was to play a prominent role the following day at the opening ceremony for the new School House and Tercentenary classrooms at Uppingham School; he was a trustee of the boys' school. The pupils presented a 'full programme [of] recitations, songs, duets, and instrumental solos' before the Principal made her report. Kindergarten pupils took no part in the proceedings this year nor thereafter but they were mentioned in the Principal's reports. This would suggest that attendance at Speech Day was now limited to pupils in Form I and above.

The older girls had now moved up to Form IV, and geology, science, harmony and German had been added as subjects taught. Georg Beisiegel taught all the singing classes and also built a small gymnasium to help cure 'some of the round backs'. Ten pupils had been entered for the different levels of the College of



Preceptors' examinations and all had passed, and seventeen-year-old Cecilia Rossiter had passed the entrance examination for the Royal Holloway College for Women, 'with no extra preparation, except in mathematics'. In their closing words, Carbery 'congratulated Miss Beisiegel on the bright faces of her pupils', and Selwyn welcomed the public examination results as 'the best test of work done'.

The 1891 Speech Day had moved from the end of the summer term to just before Christmas, the afternoon of 15th December, and the proceedings had transferred to the 'Lecture Hall', presumably the 1863 School-room at the boys' school, to accommodate the 'large gathering of parents and friends from the neighbourhood'. The previous year's Form IV had moved up to Form V and increased numbers had necessitated the creation of two Form Is, Upper and Lower. The appointment of additional teachers had not always been successful, for it seems that Mary had to remove one, but lavish praise was bestowed on her sister; Lillie taught 'the most satisfactory little class in the School'. Five senior girls had taken the Oxford Local Examination, and all passed, whilst younger ones were entered as before for the College of Preceptors' examinations. That senior girls were now entered for the more rigorous examinations set by the University of Oxford signalled the good progress that the school had made, and this gained warm praise from Selwyn. In a change from previous Speech Days, the programme of entertainment concluded proceedings.

With the school riding high, December 1891 is an appropriate time to take stock. How many pupils attended the school, who were they, and who were their parents? We know from the 1889 Speech Day report that there were 23 pupils in the school's first year and 32 in the second. The only means of identifying who the pupils were are the 1891 census and the text of the Speech Day reports in the local newspapers – but only if a child won a prize, passed a public examination, gave a recitation, or performed a musical item. All other pupils remain anonymous.

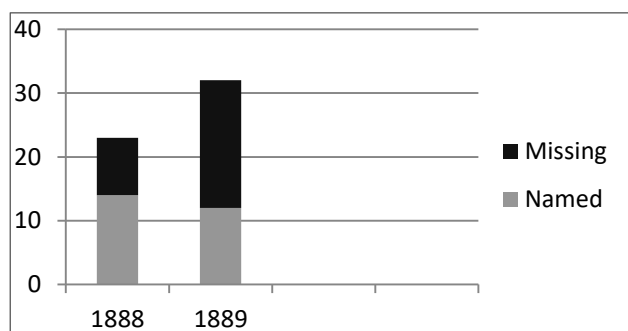


Table 1. Pupil Numbers – Named and Missing.

The first discovery comes as a surprise: not all the pupils were girls. Four boys were named in 1888 and two in 1889. In addition to the boys, 11 girls can be

identified in 1888 and 10 in 1889. Named pupils for the two years thus total 14 and 12. Nine of 23 pupils are missing in 1888 and 20 of 32 in 1889 (table 1); it will be recalled that the 1889 press report was very brief for it listed just prize-winners.

If we assume that pupils of the appropriate age were present in both years (one was too old in 1889) and that siblings of the appropriate age went to school together, we can attempt to identify the missing pupils. That produces 27 pupils in 1888, four too many, and 28 in 1889, four too few – not bad overall. If we extend that method for 1890 and 1891, the pupil roll increases slightly to 31 (table 2).

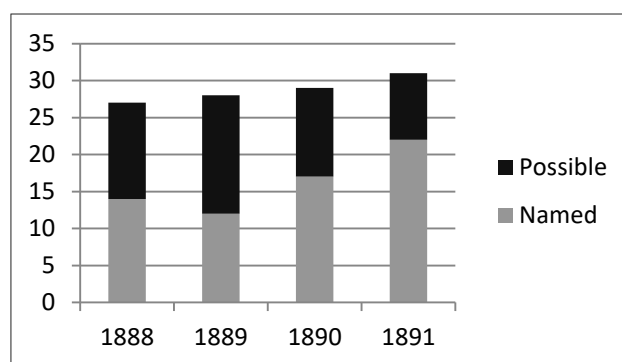


Table 2. Pupil Numbers – Named and Possible.

The identity of some pupils enables their parents to be traced using the census returns for 1891, entries in the *Deacon's Blue Book* for 1890 and the *Kelly's Directories* for 1891 and 1895. It is no surprise that parents associated with Uppingham School dominate but gradually confidence in the new school grows in the town and surrounding villages.

The Rev Samuel Haslam of The Lodge and his wife Sophia led the way for Uppingham School parents with six of their seven daughters – Ellen was too young; Edward and Elizabeth Wauton provided three sons and a daughter; the Rev William Mullins of West Deyne and his wife Jessie had three sons and a daughter at the school at different times; Heathfield Stephenson, the cricket professional, and his wife Maria sent their son as a boarder and his two sisters as day pupils; it is probable that the youngest three daughters of Howard and Edith Candler of West Bank were pupils; Charles and Frances Rossiter, both teaching art, sent two older girls in the school's first years; as did Paul David, the music master, and his wife Augusta with their daughter; one or perhaps two of the youngest daughters of the Rev William Campbell of Lorne House and his wife Fanny attended the school; together with the youngest daughter of Mary Hodgkinson, the widow of the late Rev Robert Hodgkinson of the Lower School.

Minnie Perkins is the only identifiable pupil from the town for 1888. She was the daughter of Thomas and Martha Perkins who had a draper's shop adjacent

to the Falcon Hotel. She became a teacher in the school in 1891/92. She was joined by John and Willie Wordsworth in 1889, sons of the Rector of Glaston, and in 1890 by two girls, Misses Wallis and Ward, who have left no trace. Of the ten new pupils who were present in 1891, eight fathers can be identified. Three were clergymen, from a dissenting chapel as well as the Church of England: Uppingham's Congregational Minister and the Rectors of Uppingham and Edith Weston. The fathers of the other five were an auctioneer, a land agent, a watchmaker, a farmer and a gentleman 'living on his own means' at Eureka House on Uppingham's Stockerston Road.

Enormous changes occurred before the start of the new term in January 1892 for both Mary and Lillie Beisiegel ceased their connection with the school and a new Principal, Miss Florence Wilde, took over. No information on how the change-over came about is recorded but the reasons for the sisters' departure were mentioned by the Rev William Campbell when he proposed a vote of thanks at Miss Wilde's first Speech Day: Lillie was to marry and Mary was going abroad to be a missionary. Florence Wilde, aged 24, was the daughter of a Congregational Minister and at the time of the 1891 census she worked as a kindergarten teacher near her home in Stainland, south of Halifax in Yorkshire. The changes in the school's management had immediate repercussions and over the course of 1892 there was 'an almost entire change of teachers'. One of the new teachers was Miss Wilde's brother, Edward, aged 22.

Miss Wilde had a whole school year to report on to assembled pupils, parents and guests at the Speech Day on 17th December 1892. The arrangements were as in the previous year and, once again, the girls were all dressed in white. Only Forms I to IV were recorded in the prize list – no Form V and no Upper and Lower for Form I – which suggests that there were now fewer pupils in the school. The previous year's Oxford Local Examinations were not mentioned by Miss Wilde and of the nine girls entered for the College of Preceptors' examinations, just six passed – they were the first examinations for three candidates and the pass-mark this year had been raised five per cent. Needlework, 'the study of wild flowers' and 'drill' had been added to the curriculum, the last taught by the Drill Sergeant at the boys' school, Sgt W Clunies, late of the Royal Marine Light Infantry. As usual, a programme of entertainment followed with a recitation by three pupils from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* gaining special praise. Georg Beisiegel proposed the vote of thanks to Archdeacon Lightfoot, Uppingham's Rector, for presenting the prizes and thus marked his continued interest in the school.

The change in management led to a drop of three

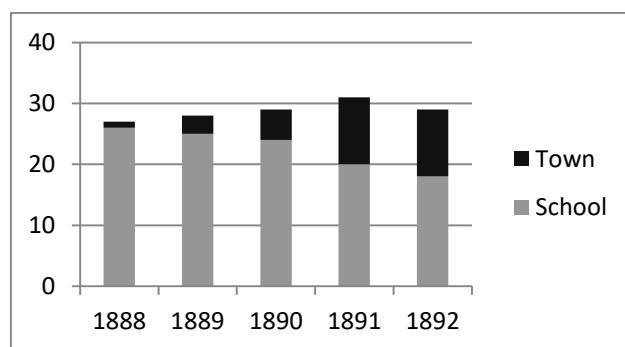


Table 3. Pupil Numbers – Uppingham School and Town.

in the number of pupils whose parents were associated with Uppingham School – the drop may have been greater for only five pupils are named and 13 are possible – but the number from the town remained steady (table 3). The school roll may have been 28 but perhaps lower. Three more pupils and their fathers can be identified: Uppingham's Baptist Minister, to add to the religious harmony in the town, a farmer from Leighfield, and a wine merchant from Ketton.

The next and final press report on the school was published in the *Grantham Journal* on 5th August 1893. It announced that twelve pupils had taken the theory and practical music examinations set by London's Trinity College and that nine had passed. Trinity in 1877 became the first organisation to offer examinations in music to other than its own students. Other colleges, notably the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music, followed this initiative after 1890. The list of pupils included a new girl, Eva Pricep, the niece of the Clerk to Uppingham's Poor Law Guardians.

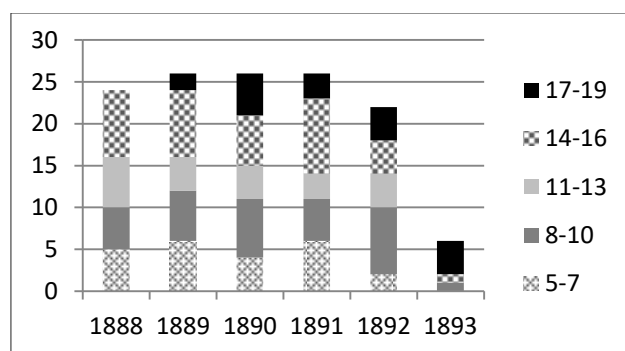


Table 4. Age Profile.

Constructing the age profile of the school from 1888 to 1893 is hampered by the difficulty in identifying almost all the Kindergarten pupils as well as the age of some of the pupils from the town. Table 4 is an attempt to determine the number of pupils in Forms I to V.

What happened to the school after the summer term of 1893 is not recorded, or rather, no record has so far been found. Then, on 11th January 1895, the *Stamford Mercury* published a personal advertisement:

UPPINGHAM, Rutland  
To be SOLD by AUCTION,  
by J. LANGLEY and SON  
On Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> day of January, 1895,  
THE whole of the genteel Household  
FURNITURE, excellent Bedding, Linen, valuable  
Walnut Trichord Pianoforte (by Brinamead),  
China, Glass, School Requisites, and Effects, the  
property of Miss WILDE, who is leaving. –  
Catalogue now ready.  
The Furniture may be viewed on Wednesday the  
9<sup>th</sup> January. – Sale to commence at Eleven o'clock.

No more is heard of the school. Florence returned to Yorkshire, married Albert Hall, a railway clerk, and raised two sons and two daughters.

It is likely that a number of factors combined to bring about the closure of the school. These might have included the following:

The Beisiegel sisters and their father were highly regarded by masters at Uppingham School and by residents of the town; that loyalty fell away when the sisters left the school.

Miss Wilde was an outsider, and she had neither the connections nor the personality to build her own loyal market before time ran out.

Miss Wilde had been a kindergarten teacher before coming to Uppingham and she had little or no experience teaching older pupils.

Older pupils were no longer entered for the Oxford Local Examinations that could lead to university entry.

Miss Wilde had not studied at university; her status was thus lower than Mary Beisiegel's; this may have carried weight with Uppingham School's masters and professional men in the town.

Miss Wilde's father was a Congregational Minister. The school had gained support from both Church of England and dissenting ministers, as had Uppingham School, but the Beisiegel sisters were Church of England and the change may have been a step too far.

There had been a high turn-over of teachers in Miss Wilde's first year.

The railway reached Uppingham in 1894. Pupils could travel on the branch line to Seaton and change there for Stamford. Stamford High School for Girls, founded in 1877, provided a well-regarded alternative. Unfortunately, that school's records of admission date only from 1928 and all older records have been either lost or destroyed, so the case cannot be proved.

An announcement in *The Times* and a full-column report in the *Grantham Journal* suggest that Lillie's marriage to John Arthur Harris in the parish church on 29th June 1893 was Uppingham's society wedding of the year. His family was from Lymington, Hampshire,

but John was stationed in Chickahully (today Chikkanahalli) in India's province of Mysore. Uppingham School's headmaster presided at the ceremony; singing was led by the school's choir under Paul David's direction; the congregation overflowed into the Market Square. The six bridesmaids wore brooches presented by the groom, each a tiger's claw set in gold, 'he having shot the tigers from which the claws were taken'. Mary was absent but her gift of a sewing machine was noted, and the girls of Uppingham High School gave their teacher a silver card case (fig. 8). The reception was held in the garden at Sunny Bank. Mr and Mrs John Harris sailed to India and settled in Chikkanahalli where they probably lived on one of the village's tea plantations. Eventually they returned to Hampshire, retiring to Pennington Grove near Lymington. Lillie died on 20th March 1952 aged 87.



Fig. 7. Lillie Beisiegel  
(Melanie Smith).



Fig. 8. Silver card case given to  
Lillie Beisiegel as a wedding  
present (Camilla English).

Mary sailed from London to Cape Town on RMS *Dunottar Castle* on 11th February 1892. It is not known what form her missionary work took but it was probably with the native population. The boys of Uppingham School regularly heard talks and read magazine reports about former pupils working as missionaries, and no doubt these also reached the Beisiegel sisters, but none reported in the *Uppingham School Magazine* for the period 1890 to 1892 referred to South Africa. Mary would probably have heard Thring's words at his final Speech Day in July 1887 when he rejoiced in 'the number of missionaries who had gone forth from the school to preach the gospel to the heathen'. She was back in England by 1895 when she was recorded attending an ambulance class in Lyddington as part of the Rutland County Council Technical Instruction Scheme.

In 1901 Mary worked as a Lecturer at the Worcester and District Pupil Teacher Centre and that same year she published her first book in the well-known *Normal Tutorial Series* that offered teachers and trainee teachers advice on subjects across the curriculum from 'Domestic Science' to 'Notes on the English Classics'. *The Normal History of Europe: An Outline, 1814-1848* (1901) was followed by *Notes on Stevenson's Treasure Island*, *Notes on Dicken's Old*



*Curiosity Shop, Notes on Stevenson's Virginibus Puerisque, A Brief History of Europe: with Special Reference to British History and The Main Landmarks of European History.* By the time of the next census in 1911 – where the National Archives record her as Max Blissard! – she was the owner and Headmistress of The Abbey High School in Great Grimsby. Later she moved to Strood in Kent and taught at The Mathematical School in Rochester. She died in Kent on 26th March 1922, leaving £461 to Lillie, now a widow.

Over half of Uppingham High School's known pupils can be traced over the next twenty years. Of the boys, Charles Watson, Edrie Wauton, Harold Wauton and Reginald Wordsworth became soldiers and served in Canada, Nigeria, India and Ceylon respectively. Cecily Haslam, Sophia Haslam, Algernon Wauton and Gertrude Rossiter chose teaching, the last becoming headmistress at Beverley High School, and Caroline David's husband was appointed headmaster of Giggleswick School. Mary Southwell and Frances Stephenson married farmers. Willie Wordsworth and Robert Lightfoot took Holy Orders, Minnie Perkins married a Baptist Minister, and Mary Hodgkinson became a Sister of Mercy, a Church of England order, serving the poor and destitute in Haggerston, East London.

Two mature students also took advantage of Uppingham High School, enrolling as private pupils of Mary Beisiegel. Ethel Perry was the niece of Walter Perry, the bachelor housemaster at Fir Croft (today Fircroft) on the London Road, and his sisters Edith and Caroline. In 1911 she was also a Sister of Mercy, serving alongside her aunt Caroline in Truro, Cornwall.

The second mature student brings us back to the

beginning of the history of Uppingham High School, for it is Thring's youngest daughter, Grace: she enrolled as a private pupil in January 1888. Her mother had been persuaded by Frances Buss and Dorothea Beale to allow Grace to study with Mary, to try for a place at university, and eventually to teach. The two headmistresses had enlisted two powerful allies to assist Grace's cause: Miss Anne Clough, the Principal at Newnham and Miss Elizabeth Wordsworth, the Principal at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Grace decided to follow in her father's footsteps, and opted for Cambridge. She won her coveted place and went up in October 1889.

Edward Thring's national, even international, legacy is seen in his insistence that every child is entitled to a broad and balanced education that matches his or her needs; teachers echo his call that it is they and not governments who should decide what is taught in schools; he is remembered for founding the Headmasters' Conference and championing female education; local history recalls his role as Uppingham School's 'second founder' and as the general who moved his school to Wales to escape typhoid in the town; and then there are the many school firsts – including first gymnasium, first indoor swimming pool, first mission to the poor, and first school to give music a prominent role. Adding to the many 'ifs' in history: if Thring had lived a few more years and if he had been able to give Mary Beisiegel more support, there might have been one more to add to the list of his achievements. Uppingham would have joined the ranks of Bedford, Cheltenham, Malvern, Sherborne, Stamford and more as home to two famous schools, one for boys and one for girls, and not just one.

## Acknowledgements

The author thanks the following for their help with the research for this essay: Paulette Burkill, Secretary of the Handsworth Historical Society; Robert Clayton, Head of Culture and Registration, Rutland County Council; Camilla English, great-niece of Mary Beisiegel; Robert Fisher, Senior Archivist, Government of Canada; Sarah Forsyth, formerly of Sunny Bank, Uppingham; Anne George, Archivist at the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham; John Hodgkinson, great-nephew of Mary

Hodgkinson; Peter Lane, Uppingham Local History Study Group; Sarah Mahoney, Alumni Relations Manager, Stamford High School; Brian Moseley, Plymouth historian; Nigel Richardson, Thring's biographer; Rachel Roberts, Archivist at Cheltenham Ladies' College; Jerry Rudman, Archivist at Uppingham School; Anne Thompson, Archivist at Newnham College; Patricia White, Plymouth and West Devon Record Office; and Jayne Williams, Local Studies Expert, Rutland County Museum.

## A Request

The author has been unable to find a single photograph of Uppingham High School's pupils, teachers or facilities. It is likely that photographs were taken at the annual Speech Day – and somewhere there must be photographs of groups of girls dressed in white, perhaps seated on a stage, or contributing to the entertainment, or receiving prizes. If

readers have family albums dating from 1888 to 1893, do please check. William Stocks, the Uppingham commercial photographer, was active in this period and may have been commissioned to record these occasions but, so Hilary Crowden advises, all his negatives were destroyed long ago.

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*Deacon's Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire Court Guide and County Blue Book*, 1890.  
*Digest of Parochial Returns made to the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the Education of the Poor*,

House of Commons, Session 1818, 2 (London 1819).  
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# Rutland History & Archaeology in 2017

Edited by T H MCK CLOUGH

The Editor is especially grateful for Michael Hinman for soliciting and gathering in the reports for this section, and to all those who have provided information. Organisations whose work in Rutland is not reported here are invited to contact the Society so that it may be considered for inclusion.

The following abbreviations are used, especially in sections I and II:

Allen	Allen Archaeology, Whisby Lodge, Hillcroft Business Park, Whisby Road, Lincoln, LN6 3QL	LN1 2HX
APS	Archaeological Project Services, The Old School, Cameron St, Heckington, Sleaford NG34 9RW	PAS Portable Antiquities Scheme
HER	Historic Environment Record	RLHRS Rutland Local History & Record Society
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund	ROLLR Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland
MOLA	Museum of London Archaeology, Bolton House, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton, NN4 8BN	RR <i>Rutland Record</i>
PCAS	PCAS Archaeology, 47 Manor Road, Saxilby, Lincoln,	ULAS University of Leicester Archaeological Services, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH
		Witham Witham Archaeology, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9DT

## I – Archaeological Fieldwork and Discoveries during 2017

### Short reports, arranged in alphabetical order by parish

*Note: Where appropriate, archives are expected to be deposited with Rutland County Museum under the accession number shown.*

#### Great Casterton, Pickworth Road (SK 99953 09244)

Human remains were uncovered during a conservatory extension by the developer on land at Pickworth Road. The police were informed and a bone fragment was sent off for radiocarbon dating; this gave a late Roman date for the burial.

An archaeological watching brief was subsequently undertaken by MOLA in September 2015 and this showed it was an isolated burial. It was a male adult with a pair of iron fetters secured with a lock fastened around his ankles, an extremely rare feature. Iron hobnails were present around the feet of the individual. Some sherds of 4th century Roman period pottery and fragments of animal bone were also recovered. The individual appeared to have been buried in a ditch, though restrictions on the limit of excavation and some modern truncation precluded any certainty on the method of burial. OAKRM 2015.12.

*Tim Sharman*

#### Ketton Quarry (Ketton Gorse: SK 96379 05236; Field 19W: SK 96251 05240)

Archaeological investigations were undertaken by MOLA during 2017 on land N of Empingham Road, at Ketton Quarry. These comprised a geoarchaeological assessment of surface depressions within Ketton Gorse and a watching brief of Field 19W.

Within Ketton Gorse test pits were excavated in February in two c30m sub-circular depressions (c1–2m deep) mapped by LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) survey, which were aligned along a major north-east to south-west fault in the limestone. These conical hollows, suspected solution hollows or sinkholes, have poorly understood formation and infilling history. The excavated hollows contained *in situ* undisturbed natural bedrock with no indication of human activity (such as quarrying) or sediment with environmental potential that relate to archaeological time periods.

The watching brief during September and October revealed the remains of up to eleven iron smelting furnaces, as well as a ditch and three unrelated pits. The smelting furnaces were located within an area of clay, distinct from the limestone to the west and north. They were all aligned in different directions and were arranged in no particular order or pattern. All were however, sited on the east side of a narrow boundary ditch, which demarcated the area of clay from the start of the limestone to the west. Two abraded pottery sherds of Roman date were recovered from the ditch.

Seven of the furnaces were similar in appearance, sub-rectangular in plan with bulbous ends. One end retained the scorched clay formed whilst the furnace was in use and all contained burnt material, charcoal and slag. Throughout the clay were scatters of ironstone nodules, which may be the raw material used in the furnaces. A further four possible furnaces were excavated, but these were very shallow. No dateable material was recovered from the furnaces or pits, but there is the potential to achieve a date for final use through C14 analysis of charcoal.

*Chris Jones, Mary Ruddy and Mo Muldowney*

#### Ridlington, Rowell's Lodge (SK 855024)

Two fields by Rowell's Lodge yielded a Middle Palaeolithic 'Levallois point' (?), heavily patinated Upper Palaeolithic (?) 'crested blades' and other pieces, plus Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, scrapers, knives, arrows and cores – all awaiting specialist identification and confirmation.

Roman pottery was found near the Iron Age/Roman site excavated in 1996 along the water pipeline easement. Medieval potsherds showed that these fields were probably within the Ridlington commons and not the enveloping Royal Forest of Rutland. The quantity of iron slag with iron-ore stone was a dominant feature across the field and could relate to the nearby Roman iron smelting kilns previously recorded.



Fig. 1. Aerial photograph of cropmarks at Ridlington in June 2011 (© Leicestershire County Council).

An aerial photo of these fields taken in June 2011 shows this dark band going E–W across the field, as well as crop marks of a Roman enclosure, and a line of parallel ditches running NE–SW across the field.

Previous archaeological results on these fields are recorded in the Leicestershire HER. This résumé is the result of an archaeological field walking survey by the RLHRS Archaeological Team during the winter of 2017–18. It is a continuation of the survey of the adjacent ‘100 Acres’ at SK 850020 published in *RR37* (2017), 326 (RLHRS Archaeological Team unpublished archive report R141 & R142).

Elaine Jones

#### Ridlington, Hollygate Road (SK 840027)

A field walking survey N of the Hollygate Road on the ridge way W of Ridlington was undertaken over the winter of 2016–17 by the RLHRS Archaeological Team. The field lies along the ridge way of the Northampton Sand at c160m OD and slopes northwards down over the Upper Lias Clay (Whitby Mudstone)

to c130m OD in the Chater valley. Ridlington’s Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) lay to the E of the area and is thought to be a Bronze Age or Iron Age enclosure. At the western end lies glacial till which appears to be the fill of a glacial overflow or outwash channel.

Surface finds in this field were sparse but flint, pottery and iron slag were found. Flint ‘blades’ and ‘flakes’ were recovered mainly up on the porous sandstone ridge. There seemed to be two distinct scatters, one at the east end near the SAM and a second at the west end of the field. Of the eight pieces of Roman and Iron Age pottery found, most were up near the road and associated with iron slag. The presence of medieval pottery on the ridge with very little on the lower clay slopes suggests that the upland was within the field system of Ridlington manor. A concentration of iron slag, possibly a smelting site, lay down in the valley on clay-land at the west end of the area – after our survey had finished a large fresh chunk of Roman mortarium emerged nearby!

We had hoped to elucidate more of the ‘mystery’ of the SAM earthwork but have to be content with the flint material we recovered from the plough soil.

Elaine Jones

#### Uppingham, land at Leicester Road (SK 8586 0019)

A detailed magnetic gradiometer survey was undertaken by APS for Matrix Planning Ltd in connection with proposed development on land at Leicester Road. The survey area totalled c7.2ha. The survey was undertaken between 12th and 19th June 2017.

The site has strong archaeological potential, mostly emphasised by the suspected round barrows in area 1. There are also multiple linear features that could be former boundaries and pits. One such double-ditched boundary has previously been mapped from aerial photographs.

Most of the site has clear agricultural anomalies, indicating that the site will show many of the potential features present.

Sean Parker

#### Negative archaeological watching briefs and evaluations in Rutland

**Empingham:** Land at Bayleys Close (SK 9518 0885) (PCAS)

**Greetham:** Greetham Garden Centre, Oakham Road (SK 9210 1443) (Allen)

#### Artefacts recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme

2018 marks our 15th anniversary as a national scheme (although we actually started work in 1997). To celebrate this we have a social media campaign #PAS15 and have set up an Instagram account which highlights our important discoveries and promotes our work.

#### Objects recorded in Rutland

In 2017 308 records containing 391 objects were recorded for the County of Rutland. The largest proportion of these were Roman at 127 records, then Medieval at 84.

#### Late Bronze Age sword fragment, Whissendine (LEIC-90D6B3)

This highly unusual object fragment was originally recorded back in late 2016 (Scott 2016, 278). Research by the British Museums Bronze Age Curator, Dr Neil Wilkin, has confirmed that it is part of a rare solid-hilted sword. It is decorated to ape the more usual organic two-piece hilts, having ‘fake’ rivet holes which would hold the two parts together. Dating to 950–

800BC, it belongs to a small group of British swords including a recent discovery from Cherry Burton, Yorkshire (YORYM-958D05). This type of sword has parallels in continental Europe (cf. von Quillfeldt 1995). I am delighted to announce that the finder has donated this item to Rutland County Museum (OAKRM 2018.21).

Scott, W, Artefacts recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Rutland, *RR 36* (2016), 277–8.

von Quillfeldt, I, *Die Vollgriffschwerter in Süddeutschland: Prähistorische Bronzefunde 4.11* (Stuttgart, 1995):

#### Group of Roman material, Leighfield parish

An interesting group of objects, found in association with a coin hoard, probably suggests industrial activity. The hoard (LEIC-FF9BCD, see below) consisted of 18 extremely worn copper alloy sestertii dating from AD 138 to 268. Dr Eleanor Ghey notes that this time range is wide but that ‘second century sestertii are known to have circulated alongside third century ones and it has been suggested that such hoards were





Fig. 2. Roman ?knife handle figurine from Leighfield (Leicestershire County Council, CC licence CCBy2.0).

also recycled to produce copies of third century radiates’.

Weight is added to this theory by the other material found in the area. LEIC-09128C, a Roman figurine – probably a knife handle – is of interest in itself, but its worn condition should be noted (fig. 2). Alongside this were items such as a drawer handle (LEIC-FD500C), an incomplete late Iron Age harness fitting (LEIC-FD99C4) and possible attempts at coin flans (see LEIC-FDE135). The finder has previously recorded a large amount of lead and probable Roman ironwork from the wider area (see LEIC-45A00F), all of which suggests a metal working site. As well as recycling they were probably producing, amongst other things, counterfeit coins known as ‘barbarous radiates’. Also found on site were a scatter of radiate coins and later nummi, again in poor condition. These could be casual losses or again may have been collected for recycling (LEIC-CB5EE0).

### Treasure cases 2017

This year has seen a marked increase in the number of cases from the county, with six reported to four Finds Liaison Officers.

#### Leighfield parish (LEIC-FF9BCD, 2017T540)

The above-mentioned Roman hoard of 18 sesterii, found in association with a large scatter of other Roman artefacts.

#### Little Casterton parish (CAM-953A1E 2017T407)



Fig. 3. Roman gold ring from Little Casterton (Leics CC, CCBy2.0).

This Early Roman gold ring (fig. 3) has a design of a corn ear or feather. Dr Eleanor Ghey comments that it ‘recalls the leaf-shaped votive plaques found on temple sites in Britain and the Continent, sometimes embellished with scrolling motifs. It is uncertain what the additional flanking elements in this design

represent. They may represent corn-ears or birds, or the whole may possibly evoke the crown of Isis (usually shown as a feather or feathers on a disc with horns, sometimes accompanied by corn-ears, cf British Museum 1814,0704.1477 and 1923,0401.40).

#### Late Medieval coin hoard, Lyddington

(NARC-24267F, 2017T822)

The hoard contains an English gold angel and silver issues such as groats and pennies dating from 1422 to 1534. It also has an unusual gold ‘Bolognino’ or Papal Ducat, generally attributed to Pope Clemente VII of Bologna (1478–1534). This coin is an extremely unusual thing to find in an English hoard and is so far the only example recorded nationally by the PAS.

#### Uppingham parish (LIN-266872, 2017T780)

Medieval gold finger ring fragment in poor condition. The ring dates to c1200–1500 and is possibly of the stirrup type, with cast and filigree decoration.

#### Whissendine parish (LEIC-F4014B, 2017T417)

A fragment of a Roman silver intaglio finger ring was found just inside the county. Its fragmentary state would be of no interest and would suggest it was scrap metal, had it not been found in the same field as the denarius below.

#### Whissendine parish (LEIC-F34F86, 2017TT475)



Fig. 4. Denarius of L Trebanius from Whissendine (Leics CC, CCBy2.0).

This Republican denarius was minted by L Trebanius around 135BC. Apart from its age this coin is of interest as it has been pierced through its centre. This is probably to allow it to be nailed to a temple wall. We are seeing increasing evidence of this practice across Roman England and also fragments of precious metal jewellery and military dress fittings are being deposited as offerings. So together with the finger ring above, this coin provides useful evidence of religious activity at the Roman site in this area (see HER entry MLE5888, [https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=MLE5888&resourceID=1021](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MLE5888&resourceID=1021)) (fig. 4).

#### Whissendine (ESS-5ECCA2 2016T592)



Fig. 5. Bronze Age gold ring from Whissendine (Leics CC, CCBy2.0).

This wonderful late Bronze Age ridged penannular gold ring, (fig. 5) dating to 1150–800BC, has now been acquired by Rutland County Museum (OAKRM 2018.16). Its crisp decoration makes it one of the best found in a number of years.

Wendy Scott, Finds Liaison Officer for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland

## II – Historic Building Recording during 2017

### **Dovecote at Prebendal House, Empingham (SK951085)**

This building stands amongst a range of outbuildings at the Old Prebendal House. The prebendal manor here was given to the Bishop of Lincoln by Henry I in the early twelfth century. The small rectangular building was constructed as a dovecote during the 17th century, though probably rather later than the re-set date-stone of 1619 over the current doorway. Inside, it preserves an almost complete set of nesting boxes to the four walls, and an original A-frame roof structure of clasped purlin type.

The building contains some earlier features in its north wall: three stepped buttresses and the splayed jamb of a blocked window. The earliest buttress, a high-status feature with a moulded string course, appears to be of mid- or late-thirteenth century date, with the other two buttresses of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The building has previously been held to have been a chapel, prior to conversion to a dovecote. However, no such chapel is noted in any of the documentary sources (including the *Victoria County History* of 1935), so the only reference located is the 1st edition OS map of 1886, where it is noted as a disused chapel. As none of the early features indicates use as a chapel, and documentary evidence is absent, it seems this identification by the Ordnance Survey was an error.

Rather than being a chapel, the medieval remains in the north wall are thought to be a surviving fragment of the medieval prebendal house which stood on this site. Very few domestic buildings of this early date remain in Rutland, making this an important survival. The unusual date-stone of 1619 suggests a phase of major work may have been undertaken to the original prebendal house, before it was comprehensively replaced by the current house in 1680-1700.

*Nick Hill with Robert Ovens*

### **Hudson's Cottage, 29 Melton Road, Oakham (SK858089)**

This building is a small house which dates from around the

mid-18th century, with stone rubble walling and a roughly-carpenentered roof structure, covered in thatch. The main central room originally had an inglenook fireplace, but this was replaced in brick in the 19th century. A cross-passage runs across the back of the fireplace, though there has been some alteration to the rear doorway. All the features of the house are consistent with an 18th century date, with no evidence for any work of the 17th century. It seems that there is therefore no direct connection between the existing building and Jeffrey Hudson, Rutland's famous dwarf, who died in 1682. If there is truth in the tradition that Jeffrey Hudson lived here, this must have been in a previous building on the site.

Michael Hinman (a member of RLHRS and a retired archivist) comments as follows on a number of deeds relating to this property and held by the last owners' successor in title, who kindly made them available for study. These were typical manorial title deeds for admission to and surrender of property and dated from 1765 to 1877. The main run of six deeds examined (1765-1877) is for a cottage 'at the eastern end of the Callis' which was owned by the Pitts family throughout that time. A second run (1824-54) is for property in what the 1854 deed describes as the Callis *alias* Gaol Lane, then called Melton Road. A third run (1827-61) is for a cottage on the Callis at the back of the 'Crown' inn. Even the earliest of these documents dates from 146 years after Jeffery Hudson's birth, but it does tally with Nick Hill's estimate of the age of the extant cottage. One of the original deeds allegedly is endorsed with a number in the low twenties, which suggests that there were earlier documents which related to the same site. However, it is difficult to reconcile these deeds to individual properties and thus to identify the exact location of the Callis (a name which also appears in the 1623 Oakham survey, ROLLR DG40/456).

*Nick Hill, Robert Ovens and Michael Hinman*

### **Other building surveys undertaken in 2017**

**Teigh:** Teigh Lodge Farm (SK 8569 1626) (Witham Archaeology)

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## III – Archive, Museum and Society Reports for 2016

*Note: Records under 100 years old containing personal information may be subject to access restrictions.*

*Please contact the appropriate Record Office for further information on opening times or advice on specific items or collections.*

### **Lincolnshire Archives**

Lincolnshire Archives, St Rumbold Street, Lincoln, LN2 5AB.

Tel: (01522) 782040. Fax: (01522) 530047.

Website: [www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/archives](http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/archives).

E-mail: [lincolnshire.archives@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:lincolnshire.archives@lincolnshire.gov.uk).

Opening times: Tues-Sat: 10am to 4pm; closed on bank holidays and at Christmas and New Year.

Latest time for requesting original documents on the same day is 1½ hours before closing time or 12 noon on Saturdays.

No new accessions relating to Rutland were acquired during 2017-18.

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### **Northamptonshire Record Office**

Northamptonshire Record Office, Wootton Hall Park,

Northampton, NN4 8BQ.

Tel: (01604) 362513.

Website: [www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/heritage](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/heritage).

E-mail: [archivist@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:archivist@northamptonshire.gov.uk).

Opening times: Tues-Thurs: 9am to 1pm, 2pm to 5pm.

No new accessions relating to Rutland were acquired during 2017-18.

## Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland

Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland,  
Long Street, Wigston Magna LE18 2AH.  
Tel: (0116) 257 1080. Fax: (0116) 257 1120.  
Website: [www.leics.gov.uk/recordoffice](http://www.leics.gov.uk/recordoffice).

This has been an important year for the Record Office. The Record Office celebrated its seventieth birthday, recalling the establishment of a separate County Record Office in 1947 at the County Offices in Greyfriars in Leicester. In 1956, it moved to 57 New Walk. City and County services were amalgamated in 1974 and the reorganisation of local government also allowed the office to assume formal responsibility for Rutland's archives. Storage constraints led to the decision to move to the present building in Wigston Magna in 1992/3. Plans are currently being developed for a new Collections Hub which will bring the county's heritage services together, rationalise storage, provide a more cohesive public service, and provide a modern facility for the future.

The Record Office also achieved Accredited Status after a long campaign of careful preparation, with review and improvement of procedures and practices. The National Archives accreditation award is the standard for places licensed to hold public records – these are national records created locally such as those relating to coroners, hospitals and courts. Services applying for the award need to be proficient in three areas: organisational health and sustainability, collections management and access. Successful services are awarded the accreditation 'badge of quality' which guarantees they are well-managed and provide public access to their rich and varied collections. Accreditation is, in effect, an MOT test for the archive except that in addition to having to prove 'road-worthiness', the Record Office has to be fit for purpose not only in its buildings and equipment but also in its procedures and approach. The accreditation award lasts for up to six years and services will be asked to reapply after three. It provides a solid foundation for future planning and partnership working as well as increasing public confidence in the service and demonstrating the council's long term commitment to its heritage services. Accreditation also assisted with preparation for the County Council's 'Collections Hub' proposal.

### MDR Project

At the end of this year the Record Office began a project, in collaboration with the National Archives, to update and put 'on-line' the Manorial Documents registers for Leicestershire and Rutland. The project, funded largely by the National Archives, will employ a *Manorial Documents Project Officer* to carry out the work and promote use of the records thus revealed. This will create and make widely and freely available a valuable resource of important records for Rutland, many extending the range of local historians into the mediaeval period. The intention is to create an exhaustive and up-to-date catalogue of Rutland's manorial records wherever they are to be found; this will involve much detective work, hunting down and checking references throughout the country. The project is also intended to familiarise Record Office users with a class of records which is so often either neglected or considered too 'problematical' for use by unskilled researchers.

### Statistics

A percentage figure has also been given of the total number of visitors, enquiries etc. from all three component authorities served by the Record Office (Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland) for the purposes of comparison. The figures from

Email: [recordoffice@leics.gov.uk](mailto:recordoffice@leics.gov.uk).

Opening times:

Mon, Tues, Thurs: 9.15am to 5pm; Wed: 9.15am to 7.30pm (6pm December & January); Sat: 9.15am to 12.15pm.

last year are also given in brackets.

Rutland visitors: 448 (372) being 7% of 6190 visitors solely to the searchroom (3% last year).

Documents produced in the searchroom: 1649 (last year 1597) being 6% of whole (5.7% last year).

Enquiries by telephone: 86 (90) of 4284 being 2% (2.3% last year).

Enquiries by post: 93 (131) being 2% (2.8%) of the whole.

It is important to remember that many enquiries do not fit into geographical categories so many other 'Rutland records' will have been used by visitors and people from all over the globe through our online services.

### Outreach

Much work was done this year in preparation for a new (micro-)website for the Record Office. A website designer was appointed and it is hoped that a new on-line presence will be 'unveiled' soon. We have been developing our social media presence and a tweet on the marriage of a deaf and dumb couple, performed using 'sign language' in Leicester in 1576, garnered over 300,000 Twitter impressions.

Our Great War commemoration continued with a re-enactment of the court martial of Private Ernest Alfred Beaumont from the 2nd battalion the Leicestershire Regiment who was executed for desertion in June 1915. This was performed at the Record Office and at the *Military History Live* event in Leicester. We also held events and exhibitions on the Base Hospital, 1917 Remembered, and our traditional *Christmas in the Trenches*.

We have already mentioned our 70th birthday which we commemorated with an open day party, complete with a cake, balloons and 1947-style food. The spam sandwiches were very popular and we understand the local Sainsbury's sold out soon afterwards!

A great deal of project work with community groups was also undertaken in the year. This included working with the Centre for Indian Classical Dance on their 25th anniversary, a project on Leicester's Diwali celebrations and work with several schools.

### Records received

It was common, a few years ago, to hear predictions of the gradual diminution, possibly almost to nothing, of archival deposits on paper or parchment as digital superseded older media and few if any hoards of more traditional records remained to be discovered, let alone created. Thankfully, such (probably wishful) thinking has not proved to be the case, at least as far as Rutland is concerned. Indeed, if anything, the last few years show an increase in the number and variety of deposits to the county's record office.

This year we received no fewer than eighteen, out of a total of 260 deposits. Though this is an unusually high number, the previous two years' figures being fifteen and eleven respectively, the high overall total means that the percentage of Rutland deposits remains fairly constant.

In terms of 'quality', or significance, neither of which terms is entirely satisfactory (reflecting too great a degree of personal choice) this year's archival harvest shows no weakness either. It would always be hard to compete with the



wealth of material received from the County Council last year but the arrival of the 1945-1999 electoral registers (DE9353) was undoubtedly a red-letter day in the Rutland researcher's calendar, as it plugged an irritating and long endured gap.

While many of the other deposits were of the familiar parish or parish council type, or of society records – such as the Wing Women's Institute (DE9405) or Rutland Three Arts Society (DE9583) – several were of a distinctly eccentric type. The small scrapbook of heraldic seals and letter heads, for example, although attractive in appearance and broad in coverage, only just scraped through the portals of our Collections Policy by virtue of its creator, Letitia Koelle, the wife of Captain Robert Noel.

Less frivolous and historically more valuable were the architectural drawings of Stretton church (DE9397), the copy of the Uppingham Enclosure map of 1804 included in DE9413, and three related deposits of Wing family correspondence and photographs (DE9428, DE9434, and DE9437).

#### **Rutland records received:**

- DE9353: Rutland Registers of Electors 1945–99.  
DE9355: Barrow Parish Meeting (Rutland): Parish Meeting papers, including financial statements, etc., 1953–61; and Precept upon Rating Authority for expenses (counterfoils), 1948–1958.  
DE9356: Langham Parish Council records: Financial records, including: bank books, 1896–1953 (3); financial statements, 1938; and cheque book (counterfoils) 1934–36.  
DE9357: Gunthorpe Parish Council records: Minutes and accounts, 1911–74.  
DE9360: Oakham United Charities records: Charity commissioners Report, 1815–39; Oakham Parish Council correspondence, 1895–1903; Trustees' minutes, 1920–58 and Receipt Book, 1954–70.  
DE9361: Rutland District Council and Rutland County Council records: District Council Ad-hoc Co-ordinating Committee minutes, 1973; Attendance Register, 1983–87; Councillors' Disclosures and Notices of Interest, 1945–68; Register of Tenders for Council Contracts, 1984–89; Terrier of Property Purchased, 1965–73, Register of Deeds, 1962–74; and scrapbook of newspaper cuttings, 1960–68.  
DE9386: Share certificates and associated correspondence re share transactions of Charles P Selby-Bigge of The Limes, Oakham and 29 Rutland Gate, London, land agent, including share certificates for the Van Mining Company Ltd and Roman Gravels Mining Company Ltd., 1875–89.  
DE9395: 'Repertoire Héraldique': scrapbook of heraldic paper seals and letter heads, including autographs and related heraldic items, collected by Letitia Louisa Carmela Koelle, wife of Captain Robert Lascelles Gambier Noel [grandson of Sir Gerard Noel Noel, 2nd Bt., of Exton]. With notes on the provenance of the volume and family history of the compiler. Includes royal, military, naval, church, university or foreign

diplomatic seals, letter heads etc., c1860s–1900s.

- DE9397: Architectural drawings of Stretton Parish Church: Plans, elevations and details by Marshall Sisson, architect, of Hemingford Grey, Cambridgeshire for St Nicholas, Stretton, vicar and P.C.C., 2011–14.  
DE9405: Wing Women's Institute records: Committee Minutes, 1926–2005 (6 vols); Monthly meetings, 1932–2005; Secretary's files, 2006–16; Registers, 1928–55.  
DE9413: Court roll index and copy enclosure map for Uppingham: 1: Card index of personal names mentioned in the court rolls of the Manor of Preston with Uppingham, 1900; 2: Copy (tracing on linen) of the 1804 Uppingham enclosure map made by C E Manton, solicitor, in 1900 (includes field names, acreages, occupiers).  
DE9428: Records of the Wing family of N Luffenham and Market Overton, 1860s–1961.  
DE9434: Correspondence of the Wing, Sladen and Burnett families of N Luffenham and Market Overton, Rutland, 1860s–1920s.  
DE9437: Wing and related family photographs, of N Luffenham, Market Overton, &c: Photographs of: Market Overton, 1880s–1960s; miscellaneous Wing family relations; Henry Wing (b1830); Henry Wing, (b1867); 2nd Lt V S Wing (RFA, killed in action 1917); John Sladen Wing, b1862 (c1880s–1930s); Wansford; Revs C & W Wing; Tycho Wing; Halcyon S Wing, 1899–1930; Major Sydney Burnett RA; William Hinman Wing, b1859; Wm (b1825) & Julia Wing & family.  
DE9495: Exton and Horn Parish Council records: records including deeds, 1973–99; minutes, 1915–96, receipts, 1896–1952; map 1962 (of road alterations); etc.  
DE9541: Rutland Three Art Society records: Chairman's papers; incl. minutes, accounts, correspondence, promotional material, membership & attendance records, etc. 1946–2017.  
DE9583: Lyndon parish records (additional): Register of Services, 1983–2017.  
DE9586: Ketton public footpath E229, temporary diversion order public enquiry papers, 2006.

#### **Conservation**

One hundred and forty-nine Rutland items received the attention of the Record Office conservator this year, representing approximately 16% of the annual work of the studio. In addition to items specifically identified as from Rutland, or with a Rutland connection, the conservation studio (meaning both the conservator and conservation volunteer) produced a large number of acid-free card folders and carried out many routine procedures involving Rutland items amongst others.

#### **Repaired items**

- DE9353: Rutland registers of electors 1946–1990 (57 folders).  
DE6137: National Farmers Union (5 items).  
DE6262: WW1 photograph (1 item).  
DE3249/2: Abstract of Duke of Rutland estates title (86pp).

*Jenny Moran & Robin P Jenkins, Senior Archivists*

### **University of Leicester Library Special Collections**

University of Leicester Library, PO Box 248, University Road, Leicester, LE1 9QD  
Tel: 0116 252 2056.

No new accessions relating to Rutland were acquired during 2017–18.

Website: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/find/specialcollections>.  
E-mail: [specialcollections@le.ac.uk](mailto:specialcollections@le.ac.uk).

Opening times: Mon to Fri 9am to 6pm.

### **University of Nottingham Manuscripts & Special Collections**

King's Meadow Campus, Lenton Lane, Nottingham, NG7 2NR.  
Tel: (0115) 9514565 Fax: (0115) 8468651  
Website: [www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/mss).

E-mail [mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:mss-library@nottingham.ac.uk).

Opening times: Mon to Thurs 9am to 6pm, Fri 9am to 5pm.

No new accessions relating to Rutland were acquired during 2017–18.

### Belton History Society

Website: [beltoninrutland.co.uk](http://beltoninrutland.co.uk)

Generally speaking it has been a quiet year for the society with regard to its public profile within the village but as outlined below much hard work has been carried out investigating and recording aspects of Belton's history. We are a small society with just 14 members.

First, however, mention must be made of the untimely passing of one of our founder members, Philip Walker, who, together with Audrey, was largely responsible for the production of all the Society's journals. His expertise in design and layout will be difficult to replicate and we all miss his enthusiasm and friendship.

Behind the scenes numerous documents relating to Belton and adjoining parishes have been located and photographed, and are steadily being transcribed. All census returns have been completed and Belton parish registers, from the late 16th century onwards, are nearing completion. Consequently all

Contact: [secretary@beltonhistorysociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@beltonhistorysociety.org.uk)

Belton's baptisms, marriages and burials will be readily available to researchers fairly soon.

Many other documents have been photographed at archives in Leicester, Northampton and Lincoln including wills, probate inventories, land terriers, title deeds, leases, rentals, newspaper articles, advertisements and land tax returns. Copies of documents at the National Archives, Kew have also been obtained. The Society is deeply indebted to Liz Gregory for the untold number of hours she has put into this aspect of the Society's work.

We also hope to add field-walking to the Society's activities and our new member, Pene Rowe, should be contacted by anyone interested in taking part. It is anticipated that field-walking may provide information about the 'lost settlement' of Ashgate located towards the western side of Belton parish.

*Ian Broughton, Chairman*

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### Cottesmore History and Archaeological Club

Website: [thelivingvillage.co.uk](http://thelivingvillage.co.uk)

The Society has been going for some ten years, noting the listed buildings. Our first project was the 'Cottesmore Round', a leaflet describing a tour which highlighted the village's listed buildings. Our second project, which was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, was about how the village grew during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Our last project, called 'How old is Cottesmore?', is an in-depth analysis of some of the houses in the village, including

their social and economic history. The project, also funded by the HLF, included a dendrochronological study giving us a more accurate idea as to when the structures were built. The result of this study was a book, *How Old is Cottesmore?*, plus a video of the same name. Currently we are in the process of producing a printed version of an oral history of the village that should be available next year.

*Ron Dane*

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### Langham Village History Group

Website & contact: [www.langhaminrutland.org.uk](http://www.langhaminrutland.org.uk)

With no major research project being undertaken during 2017, members continued to pursue their individual areas of interest relating to Langham's past. This invariably necessitated visiting various Record Offices, so it was of great concern to learn of the restrictions on opening hours introduced by Northampton Record Office and we added our voice to the many protests. Dealings with the Record Office for Stafford and Staffordshire proved to be a happier experience when two group members visited, and digitally photographed, Manorial Court Rolls relating to Oakham, Langham and Eggleton dating from 1396/1503.

During the year there have been more visitors, from this country and abroad, seeking family history information. Some are alerted by our website and make arrangements to visit in advance, whilst others are simply found wandering around the churchyard and are pointed in our direction. Members of one family, the Ives from USA, are regularly in contact and many have paid a visit here. They are always delighted to be able to

identify, from a 1624 map, 'The way to Thomas Ives plot'.

We were pleased to be able to re-use material originally exhibited at Rutland County Museum, depicting Life in Langham from 1914–19, in Langham Church for Remembrance weekend.

We continue to collect relevant reports from newspaper archives and regularly receive photographs to add to our ever-growing collection. These are always a source of interest (and often humour) at our meetings.

We are often called upon to assist the Parish and County Councils with queries regarding planning matters and it is good to know that our researches over the years are helpful in this way.

Having signed up to take part in the Parish Boundary Project, maps from 1835 to the present day have been acquired and work is in progress. It is also planned to publish a new booklet entitled 'Mills and Millers of Langham'.

*Gillian V Frisby, Secretary*

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### Lyddington Manor History Society

Website: [www.lyddingtonhistory.org.uk](http://www.lyddingtonhistory.org.uk)

Contact: [info@lyddingtonhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@lyddingtonhistory.org.uk)

Our book entitled *Buildings and People of a Rutland Manor*, launched in 2016, has almost sold out – seven hundred and fifty copies were printed. Reviews have been most favourable: in the *Local Historian* it was described as a seminal work, an

Talks are usually held on the first Wednesday of each month, at 7.30 pm in Lyddington Village Hall unless otherwise stated.

example for others to aspire to!

As Chairman of the Society, I gave talks in Market Harborough and Kettering last year. I have since spoken in Uppingham and West Deeping. Nick Hill, who led the buildings

survey team, has also spoken at Market Harborough and at conferences on vernacular architecture.

Membership numbers have been maintained at over 50 and our monthly meetings are well attended. The subjects of these meetings cover a very wide range of historical subjects and I am most grateful to the many eminent people who have given of their time to come to Lyddington. A full programme of events has been arranged for 2018 and speakers are already being booked for 2019.

During the year, I have continued to work on house histories, completing another twelve on buildings in Lyddington. Folders containing copies of all relevant court rolls, maps, photographs and other information have been given to individual house owners. Summaries of these are due to be published on our website, which already contains many structural surveys, transcriptions of wills, and copies of documents from the Exeter Archive at Burghley House, all publicly available.

In September last year Dr Charlotte Newman, the Collections Curator of Heritage England and Dr Katherine Fenelly, an archaeologist at the University of Lincoln, undertook a resistivity survey of the Bedehouse garden. Because of

internal re-organisations taking place within Heritage England, their suggestion to undertake an archaeological project in which a number of small pits would be dug under supervision on sites in the village has sadly, had to wait, as has analysis of the resistivity results.

In November last year, I was asked by Steve King to present a challenge to some first-year historians at the University of Leicester, as part of their 'History in the Community' module. A group of enthusiastic students gave us suggestions for improving our website, our brochures and our posters. Some of their recommendations have already been implemented but I have yet to tackle the website and drag myself into the Social Media universe! Our planned study of the parish is taking shape; copies of church wardens' accounts have been circulated for transcription and Robert Ovens has been trawling through back copies of newspapers for references to happenings in the Manor. We plan to use these, with other local records, to explore local provisions for the poor in the manor.

To conclude, the Committee joins me in thanking everyone who has helped. It has been a great privilege to serve as Chairman of this Society in 2017-18.

*R M Canadine, Chairman*

## **Rutland County Museums Service & Local Studies Library**

Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW.  
Tel: (01572) 758440. Fax: (01572) 758445.  
Websites: [www.rutland.gov.uk/museum](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/museum); .../familyhistory, .../castle.

Oakham Library, Catmose Street, Oakham, LE15 6HW.  
Tel: (01572) 722918. Fax: (01572) 724906.  
Website: [www.rutland.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/libraries).

E-mail: [museum@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:museum@rutland.gov.uk); [history@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:history@rutland.gov.uk).

Opening times:

Rutland County Museum: Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, 10am to 4pm;

Oakham Castle: Mon, Wed-Sat, 10am to 4pm.

Closed at Christmas, New Year and on Good Friday.

Email: [libraries@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:libraries@rutland.gov.uk); [history@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:history@rutland.gov.uk).

Opening times: Mon-Fri: 9.30am to 5pm; Sat: 9.30am to 4pm.

### **Collections**

A collection review of all items on display was carried out last year. This resulted in a list of 138 items being recommended and approved by the Cabinet for removal from the permanent collections. After further consultation we now have a list of 64 items for disposal to other museums where possible, 28 items to be moved into handling and display collections and 46 items which will remain in the collection for future use. Work is now underway to find new suitable homes, where possible keeping them in the public domain.

Work is continuing on the review of the archaeology collections and a much larger review of the museums reserve collections in the main store.

### **Acquisitions**

Notable acquisitions to the Museum have been:

- 2017.27: A seventh century gold filigree disc pendant from Burley. Filigree decoration comprises a central cruciform motif. An item of Treasure and purchased by the Friends of the Museum (Scott 2016, 328, fig. 3).
- 2017.26: An early medieval silver and gilt pyramidal mount found at North Luffenham. An item of Treasure, part donated by the finder and part purchased by the Friends of the Museum (Scott 2016, 328).
- 2018.16: Late Bronze Age ridged penannular gold ring, dating to 1150-800BC. Purchased by the Museum.

Scott, W, Artefacts recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Rutland, *RR* 36 (2016), 277-8.

The museum is not actively collecting due to an ongoing review of the permanent collections.

### **Volunteer projects**

The condition survey undertaken in 2017 by a volunteer and an intern on the Oakham School collection of archaeology is now being updated on the museums catalogue system.

A small group of volunteers from The Arts Society are working their way through a condition survey of the coin collection.

Work continues to ensure our agricultural collections remain in good condition. Display supports have been produced for some of our social history items, and work on the inventory and the review of the reserve collections continues to be supported by volunteers.

Volunteers also help to supervise the holiday workshops and to develop the children's crafts, and undertake research supporting special temporary exhibitions.

### **Displays and Exhibitions**

23rd January – 7th February 2017: Hidden exhibition

Temporary exhibitions were then postponed while Oakham Library shared the museum premises for six months.

14th September – 4th October: RALSS Art and Pottery

14th October – 10th November: Arts for Rutland Youth Open

18th November – 5th January: Arts for Rutland Open (Adult)

20th January – 3th March 2018: Stamford Photographic Society

### **Education and Learning**

The Heritage & Learning Officer has been working with the Rutland branch of RAFA to produce the RAF 100 exhibition at the museum from 17th March – 12th May 2018.

School visits 2017/2018 attracted 1,000 individuals including school group visits to the museum, outreach and loan box users, and a total of 1,845 attended family workshops during the year. Both school and craft workshop figures are again up on the previous year.

#### **Oakham Castle**

2017/18 has seen a continuation of the growth in visitor numbers to the Castle, with 50,092 visits recorded, a rise of 21% on the previous year. Interest has been sustained by a programme of engaging talks and family-orientated events, such as medieval children's crafts, tile making and archery days.

869 school pupils visited the Castle for education sessions, from 23 schools, including early years and special educational needs groups. Twenty outreach sessions were delivered to schools, giving students the opportunity to participate in such activities as shield-making, banner creation, and lessons in witchcraft and wizardry. The feedback for the sessions has been extremely positive, and a brochure promoting the learning opportunities at the Castle has now been produced.

Among the major events delivered during the year were a Living History Weekend and the High Sheriff's Hue & Cry on 28th – 29th May, a Silk Route Festival on 21st – 22nd October, and the increasingly popular Rutland Food & Drink Festival on 29th October. Christmas events saw more visitors than ever before enjoy a range of festive activities.

The Castle also continues to play a major role in the civic life of the County. In April the Castle hosted the investiture of

Mr Craig Mitchell as Rutland's High Sheriff for 2017/18. The Castle's biennial Court sitting took place on 27th October, presided over by the Honourable Mrs Justice Carr, where three cases were presented and sentences issued to the offenders.

Heritage Lottery Funded activity will continue in 2018/19, including a Community Archaeology dig, professionally supervised by the University of Leicester Archaeological Service, which promises to be a significant opportunity to discover more of the buried history of the site.

#### **Rutland County Libraries Local Studies Service**

Rutland Library Service continues to offer a Local Studies Collection and children's local studies collection at all branch libraries and Rutland County Museum. The library recently transferred back to Oakham Library after a major refurbishment. The service experiences a steady demand in terms of local studies & family history enquiries from within the UK and abroad, with access to Ancestry Library Edition being our most popular database. The libraries' volunteer-led Family History IT training sessions continue to be over-subscribed and an additional session a week is being planned.

#### **Partnership work with the Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland**

There continues to be collaboration on Local Studies research for enquiries, document storage & conservation, and scanning of local newspapers. Further filmed newspapers are expected into stock this year.

*Robert Clayton with Lorraine Cornwell and Emily Barwell*

#### **Rutland Historic Churches Preservation Trust**

Contact information:

Email: [rhcpttrust@googlemail.com](mailto:rhcpttrust@googlemail.com).

Website: [www.rhcpt.co.uk](http://www.rhcpt.co.uk).

The Trust exists to provide financial assistance to all churches and chapels within the County of Rutland, whenever they may need help for conservation and maintenance. All of these places of worship, fine buildings, have been inherited by our generation to use and to care for, and to pass on to the next generation, diligently preserved, as we have received them. Our new income for this year has come from kind and generous donations from the Rutland Parochial Church Councils of Clipsham, Belton, Preston and Tixover, to all of whom we acknowledge our sincere thanks. In addition we received donations from six individuals and a most kind legacy from the Estate of Mrs Mavis Norton-Fagge, who for many years was a Trustee of RHCPT. We also received a most generous gift from Richard Adams, the producer of The Rutland Calendar 2018. To all of these supporters we extend our sincere thanks.

The Finance Sub-Committee continues to keep our Reserves and Investment Policy closely under review. In response to the continuing climate of very low interest rates for cash investments the Trustees are cautiously developing a policy of increasing the proportion of our investments which are held in the COIF range of recommended equity funds suitable for Charities. These funds have performed well over recent years, and therefore we are also exploring opportunities to harvest a small proportion of the growth in these funds annually in order to increase our grant-giving capacity whilst, at the same time, inflation proofing our investments over the long term. In this context, Trustees gratefully wish to acknowledge the sterling work of our Treasurer for his very capable management of an increasingly complex range of

Registered Charity No 211068.

Give As You Earn Reg No 000101080.

Inland Revenue Identification No NAK 60 JG.

funds and, in this Ride & Stride year, for undertaking significantly more counting transactions than in the alternate years.

During the past financial year the Trust has paid grants totalling £19,500 to Ashwell, Hambleton, Lyddington, Manton, Preston, Tinwell and Wing. Previously approved Grants which have not yet been paid because work is still in progress amount to a further £21,500, most of which are likely to be paid out during the coming financial year.

St. Botolph's Church, Wardley, which was vested with The Churches Conservation Trust in April 2016, celebrated the completion of conservation work and the re-opening of the church to its local community in a Re-opening Celebration in December 2017. Our Trust and all who value the care of our Heritage Churches in Rutland are most grateful for the excellent work of the Churches Conservation Trust in our County.

We wish to record our sincere gratitude to Sally Wilson who retired as a Trustee in November 2017. Sally has served as a Trustee since 2005 with special responsibility for Ashwell, Burley, Langham, Teigh and Whissendine Churches. Her constant and devoted support for our Trust and for her local churches will be greatly missed. We wish her a very happy retirement. Responsibility for Sally's churches has passed to Mrs Pat Morley, who was appointed to the Trustees in November 2016 and who for many years past has been a near neighbour to these same church communities.

The 2017 Sponsored Ride & Stride raised total funds of £20,758 which represented an increase over our 2015 total and therefore ranks as the most successful event so far. Every



church in Rutland was open on the day and our grateful thanks to all those recorders and helpers who attended their church to sign in visitors and to provide refreshments. The Trustees also wish to record their sincere thanks to the Ride & Stride Sub-Committee of Trustees for all their successful work and efforts in the tasks of planning, organising and communication of this event to all the Rutland Churches and to the general public, all of which is a major undertaking in itself. A celebration and prize-giving party was held, by kind invitation, at Barnsdale Lodge in January 2018. The Chairman presented the Davenport-Handley Cup to Ben Findlay, Ryan Henry and Geoff Beetham, who cycled together to all 64 of Rutland's Churches. This is a feat which has not been achieved before according to our Trust records and sets a new benchmark for endurance cycling. Special certificates signed by the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland and the Trust Chairman were awarded to three young competitors, Paul Hitchcox (aged 7), Matthew

White (aged 6) and Tom White (aged 10), to recognise their young enthusiasm and their important contribution to the event. As usual, half of the funds raised were returned to the churches nominated by the participants and half retained for future grant awards by the Trust.

As and when their Church Quinquennial Reports are issued we are encouraging the parochial church councils to contact us for financial help, if they need it, so that they may complete the recommended work promptly, thus avoiding any unnecessary deterioration to their Church fabric. The Trustees wish to take this public opportunity of thanking all of our supporters, sponsors and donors for all they have contributed during the past year. During the coming year, as in the past, we confidently look forward to receiving the continuing favour of our benefactors, and to providing all necessary support to our beautiful Rutland churches.

*Clifford Bacon, Honorary Secretary*

### Rutland Local History & Record Society

Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW.

As Chair I am again grateful for the expert efforts of the Executive Committee in ensuring the smooth running of the Society and would like to give my personal thanks for the time and dedication each person contributes.

Every AGM I appeal to members to come forward to serve on the committee: this appeal has now become more pressing. This year we have been working on succession plans, one being our Honorary Editor who wishes to step down in the not too distant future. We would welcome discussion from anyone who wishes to be involved in the Society at any level – it is extremely rewarding and educational!

This year we have had the added responsibility of complying with the new Data Protection rules which come into force from May 2018. This has been a steep learning curve for our committee to understand how to comply with the legal requirements without inconveniencing our members too much. With our memberships renewal we have included links to our new Data Protection policy which is available on-line or via a printed version. As a Society, with postal costs on the increase, digital communication is far more economical. We rarely flood inboxes with our communications but recently, due to unforeseen circumstances, we had to cancel our February lecture. Many email addresses that we had on file were no longer valid, which made it difficult to reach members. The new opt-in method should help us.

Our promotion of research and publishing of the results this year was achieved through the publication of *Rutland Record* 37. As always the articles were wide ranging in topic and time-frame, including The Hereditary Trustees of the Archdeacon Johnson Foundation; The Lowthers at Cottesmore and Barleythorpe: a Victorian aristocratic family in the hunting shires; and What's in a hut? A WWI prisoner of war hut surviving as an Indoor Bowls Club in Uppingham. The latter article prompted the inclusion of the hut onto the Council for British Archaeology Home Front Legacy project. The publication also contained data recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Rutland and the history and archaeology reports for 2016, from projects carried out by commercial and community archaeologists, as well as local museum, record office and society reports. The Newsletter provides a means of engaging members and the public with short research projects, book reviews and information which is not included in the *Rutland Record*. When our publications go

Website: [www.rutlandhistory.org](http://www.rutlandhistory.org).

Email: [enquiries@rutlandhistory.org](mailto:enquiries@rutlandhistory.org).

out of print they are being made freely available on our website. Several issues of *Rutland Record*. Thanks indeed should go to the committee members who arranged for this resource to be viewed digitally.

The high standard of web presence continues as we promote the heritage of the county and provide an umbrella hosting service for local interest groups.

The subjects of our public lectures this year were highly entertaining. We have had excellent feedback and members have gone onto explore the subjects presented further. We had lectures on the Greyfriars project, murdered saints, talking machines (we heard the first sound recording ever made), and researching Rutland men in the Crimean War. The well-attended village visit in September was to Cottesmore. We were grateful to receive help from the Cottesmore History and Archaeology Group.

Elaine Jones continues to co-ordinate our active archaeology team. We are continuing to survey the fields of Ridlington, with some exciting nationally important finds from the Palaeolithic era. Lectures have been given to both the Society and the Council for British Archaeology East Midlands members, with publication forthcoming. Tony Martin is leading the completion of the Council for British Archaeology Parish Boundary Project, starting late spring with South Luffenham, in order to engage members with more practical activities.

The George Phillips and Tony Traylen awards ceremony took place in January at Oakham Castle. Our thanks to the committee members involved and the Rutland County Council team who recommend and coordinate the judging.

The Society monitors planning applications and where appropriate we advise and assist the authorities with our resources to ensure that the preservation and conservation of buildings and the landscape is to the best standard available. The role of Conservation Officer is now being fulfilled by the County Council on just one day per week, which still gives us cause for concern as the demand for this specialist advice in a county with such a rich built heritage warrants more time. After receiving conservation enquiries we advised members of the public that we are not in position to replace a paid member of the local authority and their services, we can only signpost them to the relevant personnel. This is not an isolated problem. Many local authorities throughout England are not addressing the

significance of removing these officer posts, so much so that national bodies have started campaigns to engage further with local authorities, such as Civic Voice 'the Big Conservation Conversation'.

Committee members who continue to provide a valuable service to the Society are; Edward Baines, Tim Clough, Mike Frisby, Robert Ovens, Carole Bancroft-Turner, Audrey Buxton, Paul Reeve, David Carlin, Robert Clayton, Hilary Crowden, Michael Hinman, Jill Kimber, Ian Ryder, Lin Ryder, Tony Martin and Elizabeth Bryan.

Debbie Frearson

### Website and Information Technology

As RLHRS publications go out-of-print we create digital versions, where possible making them available on our website free of charge. The following Rutland Records Nos. 1–7, 19, 20, 27 & 30, *The Oakham Survey 1305* and *The Heritage of Rutland Water* are already available online. Other publications will be uploaded over the coming year.

It has been decided to charge for some digital publications, making them available via GENfair. Discussions are ongoing regarding the most appropriate digital format to reduce the opportunity for illegal copying.

The website continues to have a high level of access with new articles and publications added most months. Our collection of digitised documents continues to grow, requiring additional 'Cloud' storage. The Executive Committee has agreed to its online storage capacity being increased as need arises. Links to much of the material will be made available via the website.

The Membership database is in a review process to take into account the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations which became law during May 2018.

Changed email ids continue to cause a few issues when members forget to tell us of changes.

Mike Frisby, Webmaster

### Uppingham Local History Study Group

Website & contact: [www.uppinghamhistory.org.uk](http://www.uppinghamhistory.org.uk).

The group is led by Vivian Anthony and meets on the first Monday of the month in the Taylor House Common Room, St John and St Anne almshouses, Johnson Road, Uppingham. We welcome new members and visitors to a full programme of lectures in 2018.

2017 began with a talk by David Webb on local railways. David is a railway enthusiast and has written a book on the subject. There were sixteen stations in Rutland before the Beeching cuts, but only Oakham remains.

In March member David Forbes spoke about his boyhood memories of Uppingham in World War 2. David was 11 when the war ended, and he looks back on those years as a time of great adventure for a young boy. Simple air raid shelters were dug on Tod's Piece, Beast Hill and Hart's Field. They were wonderful places for young boys to play. The National School had two shelters with brick walls and a concrete roof which would have crushed the children if a bomb had exploded nearby! Uppingham never received any air attacks.

A talk by farmer Andrew Brown of Fairchild's Lodge, Caldecott in April gave us an insight into the life of a local farmer. Andrew has been High Sheriff of Rutland and during his year of office he wore 18th century court dress and took his sheep across London Bridge.

We were pleased to welcome Rosemary Canadine in May to speak on Lyddington Manor History. Lyddington History Group formed in 2010 to research and study Lyddington Manor. They



Fig. 6. RLHRS fieldwalkers at Ridlington in January 2018 (photo: Marion Drake).

### Acknowledgements

The RLHRS Archaeological Team wishes to thank the land owner in Ridlington, Mrs Moubray, and the farmers, Parker Farms, for permitting our field walking survey on their land.

Helen Wells, of the Leicestershire County Council Historic & Natural Environment Team compiled a report on Ridlington for us. Clive Jones contributed notes on the geology, Lynden Cooper of ULAS, and Nick Cooper and Deborah Sawday identified some of the flint and pottery found during field walking by the Hollygate Road in Ridlington.

The RLHRS Archaeological Team (fig. 6) comprised Carole Bancroft-Turner, Lorraine Comwell, Linda Dalby, Iain and Marion Drake, Debbie Frearson, Jane Greenhalgh, Jo Holroyd, Elaine Jones, Jill Kimber, Jasmine Knew, Andrew Mills, Pene Rowe, and Liz Saunders.

Elaine Jones

have published a successful book entitled *Buildings and People of a Rutland Manor*. Rosemary is the archivist at Burghley House and has access to the manorial rolls. The Manor consists of Lyddington, Stoke Dry, Caldecott, Thorpe by Water and the disappeared village of Snelston near Caldecott. The Cecil family at Burghley House acquired the Manor in the 16th century.

Our June meeting heard a talk by Peter Liddle on Anglo-Saxons in Leicestershire and Rutland. The Romans preceded Anglo-Saxons in Rutland. Evidence of Roman towns at Great Casterton and Thistleton has been found. The building of Rutland Water led to the excavation of Roman villas.

In July Vivian Anthony spoke to the group about Uppingham in the 19th century. The population of Uppingham doubled in the 19th century. Vivian sourced his information from the group's publications on 1802 and 1851. Peter Lane, Alan Rogers and Tony Traylen have provided knowledge over the years.

In August we visited Rutland County Museum. We were guided by Emma Warren from the museum who had prepared a very good handout referring to items relating to Uppingham. She had lots of items on display for us from the archives.

In September the group enjoyed a talk by Lawrence Fenelon on Captain Jeffrey Hudson, the Queen's Dwarf. In October we were invited to the Methodist Church in Uppingham who were celebrating their bicentenary. An impressive history and timeline were on display and a series of

artworks depicting the history of the church from 1817 up to the present day. It was also a members' evening and Ramsay Ross spoke about the Thistleton Roman mosaic. Helen Hutton spoke about Lance Corporal R E Foster of the 5th Battalion Leicestershire Regiment. He had been a teacher at the National School in Uppingham. Peter Lane spoke about wealthy widow Elizabeth Blackbourne who had lived at the White Hart at Uppingham. Vivian concluded the evening speaking about the development of Ayston Road in the town.

Our November meeting heard all about the Restoration of Oakham Castle from Robert Clayton. Our year concluded with a return visit from Nick Hill from English Heritage speaking about his investigations of buildings in Lyddington.

Vivian has an interesting programme planned for 2018 and we welcome visitors. Vivian would like to step down from leading our group at the end of the year. We would welcome someone to take over from him to ensure it continues.

Helen Hutton, Secretary

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## IV – Rutland Bibliography 2017

*A bibliography of books and pamphlets relating to Rutland, compiled by Emily Barwell*

- Arnold, Alison, *Cottesmore, Rutland: tree-ring analysis of timbers from a number of houses* (Sherwood: Nottingham Tree Ring Dating Laboratory, 2017, no ISBN, no price).
- Audicent, David B, *Preston Village: 'Miscellania'* (David B Audicent, 2018, no ISBN, no price).
- Brown, Clive, *Walks for all ages: Leicestershire & Rutland* (Bradwell Books, 2016, ISBN 9781910551134, £5.99).
- Carlyle, Simon, *Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlement along the Empingham to Hannington pipeline in Northamptonshire and Rutland* (Archaeopress Archaeology, 2017, ISBN 9781784915346, £26).
- Clayton, Michael, *The ride of my life: memoirs of a sporting editor* (Merlin Unwin, 2016, ISBN 9781910723210, £20).
- Halstead, Timothy, *A school in arms: Uppingham and the Great War* (Helion & Company, 2017, ISBN 9781911512646, £25).
- How old is Cottesmore?* (Oakham: Cottesmore History & Archaeology Group, 2018, no ISBN, £5.00).
- Kirkham, Andrea, *Oakham Castle, Rutland: investigation of the decoration at the West end of the hall* (Norwich: Andrea Kirkham Conservation, 2016, no ISBN, no price [Report]).
- Osborne, Mike, *Defending Leicestershire and Rutland* (Fonthill Media, 2017, ISBN 9781781555781, £16.99).
- Paye, Peter, *Great Northern Railway branches from Stamford* (Lightmoor Press, 2017, ISBN 9781911038245, £25).
- Ray, Tom, *Starfish: one family's tale of triumph after tragedy* (London: Metro, 2017, ISBN 9781786065124, £8.99).
- Rutland, David, *Resolution: two brothers, a nation in crisis, a world at war* (London: Head of Zeus, 2017, ISBN 9781784979911, £30).
- Rutland Record 37: Journal of the Rutland Local History & Record Society* (Oakham: Rutland Local History & Record Society, 2017, ISBN 9780907464570).
- Stacey, Margaret, *The story of Uppingham Methodist Church 1817-2017: bicentennial edition updated and expanded* (Uppingham: Uppingham Methodist Church Council, 2017, no ISBN, no price).

# RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY & RECORD SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 700273

The Society's printed publications, with their main contents, are currently available (November 2018) as follows:

## **Rutland Record**

*Rutland Record* 31 (£4.50, members £3.50)

Medieval woodlands; Education in Victorian Rutland; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 32 (£4.50, members £3.50)

Ice Age at Glaston; Fox Talbot and Rutland; Oakham School's masters and ushers; Mid-Victorian Uppingham School; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 33 (£4.50, members £3.50)

George Villiers & Katherine Manners; Early Victorian Rutland; Wilkershaw Cowpasture; *Time Team* at Oakham Castle; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 34 (£4.50, members £3.50)

Early Market Overton; Leighfield Forest in the 16th & 17th centuries; Rutland resources at Leicester University Library; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 35 (£4.50, members £3.50)

Preston Manor House; Witch bottle from Exton; Population in Rutland 1851-1911; Lost public houses; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 36 (£5.00, members £3.50)

Isaack Symmes & Ridlington sundial; Belton & the Blount family; 18th century Vale of Catmose villages; Jadeitite axe from Martinsthorpe; Portable Antiquities Scheme; annual reports

*Rutland Record* 37 (£5.00, members £3.50)

Hereditary trustees of Archdeacon Johnson Foundation; Lowthers at Cottesmore and Barleythorpe; Uppingham Indoor Bowls Club ex-prisoner of war hut, annual reports

*Indexes: Rutland Record 1-10* (by John Field) (1994) (£1.00);

*11-20* (by Robert Ovens) (2011) (£1.00);

*21-30* (by Robert Ovens) (2015) (£4.00, members £3.00)

*Issues of Rutland Record not mentioned above are out of print and can be consulted freely on the Society's website where full details of each issue are available.*

## **Rutland Record Series**

1. *Tudor Rutland: The County Community under Henry VIII* ed Julian Cornwall (1980). The Military Survey of 1522 & the Lay Subsidy of 1524, with introduction (OP)

2. *The Weather Journals of a Rutland Squire* ed John Kington (1988). Thomas Barker's 18th century weather, farming and countryside records, with introduction (OP)

3. *Stained Glass in Rutland Churches* by Paul Sharpling (1997). Complete survey & gazetteer; introduction; lists of glaziers, subjects, dedicatees, donors, heraldry (OP)

4. *Time in Rutland: a history and gazetteer of the bells, scratch dials, sundials and clocks of Rutland*, by Robert Ovens & Sheila Sleath (2002). Definitive account of dials, clocks and bells of Rutland (OP)

5. *The Heritage of Rutland Water*, ed Robert Ovens & Sheila Sleath (2nd rev imp 2008). History, archaeology, people, buildings, landscape, geology, natural history of Rutland Water area; sailing, fishing, flora, birds, fauna (OP, available on the Society's website)

## **NEW in 2018:**

6. *Improving Agriculture in Nineteenth Century Rutland: The life and achievements of Richard Westbrook Baker (1797-1861), steward of the Exton Estate*, by Vanessa Doe (2018). Biography of Rutland's pioneering and prize-winning agriculturalist, and assessment of his profound effect on rural life in the county. 128pp, index, bibliography, full colour (£12.50, members £10.00)

## **Occasional Publications**

1. *Domesday Book in Rutland: the dramatis personae* by Prince Yuri Galitzine (1986) (OP)

2. *The Oakham Survey 1305* ed Allen Chinnery (1988). Medieval survey: population, occupations, topography, customs, and personal/place-name evidence (OP)

3. *The Rutland Hearth Tax 1665* ed Jill Bourn & Amanda Goode (1991). Introduction and transcript (OP)

4. *The History of Gilson's Hospital, Morcott* by David Parkin (1995). The charity, its almshouse, and farm at Screddington, Lincs; trustees, beneficiaries; foundation deed, Gilson's will (OP)

5. *Lyndon, Rutland* by Charles Mayhew (1999). Guide to the village and church (OP)

6. *The History of the Hospital of St John the Evangelist & St Anne in Okeham* by David Parkin (2000). The 600-year old charity: history, chapel, trustees and beneficiaries (OP)

7. *The 1712 Land Tax Assessments and the 1710 Poll Book for Rutland* ed T H McK Clough (2005). Introduction, commentary, transcripts, indexes (OP)

8. *Common Right and Private Interest: Rutland's Common Fields and their Enclosure* by Ian E Ryder (2006). Details of Rutland's enclosures, with historical background, case studies, gazetteer and indexes (£1.00)

9. *Who Owned Rutland in 1873: Rutland entries in Return of Owners of Land 1873* by T H McK Clough (2010). Annotated transcript of the 563 Rutland entries; analysis; Lyddington and Chipping Campden (Gloucs) case studies (£7.50, members £6.00)

10. *Medieval Property Transactions in Rutland: abstracts of feet of fines 1197-1509* by Bridget Wells-Furby (2013). Introduction, discussion, detailed calendar of all 355 Rutland feet of fines, full indexes (£10.00, members £8.00)

11. *John Barber's Oakham Castle and its Archaeology*, ed Elaine Jones & Robert Ovens. John Barber's notes on his 1950s excavations and other contemporary accounts; full colour (£8.00, members £6.00)

12. *Oakham Lordshold in 1787: a map and survey of Lord Winchilsea's Oakham estate*, edited by T H McK Clough (2016). Evaluation and discussion of this map of the town, transcript of accompanying field books; full colour (£10.00, members £7.50)

## **UK postage and packing (2nd class, parcel or carrier)**

*Rutland Record*, *Index*: £1.25 one issue + 50p each extra issue; *Occas Pubs* 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11: £2.00 each; *Occas Pub* 12, £2.50. This supersedes earlier lists. Rates may change when Royal Mail prices increase. Please enquire for overseas postage costs.

## **Orders and enquiries for publications**

Please send all enquiries and orders, with sterling cheque payable to RLHRS including p&p, to:  
The Hon Editor, RLHRS, c/o Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW, England.  
Publications can also be purchased on-line using a debit or credit card via [www.genfair.co.uk](http://www.genfair.co.uk) (p&p rates may be different on this site).

**Please note that a number of other historical resources for Rutland can be consulted freely on the Society's website, [www.rutlandhistory.org](http://www.rutlandhistory.org).**





## *Rutland Record 38*

*Journal of the Rutland Local History & Record Society*

### *In this issue:*



The Belton Fire of 1776



Mme de Boigne, the Earl of Winchilsea,  
and Marcel Proust



Uppingham High School for Girls



Rutland History & Archaeology in 2017

*Website: [www.rutlandhistory.org](http://www.rutlandhistory.org)*