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*Cover illustration:*  
The Church of St John the Baptist, Hellidon. Memorial window with photographic images of the four dedicatees shown as knights in shining armour. A Flanders poppy is incorporated into the tracery. The window is by Messrs Daniels and Fricker of London, dated c.1920. *(Photo by Paul Sharpling)*
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
PAST AND PRESENT

2014

Number 67
Instructions for Contributors

All contributions must be provided in hard copy and in electronic format on a CD/DVD or as an attachment to an email, preferably in Word.doc or docx. Please use the existing house style of NP&P. Normally, the maximum length is 6,500 to 7,000 words. Shorter articles and small news items are also welcome. Draft texts may be sent for discussion. Printed references used more than a few times should be abbreviated after the first time and referred back to the full citation. Each article should have at least one illustration and full articles at least three. All illustrations must be of good quality with copyright permission stated and obtained where appropriate. If digital illustrations are provided they should be in separate files, either JPEG or TIFF, preferably with a resolution of at least 300 dpi.
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All communications regarding articles in this and future issues should be addressed to Barbara Hornby, Hon. Editor, Northamptonshire Record Society, Wootton Hall Park, Northampton NN4 8BQ
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NOTES AND NEWS

First World War. To commemorate the centenary of the Great War we have two papers which shed light on two very different aspects of the war: stained glass memorial windows and Labour and socialism in Northampton during the war.

Lady Juliet Townsend has been awarded the DCVO in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List. She was High Sheriff in 1991/92 and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire in 1998. She is resigning this year and her successor is David Laing of Grafton Underwood. Lady Juliet has been a keen supporter of the Society for many years: a Council member since 1979, she was unanimously elected as President in succession to Sir Hereward Wake in 2008.

The Victoria County History of England (VCH). Following the fascinating article in last year’s NP&P about the beginnings of the Victoria County History in Northamptonshire by former national Director, Professor John Beckett, members might be interested in the latest activities of the Northamptonshire Trust.

Four Northamptonshire volumes were published by 1937. The current Northamptonshire VCH Trust started work fifteen years ago under the chairmanship of the Rt Hon. The Lord Naseby. Since then three major volumes have been published: Cleley Hundred in South Northamptonshire; the modern industry of the county; and, in 2013, Corby.

Now under the chairmanship of Lord Boswell of Aynho, work has started in earnest on Volume VIII, a standard topographical account of the market town of Towcester and the rural parishes of Towcester Hundred: Abthorpe, Cold Higham, Gayton, Pattishall, and Tiffield. The volume will be written collaboratively by commissioned experts and will draw on the expertise of local societies and communities. The intention is to complete the research and editing for under £60,000 and within a five-year period. Many of the volumes are available electronically on www.british-history.ac.uk. If anyone is interested in being involved in this project, or making a donation, please contact David Harries at the Society’s office.

New Pevsner for Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough is due for publication on 11 September by Yale University Press (www.yalebooks.co.uk). Having completed the revision of the Northamptonshire volume, Bruce Bailey has been helping Charles O’Brien, joint editor of the series, with Bedfordshire and the Soke of Peterborough. Bruce is also doing research in the New Forest for the South Hampshire volume. As Bruce says, “The work goes on!”
Eydon Historical Research Group has produced another of their occasional books entitled *Lest We Forget*. It is about the effect of the Great War on the people of Eydon. It includes the 1913 Army exercises when the king came to the village and war diaries, photo albums and women’s work. To obtain a copy email kevin.lodge@toucansurf.com.

Northampton General Hospital Historical Archive. For our May lecture, we heard from Dr Andrew Williams about this archive. Dr Williams is a consultant community paediatrician and medical historian and curator of the archive. In 1790, the Northampton Medical Society decided to form a medical library at the George Row Infirmary. This has grown from 33 books to 3,000 titles. The fact that this library has remained intact for over 200 years is due to the guardianship of individuals and it must be preserved for future generations. Contact the archive on 01604-544868 or sue.longworth@ngh.nhs.uk.

The Northamptonshire Decorative and Fine Arts Society (NDFAS) has sent us a letter outlining their activities among which is a project recording and cleaning books at Althorp House. The monthly meetings often include lectures from people well versed in a wide variety of arts. For further information contact Mr Roger Clarke on 01327-830509.

We are grateful to Dr Perry Gauci for reviewing *Estate letters from the time of John, 2nd Duke of Montagu 1709-39* last year. Dr Gauci is V.H.H. Green Fellow and Tutor in History at Lincoln College, Oxford. His research interests broadly rest with the political and social development of the English state from 1650 to 1750.

As always I would like to thank the authors and reviewers for their excellent material, and David Hall and David Harries for their support. Remember to consult the website for the latest about the Society: www.northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk.

Barbara Hornby

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Edmund King is Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at the University of Sheffield. His doctoral work was on the estates of Peterborough Abbey, and he is currently preparing new editions of the abbey chronicles, to be published in the Anthony Mellows Memorial
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**Peter McKay** is a history graduate with a particular interest in the eighteenth century Grand Tour and the arts and literature of that period. He helped to edit *Estate Letters from the time of John, 2nd Duke of Montagu, 1709-39* (NRS vol. xlvi, 2013). pmknn7@tiscali.co.uk

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**Paul Sharpling** grew up in Northampton and taught languages for many years in Kettering. He became interested in stained glass as a student at Cambridge and as a postgraduate at Oxford. He has researched the stained glass of the original diocese of Peterborough, and is currently Adviser to the diocese of Leicester. He has translated books and articles from various languages and is the author of “Stained Glass in Rutland Churches”. polyglot@talktalk.net

**Mike Thornton** graduated from Merton College, Oxford. He worked in education until retirement as Associate Principal at Northampton College. Mike took a PhD at the Centre for English Local History at Leicester University. He has had published in *NP&P* and elsewhere a number of articles about Northamptonshire in the late Middle Ages. mdthornton@waitrose.com
Almost a decade has passed since the War Memorials Trust reported on the condition and care of Britain’s civic and religious war memorials. The investigating committee concluded that the significance of our war memorials was not sufficiently appreciated and that too little was being done to maintain them.

If this is true of stone memorials, it is even more valid for commemorative windows. Extrapolation from preliminary figures from the area I have researched (the three southern counties of the East Midlands: Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire with the former Soke of Peterborough) suggests that there may be between four and five thousand war memorial windows nationwide. In contrast to stone monuments in churchyards and in town and village centres, however, commemorative stained glass windows are often less accessible because the majority of our parish churches are kept locked for much of the time.

This year marks two important anniversaries: the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, and D-Day in 1944. It therefore seems appropriate to re-examine the locations and significance of our war memorial windows.

Glass is more fragile than stone or wood, and windows are more likely to be seriously or even irreparably damaged, either accidentally or by vandals. Consequently many windows dedicated to the fallen, particularly the victims of the First World War, have been damaged\(^1\), sometimes beyond repair. In addition, the closure of redundant religious buildings has often been accompanied by the random disposal or destruction of their stained glass windows, and in cases where the windows remain *in situ*, the need for security ensures that churches are rarely left open and unsupervised. Opening times may depend on the availability or readiness of churchwardens and others to devote their time to the task of supervision. In certain areas of this county, intending visitors frequently find it difficult to obtain random access to churches and may need to make advance arrangements for a visit.

For those wishing to view the memorial windows a list of locations is, therefore, indispensable. The purpose of this article is to provide a gazetteer of these windows in Northamptonshire and the former Soke of Peterborough, to explain the reasons for their particular iconography, and to offer a brief account of their relevance to our own society, and their significance for an understanding of the psychology of the age which produced them.

A memorial window may be dedicated to:

- an individual soldier, sailor or airman or woman,
- a group of soldiers, sailors or airmen possibly from the same village or town,
- a whole regiment or battle group,
- any combination of the above.

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1 Deene, Cottingham, although the latter has been skilfully repaired.
Some memorial windows have a single dedicatory panel, others have multiple panels. Whichever is the case, dedications should always be read carefully if the viewer wishes to obtain a full understanding of the meaning and relevance of the window as a whole. The typical dedicatory panel begins with the words: “To the glory of God and in loving memory of . . .”. In the case of war memorial windows this is often expanded to: “To the glory of God and in proud and loving memory of . . .”

A memorial to an individual dedicatee is intended to express the grief and pride of bereaved relatives and friends or the community in which the dedicatee grew up. A collective memorial often stresses the pride of a regiment in its own achievements whilst at the same time expressing sorrow at the loss of fallen comrades. Many of those who fell in action or were reported missing believed dead, have no identifiable grave. The fact that they are often commemorated in foreign cemeteries by headstones restricted to giving their name, rank, number and regiment, or the simple inscription of “a soldier known to God” is a poor consolation to relatives who may not be able to visit distant burial sites. This is particularly true of members of the armed forces who fell in battles at or over the sea. In such cases the donation of a stained glass window serves both as a permanent memorial to the fallen heroes in their home parish church and as a substitute focal point for their relatives’ grief. In all cases, memorial windows attempt to add beauty to the building in which they are installed, and to express the admiration and gratitude of the local community or the nation. One major difference here is that stained glass memorials are generally pictorial, whereas stone and wooden memorials tend to be architectural.

By their choice of subject matter, Victorian and Edwardian stained glass designers and painters developed a specific iconographic system. The images used were intended to ennoble fallen heroes by likening them to Christian saints and martyrs, prominent Old Testament figures, knights in shining armour, characters from the Arthurian legends or classical literature or allegorical figures representing the virtues of a good soldier, such as loyalty, fortitude, charity, piety, fear of God, and determination to fight evil and do good. In this way it was hoped to mitigate the grief of bereaved families. It is perhaps regrettable that this emphasis on the glory of self-sacrifice took little account of the great suffering and sometimes squalid death of the individual soldier, and risked romanticising war and its consequences. Many of the earlier windows reflect the psychology of the empire-building of the preceding decades, later windows often reveal the changing public perception of a war which many considered to be unwinnable.

Among the most frequently illustrated figures, three in particular occur more often than others. St George represents patriotism, but was also a soldier who battled against evil, represented in stained glass memorials by the dragon. St Michael, the principal archangel, is frequently seen in art holding a fiery sword or the scales of justice, but in war memorials he is shown as the captain of the heavenly host, carrying a sword and shield and defeating evil in the form of the devil. St Martin of Tours, the soldier who shared his cloak with a beggar, became Bishop of Tours.

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2 Apethorpe, Badby, Barby, Brackley, Bulwick, Cottingham, Collyweston, Earls Barton, Flore et al.
3 Generally together with St George.
4 Apethorpe, Bulwick, Deene, Earls Barton.
Figure 1. The Church of St Michael, Farthingstone. Although non-religious, the window illustrates the chivalry of the dedicatee and offers details of his school, his regiment and his family history. The window is by J. Powell & Sons, Whitefriars, and is dated 1932. (Author’s photograph)
Other prominent God-fearing warrior figures include St Alban, England’s first martyr; the Good Centurion who knelt at the foot of the cross and was one of Christ’s earliest followers; Joshua, the patriarch, a fierce warrior, who destroyed the city of Jericho in the name of the Lord and showed no mercy in executing the five kings of Makkedah, but spared the life of Rahab the harlot; and David, who against all odds challenged and overcame evil in the form of Goliath the Philistine, but was also a poet and musician and an ancestor of Jesus himself. Moses is also depicted, arms raised and victorious, at the battle of Rephidim.

Knights of the Round Table in the form of Sir Bors, Sir Galahad (Figure 1), Sir Gareth and Sir Villars represent chivalry in an almost medieval form, a concept which is also mirrored in windows showing kneeling medieval knights in full armour; in one case we are shown a young knight fulfilling his pre-battle vigil in the first panel, and in the second panel presenting his sword to an angel who is placing a crown on his head following his death on the battlefield. A further example shows a fallen soldier carried up to heaven by angels. Where, as in most cases, the young man had died on a French or Belgian battlefield, the windows illustrate English and French saints; in one panel there is a unique portrayal of Jeanne d’Arc with a burning town in the background; in another case pictures of prominent buildings destroyed during bombardments. It also became increasingly popular to use portraits of the fallen soldiers in their memorial windows.

The stained glass artist during the First World War trod a very thin line between strident militarism and mawkish sentimentality, but his prime purpose was to strike a fair balance between the pride and grief of his clients and allow his window to evoke both.

In using this imagery to temper bereaved families’ grief with their pride in the readiness of young men to “give their lives for “God, King and Country”, most First World War memorial windows avoided all reference to the squalor and bloodshed of the battlefield and ran the risk of glamorising war and presenting killing as a sacred duty deserving of an eternal reward in heaven.

James Clark’s 1914 painting: “The Great Sacrifice” in which a soldier lies dying in the arms of a comrade and experiences a vision of Christ crucified, represented an attempt to present the battlefield in a completely different light. (Figure 2) It portrayed the suffering and death of the individual soldier and the devastation of the battlefield, and while offering a more realistic depiction of war in the trenches, may well have intensified rather than mitigated the grief of those left behind. Stained glass artists were not slow either in directly copying Clark’s painting or in using it as a model for their own commemorative works.16

5 Brackley, Finedon, Rushton. 6 Glapthorn. 7 Bulwick, Sywell. 8 Flore, Irthlingborough. 9 Holy Sepulchre. 10 Farthingstone. 11 Polebrook. 12 Holy Sepulchre. 13 Apethorpe. 14 Deene, Joan of Arc at Amiens. 15 Hellidon. 16 Two good examples of this can be found in the parish church at Bugbrooke and St Andrew’s church in Kettering.
Figure 2. The Church of St Michael, Bugbrooke. An adaptation of James Clark’s painting “The Great Sacrifice”. It illustrates disillusionment with war and is an attempt to de-romanticise it. The window is by Messrs. Burlison and Grylls of London and is dated c.1920. (Author’s photograph)
Clark’s original 1914 work was an oil painting. After being exhibited at the Royal Academy it was purchased by Queen Mary for Princess Beatrice. Clark himself made three copies of the painting, one of which was for Queen Alexandra. The original painting was donated by Beatrice to a church on the Isle of Wight, possibly Whippingham, in memory of a fallen relative. The windows in Northamptonshire (Bugbrooke and Kettering) were two of many unauthorised copies made following the end of the First World War.

The war memorial windows of this period shed an interesting and informative light on many aspects of British history, both political/imperial and social. Their dedications underline the drastic effects that the wars had on the younger members of the aristocracy and the upper classes, and ultimately on the structure of society itself.

Some families suffered multiple losses: the Brasseys of Apethorpe, the Douglas-Pennants of Wicken, the Fergusons of Polebrook, and the Agnews/Agnew-Evanses of Farthingstone. The windows offer a vivid record of the young men who volunteered for service, and of those who were later conscripted, whether they were suitable for trench warfare or not. The reference to Etaples in one dedication conjures up visions of the most brutal military disciplinary regime that can be imagined, (cf. *The Monocled Mutineer* and the riveting story of Percy Topless’s desertion), a brutality which was denied and covered up by the military and civil authorities. By their pictorial nature, especially Clark’s “Great Sacrifice”, the windows personalise warfare in a way in which stone crosses and wooden or brass plaques cannot. One pair of dedications seems to sum up the questionable nature of war as a means of settling disputes.

In one case at St Giles’ Church, Desborough, a 1914-18 memorial is sited close to one from 1939-45. The similarity between the characters of the two dedicatees combined with their identical fate, is both astonishing and sobering:

1914-1918: “To the glory of God and in loving memory of William Haydn Burditt aged 25 years, organist of this church, who was missing in France during the Great War on Palm Sunday March 24th 1918.”

1939-1945: “In memory of John H. Hawes, musician and poet, killed in action March 16th 1945 aged 25 and all other members of this church who fell in the war 1939-1945. A short life well spent.”

The following register of locations and dedicatees includes the comparatively small number of windows donated in memory of members of the armed forces lost in wars both preceding and following the First World War. It will be noted that the majority of windows refer to the men who fell between 1914 and 1918, and in one case a soldier who died of the effects of the war as late as 1930, almost twelve years after the armistice agreement was signed.

17 Desborough St Giles. The Hawes and Burditt memorials.
18 Farthingstone, the Agnew memorial.
LOCATIONS

Northamptonshire:

Apethorpe:
2nd Lt. Gerard Charles Brassey, Coldstream Guards,  
+ 27.08.1918, St Leger, France.  
Major Harold Ernest Brassey, Royal Horse Guards,  
+ 16.08.1916, Bouzincourt, France.

Badby:
Collective memorial to fourteen men of Badby.

Barby:
Collective memorial to sixteen men of Barby.

Brackley:
Lt. Geoffrey Arthur Campbell, Coldstream Guards,  
+ 29.10.1914, Ypres, Belgium.  
Capt. Ernest George Campbell, Rifle Brigade,  
+ 24.08.1900, Bergendall, South Africa.

Broughton:
Collective memorial for all men of Broughton.

Bugbrooke:
Collective memorial to the men of Bugbrooke.

2nd Lt. Ernest William Harrison, 11th Durham Light Infantry,  
+ 28.05.1940, Hazebrouck, France. Aged 29.

Bulwick:
Lt. Guy Tryon, Grenadier Guards,  
+ 24.08.1901, Harrismith, South Africa.  
Lt. Henry Tryon, Rifle Brigade,  
20.11.1854, Sebastopol, Crimea.

Cottingham:
Pte. Hugh Millington, 18th London Irish Rifles,  
+ 17.05.1915, Givenchy, France.

Collingtree:
2nd Lt. Hugh Palliser Frend, 6th Northants Regt.  
+ 20.03.1917, St. Leger, France.

Collyweston:
2nd Lt. W Collins Close, 6th Northants Regt.  
+ 20.03.1917, Croisilles, France.

Cosgrove:
Capt. William Henry Jepson St. Leger Atkinson, 1st Royal Dragoons,  
+ 13.05.1915. Aged 33.

Cransley:
United States Air Force.

Croughton:
Lt. Norman Ramsay.  
+ ? 1855, Crimea.

Dallington:
Tpr. Alfred James Croft, Warwickshire Yeomanry,  
South Africa.

Deene:
Lt. James Brudenell-Bruce, 1st Northamptonshire Yeomanry,  
+ 11.04.1917, Arras, France.

Desborough:
Pte. William Haydn Burditt,  
Missing in action, 24.03.1918, France.  
Cpl. John H. Hawes, RAOC and The London Regt. (Queen’s Westminster Rifles),  
+ 16.03.1945, France.  
Collective for RAF personnel serving at Desborough 1943-46.

Earls Barton:
Collective for 1914-1918, but this window is dated 1931.

Farthingstone:
Lt. Ewan Siegfried Agnew, 5th Royal Irish Lancers,  
+ 08.03.1930, as a result of wounds received.  
Lt. Michael David Agnew-Evans,  
+ 27.12.1942, Middle East (Syria).  
04-07-1943, Syracuse, Italy.
Finedon:
Collective.
Lt. William Mortimer, 4th Durham Light Infantry,
+ 13.06.1915, Ypres, Belgium.

Flore:
+ 07.06.1918 near Arras, France.
Collective. Names of the men are on a plaque.

Glapthorn:
Pte. Cyril Foers Kirby, 2nd Royal Sussex Regt.
+ 02.03.1916, France.

Grafton Underwood:
United States Air Force, 544, 545, 546 and 547 squadrons, 348th Bomb Group.

Great Oxendon:
Lt. Valentine Perry Heath, Royal Horse Guards,
+ 05.09.1914, Mons, Belgium.
Capt. George Millais James, Buffs,
+ 03.11.1914, Ypres, Belgium.

Great Weldon:
United States Air Force (window was formerly at Deenethorpe Airfield)

Greens Norton:
Collective, but with special reference to:
Pte. Claude Keith MacDonald, Canadian Army
+ 27.09.1915, Loos, Belgium.

Guilsborough:
Capt. Thomas Hitchens, Royal Artillery,
+ 11.06.1900, South Africa.

Hartwell
Missing in action in France believed dead, 28.04.1917.
Memorial at Faubourg d’Amiens, France.

Hellidon:
William Thomas Hedges.
Records give a William Thomas Hedges,
Gunner, Royal Field Artillery
+ 1917 in Greece. There are several other possible W. Hedges in the War Office Records.
Pte. Frederick W. Marlow Wells, 6th Dorsetshire [sic!] Regt.,
Pte. John James Buchanan, Canadian Army,
+ 21.10.1916, France.

Horton:
Capt. Dudley Winterbottom, 3rd Manchester Regt.
+ 07.08.1915, Baba.

Irthingborough:
Collective. Names are included in the window. Both world wars.

Kettering St Andrew:
Pte. Cecil Hugh Essam, Royal Fusiliers (London Regt.).
+ 13.10.1916, Etaples, France.

Kettering St Mary:
Harry Wilfrid Johnston,
+ 18.10.1918, Mesopotamia, Middle East.

Kingsthorpe Baptist Church:
Collective.

Kislingbury:
Collective, but with special reference to:
Capt. James William Dunkley, Durham Light Infantry,
28.06.1942, El Alamein, North Africa.

Mears Ashby:
Lt. Eustace Harvey Stockdale, Durham Light Infantry,
+ 19.09.1886, Allahabad.

Northampton:
Christ Church:
Collective.

Holy Sepulchre:
Collective memorials to the Northamptonshire Regt:
2nd Battalion, South Africa 1879-1883
4th Battalion, 1914-1918
5th (Service) Battalion, 1914-1918
6th Battalion, 1914-1918
7th (Service) Battalion, 1914-1918
48th Northamptonshire Regt. North West Frontier 1897.

**Individual memorial to:**
2nd Lt. Eric Norman Bostock, MC, 2nd Northamptonshire Regt.
+27.05.1918.

**St Stanislaus and St Lawrence:**
Sgt. Hugh Cecil Dadswell,
+ 01.07.1916.

**St Michael:**
Collective, 1914-1918.

**Abington Avenue:**
Collective, 1914-1918.

**Victoria Road:**
Collective, 1914-1918.

**Polebrook:**
Major Victor Ferguson, Royal Horse Guards,
08.01.1896, Ashantee.
Lt. Victor John Ferguson, 2nd Life Guards,
+21.08.1918, Amiens, France.

**Potterspury:**
Collective.

**Pytchley:**
Richard Lane, Master Mariner, HMS Gatling,
+ 05.12.1941, Hong Kong.

**Rushden St Mary:**
Collective.
2nd Lt. Randall Stewart Mason,
+12.03.1915, Neuve Chapelle, France.

**Rushton:**
Capt. Frederick Young Weatherall, 2nd Royal Scots,
+ 22.04.1877, Bhagabanpore, India.

**Stoke Albany:**
Lt. William Waudby, Leinster Regt. and Canadian Army,
+ 03.04.1901, South Africa.
Major Sidney James Waudby, 19th Bombay Native Infantry,
+ 16.08.1880, Dabrai, India. Acting Lt. Colonel.

**Sywell:**
Collective.

**Twywell:**
Collective 1914-1918.
2nd Lt. William Edwin Wallace, Royal Engineers,
+ 31.07.1917, Ypres, Belgium.

**Wellingborough All Saints:**
Lord Kitchener.

**Wellingborough St Mary:**
Collective.
2nd Lt. Douglas Arthur Campbell Layman, 17th Lancashire Fusiliers,
+ 19.02.1916, Festubert, France.
Lt. Arnold Thomas Layman, 5th Northamptonshire Regt.
Florence Nightingale.
Edith Cavell.

**Weston-by-Welland:**
Capt. William Frederic Matthews, i) South Wales Borderers, ii) 1st East Lancashire Regt.
+ 18.08.1918, France. Aged 31.

**Wicken:**
Capt. the Honourable George Henry Douglas-Pennant, Grenadier Guards,
+ 11.03.1915, Neuve Chapelle, France. Mentioned in Despatches.
Lt. the Honourable Charles Douglas Pennant, Coldstream Guards,
+ 29.10.1914, Gheluvelt, Belgium.
Lt. Alan George Sholto Douglas-Pennant, Grenadier Guards,
+ 29.10.1914, France.
Former Soke of Peterborough:

Peterborough Cathedral:
Collective for South African wars.

Peterborough St John:
Edith Cavell.

Glinton:
Lt. Samuel Vergette, 1st Lincolnshire Regt.
+ 04.10.1917, Polygon Wood, nr. Ypres, Belgium.

Maxey:
Rifleman Gerard Talbot Sweeting, 9th Co.

Wittering:
RAF memorial to the men who served at the Wittering station.

London Regt. (Queen Victoria’s Rifles).
+ 14.03.1915, Belgium, aged 30. Son of the former rector of Maxey.

Peakirk:
2nd Lt. Francis William Alexander Faithfull, 3rd Seaforth Highlanders.
+ 03.07.1915. Mesopotamia, aged 18. Son of the former rector of Peakirk.

No fewer than fifty-seven of the dedicatees listed here refer to the First World War, more than the sum total of all other stained glass war memorials. Considering the huge number of casualties incurred between 1914 and the end of the war, and the post-war mortality rate, this figure is not at all surprising.

Many of the above windows also have regimental badges and insignia and coats of arms of some of England’s most important public schools.
King Stephen and the Empress Matilda: The View from Northampton

EDMUND KING

When William of Malmesbury was asked to explain the outbreak of the civil war of King Stephen’s reign, he said that it was necessary to go back to the return of the Empress Matilda to England, and to the oaths that were sworn by the magnates to maintain her rights to the succession. There were two such solemn occasions. The first took place in London on 1 January 1127. The second was at Northampton on 8 September 1131. There, at “quite a considerable gathering of the nobles”, the Empress “received an oath of fealty from those who had not given one before and a renewal of the oath from those who had”. The “quite considerable” was one of William of Malmesbury’s characteristic jokes, for this was a huge gathering, including the two archbishops, of Canterbury and York, ten other bishops, and a visiting papal legate. The townsfolk of Northampton may have speculated, along with everyone else, on the precise implications of the oath. Not least, at this date, as to whether the empress could have children, for her first marriage had been childless, and her second had run into difficulties.

That query at least would soon be answered, with the birth of her son Henry (the future Henry II) in 1133, but it brought others in its wake. Would she rule in her own right or would there be some form of regency? The insistence on the oaths was an indication of the lack of enthusiasm for the empress’s succession, however it was formulated. It would be Stephen, the king’s nephew, count of Boulogne and Mortain, a substantial landowner in England, and a very popular figure, who succeeded in December 1135. A fine early seventeenth-century reproduction of his comital seal survives in “Sir Christopher Hatton’s Book of Seals” in the Northamptonshire Record Office. A circular went out, and was preserved at Ely, to say that the king had changed his mind and designated Stephen as his successor. Few will have believed it.

For the first two years of his reign, according to a local archdeacon, Stephen prospered, but by 1138 “things were starting to fall apart”. In Easter of that year the royal court met at Northampton. The king will have worn his crown, and he may have confirmed an earldom on the local castellan, Simon II of Senlis. Archbishop Thurstan was at court, along with “bishops, abbots, earls, barons and many magnates of England”. The king’s party, which was what it had become, had to battle on several fronts, and the archbishop of York was sent north with some troops and the responsibility to muster the forces of northern England against the Scots. They would win a victory at the Battle of the Standard later in the summer.

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1 This article is based on the Autumn Lecture given to the Society at St Andrew’s Hospital, Northampton, on 20 October 2012. Its main source is the records of St Andrew’s Priory. Professor Keith Stringer has very kindly read this paper and made several invaluable suggestions for its improvement. Passages where I am particularly reliant on him are marked by his initials [KJS].
These events in the north will have been followed in Northampton with particular interest. This was because they had a direct impact on the exercise of lordship in Northamptonshire, specifically the descent of the honour of Huntingdon. This was the main lay estate in the county, its core being the lands held at the time of Domesday Book by the Countess Judith. She was a niece of William the Conqueror, and the widow of Earl Waltheof, executed in 1076, whose body was claimed for burial at Crowland Abbey. Their lands descended to their daughter, Matilda, who was married twice. Her first marriage was to Simon I of Senlis, who gained from it the title earl of Huntingdon. They had two children, Simon II and Waltheof. Waltheof became abbot of Melrose and would be reputed a saint. In his Life it would be claimed that his vocation became apparent in the nursery, for while Simon played at building castles, Waltheof would act out the rituals of the mass.5 The later careers of the

two boys were in part moulded by their mother’s second marriage, to David, son of the king of Scots, with whom she had a son, Henry. The two marriages set up two competing claims to the honour of Huntingdon, from the house of Senlis and from the Scottish royal house. Henry I, and Stephen after him, and Henry II in his turn, would each recognise both claims.6

When Henry I died, the honour of Huntingdon was held by David, who had become king of Scots in 1124. By the first treaty of Durham early in 1136, the honour was granted to his son, Henry.7 Henry paid homage to Stephen for it, at York, and in so doing recognised the legitimacy of Stephen’s title to the English crown. So at least it would have appeared. And when Scottish armies made fresh incursions, in support of a claim to hold the earldom of Northumberland, even though they were defeated at the Standard, this claim was also recognised, by a second treaty of Durham in 1139. When Stephen was defeated at the Battle of Lincoln, on 2 February 1141, (Figure 2) David of Scots came south to join his niece the empress at her moment of triumph, and he could look to consolidate the gains that his family had already made. But he was one of those driven from Winchester in September 1141, only evading capture, so it was said, through the intervention of his godson, David Olifard, one of the knights of the honour of Huntingdon.8 Subsequently, Stephen was released and restored to power, and at this point he recognised the Senlis claim to the honour of Huntingdon.

The king will have done so very readily, for the claim was a strong one, and Simon II of Senlis had been and would continue to be one of his staunchest supporters. As Simon of Senlis he was one of the barons who witnessed Stephen’s charter of liberties issued at Easter 1136. In 1138 he was one of a number of Stephen’s supporters who were granted the dignity of an earldom. Charters of this time refer to him variously as “Earl Simon”, “Earl Simon of Senlis”, and “Simon, earl of Northampton”.9 It is interesting that in every one of these charters he appears alongside Robert, earl of Leicester. Simon was Robert’s son-in-law, married to his daughter Isabel. Their child, Simon III, was born around this date, and Professor Crouch suggests that the boy may have been brought up in Robert of Leicester’s household. The Senlis earldom may be taken as a further reflection of Beaumont influence at court in the early years of Stephen’s reign.10

Simon was one of six earls who fought at Lincoln at the side of the king and abandoned

story was told about Cardinal Hume, though here it was his sisters who acted as altar servers: Anthony Howard, Basil Hume: The Monk Cardinal (London, 2005), 9.


7 Richard of Hexham, in Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I, ed. R. Howlett, 3 (Rolls Series, 1886), 146, states that he was granted Carlisle and Doncaster “cum consulatu patris sui de Huntadun”.

8 King, Stephen, 170–1 and note 141.


the field. He would, however, remain loyal to the king in his captivity, named along with Walera of Meulan and William of Warenne by Orderic Vitalis in Normandy, and termed “the faithful three” by John Horace Round. He was at the siege of Winchester in late summer, a willing accessory of the bishop, who had ordered his own cathedral city to be razed to the ground – according at least to some of those who took the empress’s part. He attended the king’s second coronation, at Christmas 1141, and may have had a hand in the ceremonial. And when Stephen went north in 1142, to attempt to reassert his authority in the north, he travelled via Northampton. There he was taken sick, an illness so severe – according to his opponents – that his life was despaired of. It was perhaps in the castle, or perhaps in the priory, that “the vigour of health gradually came back and put him on his feet again”.

Figure 2. The Battle of Lincoln, 1141. The king is shown in the centre, while Baldwin fitz Gilbert (left) addresses the troops. From a manuscript of Henry of Huntingdon’s chronicle, BL Arundel MS 48, fo. 168v. (© The British Library Board)

12 John of Worcester, 3, 300-1.
13 J. Horace Round, The King’s Serjeants and Officers of State with their Coronation Services (London, 1911), 338-41.
14 Historia Novella, pp. 122-3; King, Stephen, 179-80.
During the 1140s, Earl Simon was not much noticed, but on two occasions the internal tensions of Stephen’s court resulted in a high-profile arrest, and on each occasion there is reason to suggest that he was present. The first occasion was at St Albans, with the arrest of Geoffrey de Mandeville, who – his supporters claimed – had been “malignèd by some of the leading men of the kingdom, who were motivated by envy” and as a result he was falsely charged with disloyalty and treachery. Simon is not one of the “leading men” named, but his close associate, Turgis of Avranches, was one of those who profited by Geoffrey de Mandeville’s fall, being given custody of Warden castle. Simon’s involvement in the second arrest may be presumed from the fact that it took place at Northampton. This was in 1146. Ranulf, earl of Chester, was looking northwards, to the threat presented by the Welsh, and proposed an expedition led by the king, but his “chief counsellors” suspected treachery, and the earl was arrested. It would prove the last of what became viewed as a series of high-profile arrests at court, and would figure on the charge-sheet against the king as the reign drew to a close.

After the empress had retired to Rouen and after the death of Robert, earl of Gloucester, in the late 1140s, the succession dispute was focused ever more clearly on the competing claims of the king’s elder son, Eustace, and the empress’s eldest son, Henry. A form of compromise had long been on the table, which would recognise Stephen as the lawful king, but Henry not Eustace as “the lawful heir”, and many of those sympathetic to the king recognised its force. But the protagonists themselves were reluctant to compromise. Just as Henry I had done earlier, endeavouring to secure the succession for the empress, first at London and then at Northampton, so now at Westminster in Easter week 1152, Eustace was designated as successor to Stephen, and oaths were sworn to him “by a good number of the nobles of England”. Again it seems hardly fanciful to place Earl Simon as one of those present. After Henry had landed in England, early in January 1153, Simon was one of those who mustered with the royal forces at Cirencester ready to oppose him. The confrontation came to nothing, for the political community was determined on an agreed settlement, and some of the earls who had previously supported the king now secretly made terms with the duke. It is not impossible that Simon of Senlis was amongst them, but he was not noted as having any part in the making of the peace, and very soon after terms were first agreed he was dead. He died in August 1153, around the same time as the king’s son, Eustace, and reputedly of the same disease. Men such as this, reflected John of Salisbury, were “not so much counts of the kingdom as public enemies”.

The Life of the earl’s brother, Abbot Waldef, who survived him for only a few years, is forced to admit that the critics had a case. But like a good Christian, so it was claimed, Earl Simon admitted his faults and showed a firm purpose of amendment.

18 Annals of St Augustine’s, Canterbury, s.a. 1152, Ungedruckte Anglo-Normannische Geschichtsquellen, ed. F. Liebermann (Strasbourg, 1879), 82; King, Stephen, 264.
19 Regesta, 3, no. 192; King, Stephen, 271.
20 John of Salisbury, Policraticus, 213.
In order to expiate his sins he increased the rents of, and conferred many other benefits on, the monks of the Cluniac order at St Andrew’s monastery at Northampton, and the nunnery of St Mary outside the walls, which he founded. He founded a house of the Cistercian order, namely Sawtry, the abbot and convent coming from Warden, under the direction of that holy man, Abbot Simon.21

The three houses named here obtained the lion’s share of what certainly were very generous benefactions, so generous that in Professor Stringer’s view they represented a “serious threat” to the economic strength of the estate.22 St Andrew’s priory, Northampton, was the foundation of his father, and it was where he was buried in 1153. It was a daughter-house of La Charité, which was where his father had been buried c.1113, having been taken ill on his return from a second journey to the Holy Land. The nunnery that Simon founded was at Delapré, its location very well known to members of our Society. The third house was Sawtry, on the edges of the fenland in Huntingdonshire. The records of these three foundations, largely the earl’s own charters or those that testify to his involvement, form a fascinating archive. They show the earl exercising his lordship, within the town of Northampton and elsewhere. You can hear his voice. It did not lack confidence.

There can be little doubt that his voice and actions echoed with the monk of Peterborough who wrote of the iniquities of the castle men. “They levied taxes on the villages every so often and called it ‘protection money’ (tenserie).”23 This language is found in Simon’s charters. In one of them, he confirmed the grant of the manor of Sywell, made by one of his men to the monks of St Andrew’s, “free and quit of tenserie and all customs and services owing to myself and my heirs”.24 He saw these rights as attached to his land and stretching out over time. He granted “his firm peace” to those coming to market at Yaxley, a Thorney Abbey manor which the monks hoped might rival the Ramsey fair at St Ives, consciously borrowing the language routinely used in royal charters of protection. They too were to be “quit of tenseria and all works”.25 As earl he claimed the “third penny” of market rights within the three county towns that he controlled, Northampton, Huntingdon, and Bedford. He granted to Nostell Priory three marks annually from his rents in Bedford, “that is to say from the third penny which belongs to my earldom”.26 And were you to ask him where these rights and privileges came from, at least when settled expansively in the priory or castle of Northampton, his answer would have been clear. They came from God. In several of his charters he describes himself as earl of Northampton, “by the grace of God”.27

The mention of tenserie in the Sywell charter can be dated to 1147. But by then such language was already dated. The churchmen came to focus on such taxes as the illegitimate

22 Earl David of Huntingdon, 109.
23 Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, 199.
24 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fo. 6v-7r: “liberam et quietam de tenseriis et omnibus serviciis atque consuetudinibus mihi et heredibus meis pertinentibus”.
25 Cambridge UL, MS 3020, fo. 21r: “quieta de tenseria et de uniuersis operibus”.
27 “Simon dei gracia comes Northamtonie”, BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fo. 6v, 263v.; “Simon dei gracia comes de Norhamtona”, ibid., fo. 9v; “Simon de Siluanecta dei gracia comes de Norhamtona”, ibid., fo. 8r-v (adapting the form of the place name to that found in the earl’s original charters).
imposition of lay power. This was the first dose of their prescription for the English body politic at the legatine council in 1151. “We ordain that the church and ecclesiastical possessions shall remain free from works and exactions that are popularly called tenserie or tallages … only those works owing to the king are not prohibited.” 28 There was an emphasis on the rights of the crown. In an influential chapter in his biography of Stephen, Ralph Davis coined the term, “the magnates’ peace”. 29 It may be seen as involving not just the lay magnates, and particularly the earls, but also the leading churchmen, and especially the bishops. It marks an important change in the climate of ideas. One question that can properly be put to the Senlis archive is to what extent did Simon of Senlis, earl of Northampton, respond to new circumstances? Did he change his behaviour? Did he at very least change his tone?

Earl Simon seems to have been slightly reticent in confessing his faults. In the Red Book of Thorney, the magnificent cartulary of that house, there is grant to it made in restitution “for the offenses and injuries and exactions which he has inflicted on the monastery”. 30 The price was a render of 40s. a year from the mill of Huntingdon. 31 But he helped mediate another grant in favour of the same monastery. It reads as follows:

To his most reverend father and lord, Theobald, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury and primate of all England, and to his venerable brothers, his fellow bishops, abbots and priors, and to all the faithful of Holy Church, both clergy and laity, Robert the humble minister of the church of Lincoln sends greetings and due deference. At a time when very many churches suffered grave damage from Gilbert, earl of Clare, for which he suffered excommunication, he violently subjected the church of Thorney to grave and inordinate afflictions. Then, wishing to give satisfaction to that church and to the abbot and brethren of that place, he came to Northampton, and in our presence and that of many religious persons, and earl Simon and very many other barons, he came to an agreement with the abbot and convent of Thorney, giving and conceding to them, in respect of the damage and injuries they had incurred, land worth 100s. a year from his own inheritance, of which he would grant them full seisin within six months of his receiving his inheritance. He gave and conceded this to them to hold in perpetual alms, enjoying free and peaceful possession. So that this should be better understood, and that the agreement should hold firm, he has sworn in our presence to hold to it forever. We maintain it and confirm it by the authority of our seal. Farewell.

I give the document in full since few texts convey quite so clearly the atmosphere of “the magnates’ peace”. 32 It is the joint enterprise of the leading churchmen, whose collegiality the bishop of Lincoln is concerned to stress, and the leading magnates. The bishop of Lincoln and the earl of Northampton presided together, and while the text comes from the bishop’s

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28 Councils & Synods with other Documents relating to the English Church 1 A.D. 871-1204, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke, 2, 823 (no. 151, cap. 1).
30 Cambridge UL, MS 3020, fo. 41r.
31 His son, Earl Simon III, would later make a further grant from Huntingdon mill to Ramsey Abbey, for the souls of his father, “who greatly oppressed the abbey in his days”, and he himself, who had acted similarly “out of necessity” during the rebellion of the earls: Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia, ed. William Henry Hart and Ponsonby A. Lyons, 1 (RS 79, 1884), 255-6, dated 28 March 1175 [KJS].
chancery the earl appears as the prime mover. All those present at Northampton, witnessing a form of liturgy which involved public penance and restitution for offences against the church, would have seen and heard how times had changed.

Shortly after this meeting at Northampton, the earl is to be found in a very public forum making a substantial grant from his own resources. This was the manor of Merton in Oxfordshire, a manor up to this point retained in demesne, amounting to 10 hides and valued at £8 a year in 1086. He made the grant “for my salvation, and that of my wife and children, and for the souls of my father and my mother and of all of my predecessors”. The grant is witnessed by Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, five other bishops, two earls, Henry of Essex, the royal constable, Richard de Lucy, and William de Chesney. It is likely to have been made soon after the consecration of one of the witnesses, Richard, bishop of London, in late September 1152. Archbishop Theobald would later confirm this grant, “which Simon earl of Northampton gave to them in perpetual alms”. He treated the earl with a studied courtesy. On another occasion, writing to the bishop of Lincoln, he confirmed a grant that had been made “by that noble man, Simon, earl of Northampton” to facilitate the foundation of Sawtry Abbey. The archbishop could afford to be magnanimous. He could not be entirely sure how the civil war would end, but in all other respects he was getting his way.

Sawtry Abbey was Simon of Senlis II’s chief religious foundation. A significant archive relates to the foundation of this house, which a later source dates very precisely to 31 July 1147. This archive allows us to raise, if not necessarily to answer, some further questions relating to the source of land used as endowment, and the impact on the ground of competing claims to the honour of Huntingdon. There are two key documents. The first is the “foundation charter” of the house, a record unusual only in the considerable detail given of the resources being granted. (Figure 3) The other, and the earlier, text is an almost unique record, a written statement of the verdict of a local jury as to the bounds of the estate. It was issued in the name of Alexander Maufe, one of the earl’s tenants, and he put the monks in seisin of the carefully delineated estate, as – he is careful to stress – the earl’s agent. The foundation charter incorporates much of this material. Reading these documents in print, a historian – trained to look for later inflation of earlier texts – would be tempted to condemn them as forgeries. But happily each of them survives and in the

34 Lees suggested “autumn 1152” as the date of the grant. More likely at the meeting of Theobald “and the bishops of the province” in London on 7 Dec. 1152: Councils & Synods, 2, 826–8 (no. 151). One of the witnesses, Gilbert Foliot, bishop of Hereford, had been at Northampton, possibly at St Andrew’s priory, on 18 November 1152, hearing a case as papal judge delegate: Liber Eliensis, ed. E.O. Blake (Camden 3rd ser. 92, 1962), 355–6.
35 Records of the Templars, 186. The archbishop’s charter refers to a charter of King Stephen, which has not survived.
36 Registrum Antiquissimum of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln, 2, ed. C.W. Foster (Lincoln RS 28, 1933), 19 (no. 330).
38 BL Cotton ch. vii. 3; printed Monasticon, v. 522–3.
Figure 3. The “foundation charter” of Sawtry Abbey, showing the unusual counterseal of earl Simon II of Senlis, a “lion passant contorné”, its tail passing between its hind legs. The first three witnesses are the earl’s son, Simon [III], Walter, abbot of Ramsey, and Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon.

BL Cotton ch. vii. 3.

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same repository. When they are placed alongside each other, seemingly written in the same
hand, the foundation charter bearing a fine example of the earl’s seal, those doubts disappear.
Once you can trust a record you can question it with more confidence.

We may start with the descent of the honour, as given by the jurors by way of preface to
their verdict.

Our fathers who lived in this township in the time of Turkil the Dane and Thorogund,
held the land of the township with these boundaries and divisions and liberties, in wood
and plane and marsh, and Whittlesey Mere, as we have learned from them. And we their
sons have so held, under Earl Waldef and Countess Judith; and Earl Simon, who was given
in marriage the daughter of the said Waldef and Judith with the whole fee, by the grant
of King William, who acquired England; and under David, king of Scots, who received
in marriage the same daughter of theirs, Matilda, after the death of Earl Simon her lord,
in the time of King Henry; and up to this time under our lord Earl Simon, son of the
first Earl Simon.

It is interesting to see the way the jurors interpreted the instructions that they were given.40
In the first place, they give the full descent of the honour, including the lordship of David,
king of Scots. What they had been told to do was trace the rights back to the current earl’s
father, and to his grandfather and grandmother. When the “foundation charter” was issued,
that was how it was phrased, in terms solely of the Senlis title. Secondly, and this in part
must explain why they did so, they have told the story in terms of their own tenure, not
that of their lords. “Thus they held, and they were entitled to hold, of the lords aforesaid,
by the law of the land.” Their insistence is not surprising. If we look for the one thing that
most concerned the men and women who lived through the civil war, it was for their own
security, the peaceful possession of their own lands. It was important to the men of the
honour of Huntingdon that their title was secure. And it was important to the religious
houses to which the lords of the honour gave benefactions also. In the cartularies of St
Andrew’s priory, Northampton, the charters of the lords start with those of the three Senlis
earls, with some confusion between the acts of Simon II and Simon III, and then give those
of the earls of the Scottish line. Similarly in the Red Book of Thorney, there are two charters
of Henry, son of David of Scots, relating to the market of Yaxley, followed by two of Simon
II of Senlis. They are given among the royal charters not those of the magnates.41The bishop
of Lincoln, Robert Chesney, was similarly even-handed. Again to St Andrew’s priory, he
confirmed the grant of the church of Potton, “as is contained in the charters of the advocates
of that house, namely David, king of Scots, and Simon, earl of Northampton”.42 Any rivalry
between the two men was not at issue here. Their charters were equally authoritative.

The earl’s other new foundation was at Hardingstone outside Northampton, where he

40 These are to be found in translation in *English Lawsuits from William I to Richard I*, ed. R.C. Van Caenegem,
41 Cambridge UL, MS 3020, fos. 20r, 21r. The two charters of “Henry, son of the king of Scots”, are printed
in *The Charters of David I: The Written Acts of David I King of Scots, 1124–1153, and of his son Henry, Earl of
Northumberland, 1139-52* (Woodbridge, 1999), pp. 83–4 (nos. 63–4). There is much of interest in this splendid
collection, including the suggestion that Henry did not claim the title of earl in respect of his tenure of the
honour of Huntingdon.
42 *EEA 1: Lincoln 1067-1185*, p. 120 (no. 192): “sicut in cartis advocatorum eiusdem ecclesie videlicet David
regis Scotie et Simonis comitis de Norhamtona continetur”.
endowed a nunnery which would become known as Delapré Abbey. The records of this foundation are more fragmentary than those for Sawtry and it is difficult to tell a clear story. It appears to be a new, and independent, foundation, though later tradition said that the nascent community had moved from Fotheringhay. A charter of Earl Simon III, referred to in an inspeximus of the early fourteenth century, refers back to his father’s gift to the nuns “of all that Hugh Grimbald held in Hardingstone, and all that Walter de Alta held there, and of all the holding formerly of Other, formerly porter of the king of Scotland in the town”. With this latter prompt, and in the context of the known descent of the honour, when the nuns came to write their history a century later, what had happened seemed clear. These men had been put in possession by David, king of Scots, but then when Earl Simon II of Senlis, who had been in the guardianship of the king of Scots “recovered the honour of Huntingdon as his inheritance, he disseised these men”. Granted that Hugh Grimbald was the brother of Robert Grimbald, Earl Simon’s steward, and a frequent witness to the earl’s charters, the idea of his having been dispossessed seems highly improbable. A remarkable record, now in the Northamptonshire Record Office, proves that he was not. It shows that the site of the nunnery at Hardingstone had originally been granted by Earl Simon I to St Andrew’s priory. The prior and convent now granted it to Earl Simon II, their “advocate”, and were granted resources in exchange. They were given 40s. a year from the mills of Earls Barton and Great Doddington, and other income of just over 20s. a year, “until the earl shall give them 60s. in exchange, in lands or churches”.

In the charters for St Andrew’s priory, the earl was on home ground. It was in Northampton that he appears at his most confident. At the same time it is here that he appears at his most accommodating. When he grants to the monks the mills of Gretton (Northants) and Ketton (Rutland), he records that he has given them possession “by means of this charter in the presence of his worthy and lawful men, both clergy and laymen, from the town and from the country”. By way of a postscript, after the list of witnesses, the earl adds that in order to keep them completely happy he has granted that they may take timber from his woods, all that they need, in order to repair the mills. He is concerned to record that his tenants, several of them men of substance, have made grants to the monks “in my presence at Northampton and that of several of my barons”. Anselm de Chokes, the holder of a barony, thus granted the abbey two-thirds of his demesne tithes of Wollaston, to which they had proved their right in a synod of the bishop of Lincoln held at Northampton. Possibly on the same occasion, Robert de Pinkney gave the monks the knight’s fee which Gozo of Pevensey and Godfrid held of him in Sulgrave. In each case the tenant’s own gift is witnessed by the earl.

46 Facsimiles of Early Charters from Northamptonshire Collections, ed. F.M. Stenton (NRS, 4, 1930), 144-5 (no. LV).
47 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fo. 8r-v: “seisiui predictos monachos per presentem cartam astantibus probis legitimisque hominibus meis clericis et laicos tam de urbe quam de villa”.
49 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fo. 224r (Anselm); BL Royal 11 B. ix, fos. 40v-41r (Robert). The bishop of Lincoln confirmed these two grants together: EEA 1: Lincoln 1067-1185, pp. 120-1 (no. 193).
On at least one such occasion the king was present at the time that the transfer was made. William of Avranches’s gift of the manor of Sywell in Northamptonshire, most unusually, bears a date in a form appropriate to a royal act. “This was done in the year of Our Lord 1147, when Stephen ruled in England, in the time of Pope Eugenius.”50 The royal charter of confirmation was given at Northampton, and it seems clear that a visit to Northampton at some time in 1147 needs to be added to the king’s itinerary. And it was not just secular business that was conducted in the king’s presence. In a charter given in London, and witnessed by Earl Simon, the king confirmed a grant made to the monks of St Andrew’s by Nicholas fitz Serann at Bures in Essex, “which this Nicholas gave to them in my presence when they received him as a member of the community”.51 The king enjoyed ceremonial and was comfortable with Cluniac observance. His brother, Henry, bishop of Winchester, had been a monk of La Charité, and his mother, Adela, had ended her days at the great nunnery of Marcigny.

The earl would customarily make his gifts for his own salvation and that of his family, so that they might merit eternal life, and for the souls of his parents. A charter for the Augustinian abbey of St James in Northampton shows a more specific concern. In it he grants the canons the mill of Duston, “for the souls of my father and mother, and specifically for the recovery of my son from illness and for the prolongation of his life”.52 They were to hold the mill for so long as the earl could warrant it. On failure of the warranty they were to have in exchange 20s. of annual rent and a cash sum of 10 marks, or in lieu of the 10 marks “their value in land or in other rents”. Another grant, to St Andrew’s priory, seems to show how a valuation would be made in terms of “lands and other rents”. This was the grant of the whole meadow of Eastcroft, valued at 40s., “in respect of 20 marks and a horse”, to Swain of Northampton, “thus I say, to him and his heir”. He was to hold this until the earl was able to restore to him a hide of land which had belonged to Geoffrey Fitz Peter, “which is his right”.53 Swain was a prominent burgess of the town. His heir, Robert Fitz Swain, who was one of the witnesses, would be one of those lending money to Henry II soon after his accession.54 Father and son will have driven a hard bargain. What is interesting here is that there is every indication that they were bargaining with the earl himself.

To the earl’s opponents, in the words of a battle oration supplied by Henry, archdeacon of Huntingdon, here was a man “whose action is only talk, whose gift is mere promise: he talks as if he has acted and promises as if he has given”.55 It is an interesting formulation. Henry knew his man. The earl’s charters may have passed through his hands. Many of the earl’s gifts were indeed promises, his grants provisional. To the examples already quoted may be added the grant to St Andrew’s of 100s. in Ryhall, “until I shall give the monks an exchange from my own inheritance in Huntingdon”, and of rents in Earls Barton, “until I

50 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fos. 199v–200r: Actum est hec anno incarnacionis dominice m. c. xlvi. regnante Stephano in Anglia . temporibus Eugenii pape. in margin anno Stephani regni . xiii.
51 Regesta, 3, no. 613: “sicut prefatus Nicholaus eam illis dedit et concessit coram me quando receperunt eum ad faciendum monachum”.
53 BL Royal 11 B. ix, fo. 7r: “pro suo servicio et pro viginti marcis argenti et uno caballo, ei dico et suo heredi, de me et herede meo donec reddam ei hidam terre que fuit Gaufridi filii Petri ut suum rectum”.
55 Henry of Huntingdon, 77.
shall assign them from my patrimony 20s. either in a church or other rent”.56 For the monks such payments were unsatisfactory, since they were out of their hands, dependent on the memory and goodwill of the earl’s agents. This clearly could not always be relied upon. Twenty shillings a year had been granted by Earl Simon I from the mills of Paxton to purchase wine for mass; his son had to instruct his steward “and all his ministers of Huntingdonshire” to make the payments without contradiction at the stated terms.57

Northampton was a mint town, if never of the first rank, and coins were struck here throughout Stephen’s reign. Two moneyers are recorded, Paien and Willem. Paien struck coins throughout the reign, a force for stability in changing times. His first coins were from Stephen’s first type; this was a genuinely national coinage, issued when the king’s authority was uncontested. By the end of this type, which extended into the 1140s, coins were struck from locally-made dies rather than from dies issued by the central workshops in London: a variant of Type 1, followed by coins of a quite distinctive local design (Type 3). Most interestingly, in the late 1980s, a reverse die of the Type 1 variant Northampton issue was found during excavation of the Thames Exchange development on the London waterfront. It is suggested that it came to London, “when Northampton was reintegrated into Stephen’s network of mints”. By a most happy coincidence, three Northampton coins found elsewhere seem to provide evidence of this reintegration. They were from Stephen Type 6, and found in a hoard excavated at Wicklewood in Norfolk. (Figure 4) The date suggested for this type is c.1150. There is just the one coin from the Northampton mint surviving from Stephen’s Type 7, the national coinage which throughout the country provided tangible evidence of the making of the peace.58

56 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fos. 260r (Ryhall), 263v (Earls Barton, another complicated transaction) [KJS].
57 BL Cotton Vesp. E. xvii, fo. 9v [KJS].
1153 was the year the peace was made and the civil war ended. It rapidly became a very good peace, better than there had been before, in the view of the monks of Peterborough. The one recorded event at Northampton in 1153 was the burial of Simon of Senlis II, earl of Northampton, at St Andrew’s Priory. It was a short step to link the peace settlement and the earl’s death. “Earl Simon was buried at Northampton, sated with every kind of lawlessness and with every kind of indecency.” The archdeacon of Huntingdon saw the earl as an enemy of the peace and his death as providential. For him there was no such thing as the magnates’ peace. But by the time that earl Simon died in mid-August the peace had been made. There is no reason to think that he would not have accommodated himself to it. He may already have started to do so, for the castle of Northampton was never invested by Duke Henry in his progress through the midland counties in the summer of 1153. Earl Simon remained close to his father-in-law, Robert, earl of Leicester, who was one of the first to come to terms with Duke Henry and one of the makers of the peace. Earl Simon’s death deprived him of the opportunity to do homage to the duke and in so doing secure his inheritance. It could hardly have been refused.

Simon III of Senlis was about fifteen years old when his father died. His connections did the best that they could for him. He was allowed to succeed to the honour, and given the title of earl, presumably by King Stephen. His mother issues charters jointly with him: “Countess Isabel, daughter of Robert, earl of Leicester, and Earl Simon, her son and heir”. She quite ignores her former husband, the earl of Northampton, but rather draws attention to her father, the earl of Leicester, one of the new king’s chief counsellors. Here you feel is a lioness fighting for her cub. But their independence and standing were drifting away. The terrae datae, the crown lands ostensibly given to the family, were removed. It appears that Henry II had declined to confirm Simon “in possession of the honour when he came to the throne”. Then when the king made peace with the Scots in 1157, he resumed the border counties which the Scots had previously controlled, but was able to sweeten the pill by granting Malcolm the honour of Huntingdon. One of Malcolm’s first acts was to refound Sawtry Abbey, “as it was held by my grandfather King David of blessed memory, and as Henry king of England restored it to me with my other rights of Huntingdon”. One of those witnessing this act, which quite ignored his own family’s involvement in the foundation, was Waldef, abbot of Melrose.

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59 Henry of Huntingdon, 92; so also, more temperately, Gesta Stephani, 238-9.
60 There is a useful map in Davis, King Stephen, 116.
63 Stringer, “A Cistercian archive”, 329 note 23, the fullest discussion of Earl Simon III’s status, 1153 x 1157.
64 Sir Christopher Hatton’s Book of Seals, ed. Lewis C. Loyd and Doris Mary Stenton (NRS 15, 1950), no. 436.
The Literary Career of Charles Lamotte

PETER McKay

The recently published volume of early eighteenth-century estate letters from Boughton House includes some 88 letters from the Reverend Charles Lamotte mostly to John, 2nd Duke of Montagu.¹ Such details of Lamotte’s life as have been discovered are set out on pages 1 to 5 of that volume but a summary may be helpful.

Lamotte was of Huguenot extraction and was born in about 1679. He was educated at Westminster School then Trinity College, Cambridge. Ordained deacon in the London diocese in March 1704, he was made a priest six months later in the Diocese of Peterborough and almost immediately was introduced as Vicar of Weekley (Figure 1) by Ralph, 1st Duke of Montagu. It seems likely that Lamotte was already known to the Duke and to John, the future 2nd Duke, before this appointment was made, for, in the Dedication of An Essay upon the State and Condition of Physicians to the latter, Lamotte states that he had known him “from your Infancy”. John (1690-1749) succeeded his father in 1709 and in 1714 Lamotte was made Rector of Warkton. (Figure 2) The Weekley living was swapped for that at Scaldwell in 1722. (Figure 3)

Lamotte’s secular responsibilities at this time may be inferred from his letters to Mark Antonie, the Duke’s “chief executive” at Montagu House in London. He was, in short, the Duke’s ears and eyes in Northamptonshire, whether it was responding to a request for particulars of the Brigstock estate, which the Duke subsequently purchased, or supervising alterations at Boughton House or in the gardens there.²

He also informed the Duke of cases where the latter’s charity or exercise of influence would be appropriate and in 1719 he refers to himself as “Trustee for Your Grace at Kettering School”.³ In 1717, presumably under instruction, he held an inquest at Aldwincle, which probably related to the Duke’s rights there as the owner of the Gloucester Fee, and two years later he managed to rescue “an old paper” that related to the Fee’s holding in Thrapston.⁴

The letters tell us very little about Lamotte’s private life or spiritual duties but it does appear that it was not until 1718 that he established himself in the Rectory at Warkton. His mind then turned to matrimony which he appears to have regarded as a purely financial transaction and, unsurprisingly, he was not successful. Then, two years later in 1720, his position changed radically when in June Elias Walter was appointed steward of the Boughton “collection” and in October Mark Antonie died. Antonie’s job was then split; a surveyor, John Booth, took over the estate management role while Andrew Marchant became the accountant in London. In Northamptonshire Walter’s job specification was clearly more extensive than that of his predecessor, John Balgay, who had retired as of Lady Day 1720. It is therefore not surprising that he and Lamotte should clash. In a letter of 21 March 1721

² Estate letters, 14, 22-23, 26.
³ Estate letters, 21, 25-26, 29.
⁴ Estate letters, 15, 27. For the Gloucester Fee, 263-68.
to Booth, Walter complains of Lamotte’s interference in the appointment of a gamekeeper: “you always told me it was my business, & not his.” Then, in July 1722, Lamotte is reported circulating rumours of Walter’s impending dismissal. The Duke had already rebuked Lamotte a year earlier for cultivating untruths about Walter and whether he intervened on this occasion is not known but it is probably significant that after this date none of the surviving letters refer to Walter or estate matters.

Banished from the role he had previously played in the management of the Duke’s estates, Lamotte turned to the study of history and antiquities. In November 1721 he tells Duke John that he has begun to “peep in antiquities with Mr Bridges”. In 1725, following the Duke, he was elected a member of the Society of Antiquaries and in February 1727 gave a paper there on the Doors and Gates of the Ancients. A further paper on their Lights and Windows followed three weeks later. An essay on *The Antiquity and History of Funeral Orations* survives in manuscript and would appear to date from this period. 1728 also saw

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5 Estate letters, 113, 153.
6 Estate letters, 48. The reference is of course to the county historian, John Bridges (1666–1724). Lamotte appears to have acted as one of his field workers. T. Brown and G. Foard, *The Making of a County History* (Leicester, 1994), 41.
8 British Library, Lansdowne MS 664. This manuscript came from Bishop White Kennett’s collection and would therefore have been produced before Kennett’s death in December 1728. It was discussed at the Antiquaries on 15 June 1730.
Lamotte’s first publication, *An Essay upon the State and Condition of Physicians among the Antients*. The title page continues …Occasioned by a late Dissertation of the Reverend Dr Middleton: asserting That Physick was Servile and Dishonourable among the old Romans, and only practis’d by Slaves, and the meanest of the People. This pamphlet is considered further below. In May of the same year Lamotte was made a DD of Cambridge University and in May 1732 he was appointed a chaplain to Frederick, Prince of Wales. This appointment gave Lamotte the opportunity to dedicate the second edition of his next publication, *An Essay upon Poetry and Painting, with Relation to the Sacred and Profane History*, to the Prince.

After 1732 the number of surviving letters from Lamotte decreases dramatically but when in 1735 a Canonry at Christ Church, Oxford became available, Lamotte bestirred himself to write to the Duke and ask him to use his influence to secure this appointment. “I assure you my Lord tis not ambition or a desire of money…that makes me give you this trouble, but to have an agreeable place to spend the winter in, & to retire decently & by degrees out of this country as I intend.”⁹ This seems to imply that Lamotte was actively trying to escape from Northamptonshire and find a position more compatible with his intellectual interests; there are suggestions throughout the essays listed below that he felt stuck in the country without access to a good library. “I quote by Memory” he writes in his 1737 essay on Cato while, referring to the April 1741 essay on Atterbury’s Japis, it was only “by Means of a Friend, I got sight of that ingenious Piece.”¹⁰ In a letter dated February 1736 the

⁹ *Estate letters*, 69.
¹⁰ In the spring of 1727 Lamotte wrote to the Society of Antiquaries stating that he was “obliged to live altogether in the Country [and] desires to be excused any further Payments.” Society of Antiquaries’ Minutes, 18 April 1727. It is difficult to believe that this exile was other than on the Duke’s direct orders.
question of other Church preferments is raised again with the Duke despite an acknowledgement of the trouble already given. Nothing, however, was achieved and Lamotte died in January 1742 and was buried in Warkton Church. A sermon, *The Greatness of God’s Works in the Vegetable World*… preached by Lamotte in August 1740 at a meeting of the Stamford Gentlemen Florists and Gardeners was printed locally.

**Published works**

The *Essay upon Poetry and Painting* was first published in 1730. It consists of three letters and an appendix, *Obscenity in Poetry and Painting*. The first letter is a discussion of the truth of a painting and the bounds which painters and poets should observe. He condemns in particular the conscious use of anachronism, citing as an example Raphael’s picture of St Cecilia at Bologna with St Mary Magdalene and St Augustine. Richardson’s excuse (“Perhaps these five saints [St Paul and St John also appear in the picture] were the Patrons of those for whom the picture was made or for whom they had a particular Veneration”) is smartly dismissed. “A great Artist and a noble Genius should set himself above such mean Considerations… he should not debase or prostitute his pencil [for the] Vanity of others.”

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11 Estate letters, 72.
This theme is pursued through the other two letters where numerous examples of different types of errors are cited and analysed. It is a fine display of erudition but shows little or no appreciation of the paintings discussed.

An Essay upon the State and Condition of Physicians among the Antients was published, says Lamotte in the Preface, because some of his friends “prevailed with me to give it to the World.” It had, he says, been “drawn up for a Company of learned Men who did me the honour (some Years since) to admit me into their Society…” A footnote tells us that this society was the Society of Antiquaries in London. Lamotte’s essay was but one contribution to the vigorous debate concerning the status of doctors in the ancient world. This had been started by Dr Mead’s Harveian Oration for 1723, subsequently published in 1724 with an appendix by Edmund Chishull entitled Dissertatio de Nummis quibusdam a Smyrnaeis in Medicorum honorem percussis [A dissertation on coins found at Smyrna struck in honour of doctors].

One of the early respondents to Mead’s Oration was Conyers Middleton (1683-1750) who in 1726 published Middletoni Dissertatio de statu Medicorum apud veteres Romanos. Lamotte’s contribution came relatively late in the controversy (1728) and while he disagreed with Middleton’s conclusions, he notes that “Dr Middleton has clear’d himself of the false Quotations that were laid to his charge.” This pamphlet is perhaps the best of Lamotte’s published works; it is clearly argued and has less of the leaden and pedantic point-scoring which characterises most of his other works. The various other pamphlets published in the course of this controversy are set out in Nichol’s Literary Anecdotes.

Although Conyers Middleton was three or four years younger than Lamotte, it is not unlikely that they got to know one another at Trinity College, Cambridge. The precise date of Lamotte’s matriculation is not known but Middleton went up in January 1700. While Lamotte was becoming established in Northamptonshire in 1704, Middleton was still at Trinity, becoming a fellow there in 1706. In 1723 Middleton left England to go on a “grand tour”; by November 1723 he had reached Rome and in March 1724 he visited Naples. On 13 May of the same year he signed the Padua University visitors’ book, presumably on his way back home. Perhaps he was inspired to make the tour by his contemporary, John Durant Breval (1680/1-1738), who held a Fellowship at Trinity College between 1703 and 1708 when he was sacked by the Master, Richard (Dr) Bentley. His Remarks on several Parts of Europe was published in 1726. In the course of his tour Middleton collected material for his Letter from Rome, Shewing an Exact Conformity between Popery and Paganism… which was published in 1729. Despite the fact that Lamotte had disagreed with him about the status of Roman doctors, Middleton nevertheless sent him a copy of his Letter from Rome on its publication. Some ten years later when his Life of Cicero was ready for publication,

13 The Society’s Minutes record that Lamotte presented a copy to the Library on 21 February 1728.
14 Preface. See also pages 47-48 where Lamotte states that he has a “just and real Esteem” for Middleton.
15 J. Nichols, Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1812), i. 266-70.
17 In two substantial folio volumes. A second set of Remarks (which does not duplicate any of the material in the 1726 book) was published in 1738, again in two folio volumes.
a two-and-a-half page invitation to subscribe (“a Guinea and a half for the small Paper and
two Guineas for the large”) was published in the September 1739 number of The History
of the Works of the Learned.

The History of the Works of the Learned was the main vehicle used by Lamotte for his literary
endeavours although an essay on Josephus appeared in its predecessor, The Literary Magazine,
in November 1736. Both these journals were themselves offsprings of The Present State of
the Republike of Letters, which began publication in January 1728 and ceased in December
1736. Its editor was Andrew Reid, a somewhat shadowy figure whose chief claim to fame
was as joint editor of an Abridgment of the Royal Society’s Philosophical Transactions (1720-
32) published in 1733. In the previous year he had published an abridgement of Newton’s
Chronology. The Present State of the Republike of Letters was published monthly; each monthly
part cost one shilling, contained 80 pages and was intended to be bound into a half-yearly
volume; the pages as well as the articles were through-numbered from January to July and
from August to December. The Literary Magazine was also a monthly publication but
contained only 40 pages and was printed two columns to a page. Both publications appeared
throughout 1735 and 1736 but were merged as of January 1737 to become The History of
the Works of the Learned. This journal reverted to the format adopted by The Present State. It
was “the united Concern of the Proprietors of the Present State of the Republike of Letters
and the Literary Magazine to substitute something in the Place of these Journals, which,
though not of another kind, may yet be more extensively useful than either of them.” The
editors (Ephraim Chambers had probably joined Andrew Reid by this stage) continue that
as well as giving “an Account of all the valuable Books” recently published, “many curious
Dissertations on miscellaneous Subjects… by their learned Correspondents” will be
included.19

Despite these assurances, abstracts continued to predominate. Indeed Lamotte appears to
be the only correspondent who wrote articles not attached to a recent publication. These
abstracts though cover a wide range of subjects. Many of the articles have a religious flavour;
an abstract of part of Doddridge’s Family Expositor appeared in the August 1741 number
while in October 1738 the two quarto volumes of A. DesVignoles’s Chronologie de l’Histoire
Sainte were reviewed. More formal religion is represented by such books as Dr Waterland’s
Sermons (August 1742) or Dr A.A. Sykes’s A brief Discourse concerning the Credibility of Miracles
and Revelations (March 1742). Travel literature is covered with extracts from, for example,
Breval’s second set of Remarks on Several Parts of Europe (November and December 1738)
and de Blainville’s Travels (November and December 1742) while history is acknowledged
by reviews of the seven volumes of the Thurloe State Papers (July 1742) and a similar review
of the State Papers of Roger Boyle, 1st Earl of Orrery in June 1742.

More esoterically, James Anderson’s book on The Constitutions of the ancient and honourable
Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons was summarised in the November 1739 number, while
Stukeley’s second volume of the Description of the British Isles is noted in August 1742. The
sciences are usually represented by reviews of volumes of the Royal Society’s Philosophical
Transactions while the May 1742 number contains an abridgement of Mémoires of the Royal
Academy of Sciences in Paris by Fontenelle. There are articles on Astronomy (September

19 Preface, January 1737 number. For the history of these journals, see British Literary Magazines. The Augustan
1739) and Algebra (May 1741) while Samuel Sharp’s *A Treatise on the Operations of Surgery* is noticed in October 1738. Between January 1737 and April 1739 some 20 exchanges between Philalethes Cantabrigiensis (James Jurin) and Dr Henry Pemberton on an obscure point of Newtonian physics were printed. The issues of November and December 1739 contain a long (50 pages) if somewhat patronising review of the second volume of David Hume’s first work, *A Treatise on Human Nature* which was published anonymously in 1739.

Magazines of this type were a feature of the late seventeenth/early eighteenth centuries. The Preface to the January 1737 number just quoted cites the *Journal des Scavans* first published in Paris in 1665 as its original, closely followed by Pierre Bayle’s *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* first published in Rotterdam in 1685. Bayle is usually credited with the invention of the term “Republic of Letters” and, in appropriating it for his first venture, Reid was laying claim to a state of mind not just a title. To be (or to consider oneself to be) a member of the Republic of Letters was a conscious choice and carried with it certain obligations. Learning in whatever field was considered to have a value in its own right and workers in any particular field of study felt able to approach their fellows and share opinions without being deterred by barriers of status or position. On the other side there was an obligation to assist as far as reasonably possible. On a more mundane level the extracts which the journals provided meant that the less affluent scholar could keep up with developments both in his own field of interest and in others without incurring the often considerable cost of actually buying the book.

Lamotte’s contributions, as mentioned above, are mostly dissertations unconnected to a specific publication. His articles are usually signed unlike those of other contributors. His first acknowledged article appeared in the November 1736 number of *The Literary Magazine*. Although this is unsigned, Lamotte specifically claims it in his April 1737 article in *The History*. Reid, as editor, prefaced the article: “We are highly indebted to our learned Correspondent for the judicious Remarks sent to us. We shall always be proud of such curious Pieces as both instruct and divert the Public…” Lamotte begins his piece: “Sir: I have received your last kind and obliging Letter, wherein you desired me to give you my Opinions of Josephus…” Was this Lamotte’s first contribution to a Reid journal? It is impossible to tell but none of the small number of non-book-related articles in either journal suggests Lamotte’s authorship. The introductory parade set out above could therefore be taken to indicate that this article was Lamotte’s maiden effort.

His dissertations are usually around 4,000–5,000 words though that in the September 1738 issue is the shortest at only about 1,700 words. By contrast the two-part essay, in the January and June 1739 numbers, amounts in total to some 12,500 words; the essay on Critics

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20 Sharp’s highly critical *Letters from Italy* published in 1766 provoked one of the eighteenth century’s most famous literary disputes when Giuseppe Baretti published his counter-attack, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy* in 1768.

21 This follows on from many previous articles in *The Present State*. Both James Jurin (1684–1750) and Henry Pemberton (1694–1771) appear in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

22 “…Time and Use may ripen these Qualities in our Author; and we shall probably have Reason to consider this, compared with his later Productions, in the same light as we view the Juvenile Works of Milton…” (December 1739, 404.)

23 R. Sweet, *Antiquaries. The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 2004), 60–70 sets out some examples of the way the system worked (and sometimes did not) as far as British antiquaries were concerned. The notes to these pages refer to some of the wider literature on this subject.
(November 1741) is only slightly shorter at about 11,700 words. The subject matter of these articles is indicated in the summaries below, and what this subject matter seems to show is that Lamotte’s thinking and attitudes were somewhat outdated by the time these dissertations were published. There are echoes of the “ancients v. moderns” debate which was at its height in England in about 1700.24 These echoes are to be found in the suggestion that the Ancients possessed technologies which were subsequently lost, which idea is conflated, in the October 1739 essay, with the notion that it was the priestly caste who were the guardians of such technologies and leads Lamotte, no doubt with assistance from William Stukeley, to conclude that the Druids used telescopes.25 The particular interest in the Jews (September 1737, January, June and July 1739) is perhaps explained by Lamotte’s Huguenot ancestry. Like the Huguenots the Jews had been driven from country to country on account of their religion but what was particularly important for Lamotte was the vigour with which Judaism condemned the worship of idols; they were in effect also fighters against the “idolatry” practised by the Roman Catholic Church.

But Lamotte’s chief interest was in the classics. In the Essay upon Criticks (November 1741), Lamotte recounts the trials of a number of critics (i.e. editors) of the classics and indeed claims this occupation for himself.26 This activity did not lend itself to collaboration and in any event (despite Dr Bentley’s work which Lamotte specifically praised) this was a field dominated by continental scholars, usually of the previous century. Not only does Lamotte’s mindset look outdated but his main intellectual interest belonged to another time and another place.

Further, the way that intellectuals interacted was beginning to change. Although Lamotte was a member of the Society of Antiquaries, there is no record of any attendance after 1728. Similarly, although he was a member of the Spalding Gentlemen’s Society, there is no evidence that he took any active part in their proceedings. Increasingly knowledge and ideas were discussed before being published to the world at large and in this movement the Spalding Gentlemen’s Society was the first such Society outside London. It had been founded by a lawyer, Maurice Johnson, in 1709-10 and he and his countryman, William Stukeley, played an important part in the revival of the Society of Antiquaries in London in 1717. The Treasurer and Librarian of the Spalding Society, Timothy Neve (1694-1757) founded a similar Society in Peterborough soon after he moved to Alwalton in 1729. Also following the Spalding example, a Gentlemen’s Society was founded at Stamford in 1721 under the patronage of John, 6th Earl of Exeter. This Society needed to be revived in 1736 by Stukeley who renamed it the Brazen Nose Society. It seems unlikely that Lamotte took any part in the proceedings of any of these societies – if he had, it is probable that his name would have been noted somewhere. He was though involved in a Club in Wellingborough in 1729 but meetings of this Club (or perhaps Lamotte’s attendance at it) appears to have been spasmodic; writing to Edward Lye, Rector of Yardley Hastings, on 3 January 1729, Lamotte refers to the next meeting three months away in April.

The Spalding Society met on Thursday evenings and often considered letters sent to the Society or its officers discussing some new discovery or theory. These letters were then

26 November 1741, 332. “…you may perhaps wonder that I should offer to set up for one myself.”
27 Correspondence of Edward Lye, 51-2. In a later letter (ibid.) Lamotte tells Lye that he has received a pamphlet
carefully filed by subject in large heavy-paper folders. Both the letters and their folders still survive. Correspondence of this kind served to add variety and freshness to the Society’s proceedings together with an element of individuality which the Journals could not. Thus correspondence fostered the bonds that had been created within the Republic of Letters and yet there is no letter from Lamotte among the Spalding Society archives. As the essays summarised in the Appendix below show, classical literature remained Lamotte’s core interest though he was not uninterested in antiquarian matters, particularly if they provided an opportunity to flatter the Montagu family. But by the 1730s textual criticism of the kind favoured by Lamotte was no longer at the centre of intellectual debate. Nor did it lend itself to the type of cooperative scholarship which organisations like the Gentlemen’s Societies represented. Indeed by the time Lamotte died in 1742 the antiquarian and literary bias of the Gentlemen’s Societies was itself under threat. In 1743 the Northampton Philosophical Society was founded. With its emphasis on science and technology and social improvement, the agenda of this Society would have been totally alien to Lamotte.

Appendix: Lamotte’s dissertations

The Literary Magazine
November 1736. Remarks on Josephus.
Following the publication of William Whiston’s translation of the Works of Josephus there was considerable discussion as to the veracity of Josephus as a historian. Lamotte notes a number of omissions (including the Massacre of the Innocents) and a number of mistaken statements usually included to mollify Roman susceptibilities. “In short Josephus can never pass for a true and faithful historian” concludes Lamotte. Some of the material here reappears in the April 1737 essay.

The History of the Works of the Learned
February 1737. Remarks upon the Death of Cato, and the Book which he read before he killed himself.
Cato [of Utica] took his own life in 46 BC following Caesar’s defeat of Metellus Scipio. According to Plutarch he had been reading Plato’s Phaedo, which strongly condemned suicide. Lamotte points out that Cato was a Stoic, which sect did not object to suicide. (There is some discussion of the impact of Addison’s play, Cato, which “one would hardly expect possible, to draw Tears from the fair Sex.” But Lamotte always was a misogynist.)

April 1737. Remarks upon the Death of Herod the younger, mentioned in the Acts, and the Owl that appeared to him at that time, as is related by Josephus.
The Acts of the Apostles records that “the Angel of the Lord smote him [Herod] and he was eaten up of worms.” Josephus records that Herod was visited by an owl and does not mention an angel. Lamotte thinks that the owl story was invented by Josephus to give his account a Roman flavour. He goes on to quote other birds-as-omens stories.

from Paoli Antonio Rolli, “donum authoris”. Rolli (1687-1767) was the most conspicuous Italian literary figure in London, having produced a new edition of the Decameron in 1725 and an Italian translation of Paradise Lost in 1730. He also taught Italian to the Prince of Wales and various aristocratic families. J. Sambrook, James Thomson 1700-1748. A Life (Oxford, 1991), 106-7. It therefore appears that Lamotte was still in touch with the London literary scene in 1729/30.
30 See Estate letters, 65.
July 1737. An Examination of the Question; Whether Aeneas ever came to Italy, or not? With Remarks upon the Usefulness and Pleasure of Classical Learning, and some Observations on Virgil. The essay is as confused as the title. There are opening remarks on the pleasures of classical literature in old age, which run into thoughts about the foundation myths of various nations. Lamotte concludes that although Homer talks of Aeneas reigning over the Trojans, this could not undermine the Romans’ foundation myth, which Virgil elaborated in the Aeneid but which was already widely accepted. Lamotte concludes with an interpretation of a couple of lines describing Aeneas’ departure from Carthage.

September 1737. Remarks upon the Voice that was heard in the Temple before the Destruction of Jerusalem, as ’tis related by Josephus, with Observations on the Accounts which Eusebius, St Jerom [sic] and Baronius have given of it. Although Josephus was given to “Wonders, Omens, and Prodigies” his description of a voice in the Temple in Jerusalem saying “Let us depart” just before its destruction in AD 70 conformed closely to the Roman idea that the tutelary deities will leave a doomed city. Eusebius and St Jerome and others subsequently shifted the story back into that of Christ’s Passion. Much of the material on tutelary deities is reused by Lamotte in his December 1739 essay.

November 1737. Remarks upon the Table-Gesture of the Ancients, and particularly that of Christ and his disciples at the last Supper. When did the Romans start to use reclining couches rather than chairs when they ate? Lamotte decides the custom was introduced by Alexander the Great but its use was a function of class, sex and age. There can be no doubt (from St John’s account) that reclining couches were used at the Last Supper.31

January 1738. Remarks upon the Two Battles of Philippi in the Georgicks, which seem to contradict History and Geography: With a Vindication of Virgil, from the Censures pass’d upon him in relation to that noted Passage.

Ergo inter sese paribus concurrere telis
Romanas acies iterum videre Philippi;
Nec fuit indignum superis bis sanguine nostro
Emathiam, & latos Haemi pinguescere campos. (Georgics I, 489-92)

(For this, th’ Emathian plains once more were strow’d
With Roman bodies, and just heaven thought good
To fatten twice those fields with Roman blood.32)

Lamotte seeks to explain the two battles mentioned by Virgil. Some commentators thought the two battles were, first, that at Pharsalia (between Julius Caesar and Pompey in 48 BC) and, secondly, that at Philippi between Mark Anthony and Octavian — later the Emperor Augustus — and Brutus and Cassius in 42 BC. There were in fact two battles at Philippi in October and November 42 BC, separated by about 20 days. In the first engagement, Cassius, thinking that all was lost, killed himself; Brutus was killed in the second engagement. Lamotte stresses these two separate engagements and ridicules the notion of any reference to Pharsalia.

31 A dissertation by Lamotte on the Manner of Eating among the Ancients was considered by the Society of Antiquaries at its meetings of 6 November 1728 and 20 February 1729.
32 Dryden’s translation of the last two lines. The other translations below are also by Dryden.
(In the September 1742 number there is a long abstract of E. Holdsworth’s Pharsalia and Philippi: Or The two Philippi in Virgil’s Georgics attempted to be explained and reconciled to History. This was a quarto volume running to 54 pages with two maps; it was subsequently reprinted in Holdsworth’s Remarks and Dissertations on Virgil, edited by his friend Joseph Spence and published by Dodsley in 1768. In this Holdsworth argues that the two battles referred to are Pharsalia and Philippi.)

March 1738. Remarks upon the Destruction of Brennus and his Army at Delphi, and the Rev. Dr Prideaux’s Observations upon it, that God was pleas’d, in an extraordinary Manner, to execute his Vengeance for the Sake of Religion, how false and idolatrous soever that particular Religion was for which the Temple at Delphos was erected.

Brennus led a large army of Gauls into Greece in 278 BC and got as far as Delphi where he was defeated by the Greeks inspired by the priests of the temple of Apollo, an earthquake (which caused a landslide) and ferocious storms. Lamotte recounts this story and also Prideaux’s comments that “God [was] pleased… to execute his Vengeance upon those sacrilegious Wretches…” \(^{33}\) He finds Prideaux’s arguments absurd; there was no sin worse than that of idolatry.

May 1738. Remarks upon a Passage in Virgil relating to Agriculture, and an unjust Censure, which Seneca the Philosopher has passed upon it.

\[\text{Vere fabis satio; tunc te quoque, Medica, putres} \]
\[\text{Accipiunt sulci; & milio venit annua cura.} \] (Georgics I, 215-16)

(Sow beans and clover in a rotten soil,  
And millet rising from your annual toil, …)

Seneca (Letter 86), writing in the middle of June, says that he has seen peasants “mowing the beans and sowing the millet” at this time of year and suggests that Virgil was seeking to divert his reader rather than instruct the husbandman. Lamotte offers extracts from Pliny the Elder and Columella\(^{34}\) to show that millet was usually planted in the spring.

July 1738. An Inquiry into the Religion of Seneca the Philosopher. With Critical Remarks upon the Epistles that are said to have pass’d between him and St Paul.

The existing letters between Seneca and St Paul are, says Lamotte, undoubtedly forgeries but this does not preclude the possibility that there was a genuine correspondence, now lost. Lamotte then goes on to suggest, on the basis of certain parallel wording in Seneca’s works and in the New Testament, that Seneca may have been a Christian. The manner of Seneca’s death also contains some Christian resonances, claims Lamotte.

September 1738. Remarks upon Aeneas’s sacrificing the Captives to the Manes of Pallas in Virgil; which does not seem to agree with the Judgement of the Poet, nor the Character of his Hero. The Passage runs thus:

\[\text{Sulmone creatos} \]
\[\text{Quattuor hic juvenes, totidem, quos educat Ufens,} \]
\[\text{Viventes rapit: inferias quos immolet umbris,} \]
\[\text{Captivoque rogi perfundat sanguine flammas.} \] (Aeneid X, 517-20.)


\(^{34}\) A native of Cadiz, probably fl. mid-1st century AD. Only a small part of his writings on agriculture have survived.
(Four sons of Sulmo, four whom Ufens bred,
He took in fight, and living victims led,
To please the ghost of Pallas, and expire,
In sacrifice before his funeral fire.)

Lamotte accepts that this passage may be derived from a passage in the *Iliad* where Achilles sacrifices twelve Trojan captives to the manes of Patroclus. Whereas Homer condemns this action, Virgil did not condemn that of Aeneas because to have done so would have offended Augustus.

January 1739 (Part I) and
June 1739 (Part II). *A Vindication of the Jews and their Religion, from the Calumnies of the Egyptian, the Greek, and the Roman Writers. With Remarks on Mr Toland’s Origines Judaicae,* relating to that subject.

In this essay Lamotte analyses the attitude of some of the well-known classical writers towards the Jews, making the point that the earlier writers (like Cicero and Strabo) were generally fairer to the Jews than later writers like Plutarch and Tacitus.


In Virgil’s 3rd Eclogue (lines 37-41) an engraved cup with the depiction of an astronomer is described. Servius suggested Ptolomy Evergetes, the builder of the lighthouse of Pharos and the telescope which the lighthouse contained. Despite the opinions of other editors, Lamotte thinks that the astronomer was Pythagoras.

April 1739. *Remarks upon Archimedes’s setting the Roman Ships on Fire with Burning-Glasses at Syracuse, and on Hannibal’s dissolving the Alps with Vinegar, in his famous passage to Italy from Spain.*

Both the stories noted in the title are, Lamotte considered, pure invention, often unsupported or positively contradicted by those writers nearest in time to the events recounted. Lamotte then suggests that Archimedes was actually using some sort of Greek Fire, the secret of which was subsequently lost.

July 1739. *A Discourse concerning the modern and present Jews: Being an Appendix to the Apology for the ancient Jews, and their Religion, against the Calumnies of the Egyptian, the Greek, and Roman Writers.*

This essay starts with an overview of the history of the Jews. Their horror of idolatry has meant that many have fled Roman Catholic countries and, while their conversion is desirable, force must not be employed.

August 1739. *Remarks upon the Mistakes committed by some Learned Writers, in relation to the famous Passage of Virgil, Book the 8th, Ver. 670 [of the Aeneid].*

> Secretosque Pios, his dantem Jura Catonem.

(...And Cato’s holy ghost, dispensing laws.)

35 John Toland (1670-1722). Deist then political controversialist. The *Origines Judaicae*, defending Strabo’s account of the Jews, was published in 1709.

36 Servius Maurus, “a learned grammarian in the age of [the Emperors] Honorius and Theodosius,” i.e. fl. c. AD 400.
While most scholars have assumed that the Cato mentioned was Cato of Utica (see the essay of February 1737 above), Lamotte proposes Cato the Elder or the Censor and great grandfather of Cato of Utica. The Elder died c.150 BC. This interpretation is accepted by some modern scholars.

October 1739. An Essay upon the Invention and Antiquity of Telescopes, and the great Advantages the Moderns have thereby over the Greeks and the Romans in their Astronomical Observations. Presented some time since to the Royal Society…

On the basis of a passage written by the historian Hecataeus (fl. c.550 BC) preserved by Diodorus Siculus, Lamotte concludes that the Druids “had the Knowledge of Optick glasses and Telescopes, and likewise made use of them in their Astronomical Observations.”

December 1739. Remarks upon a Passage in Virgil, relating to the Destruction of Troy, with Observations upon the Palladium, which, by the Trojan and the Romans, was reckoned the main Stay and Support of their State.

“Venit summa dies & ineluctabile Tempus
Dardaniae. Fuimus Troes: fuit Ilium, & ingens
Gloria Teucrorum. Ferus omnia Jupiter Argos
Transtulit: incensa Danai dominantur in urbe.” (Aeneid II, 324-27)

[Panthus, a priest, to Aeneas]

(“Troy is no more, and Ilium was a town!
The fatal day, th’ appointed hour, is come,
When wrathful Jove’s irrevocable doom
Transfers the Trojan state to Grecian hands…”)

Lamotte’s remarks on the Palladium are not without interest but the thrust of the article is the suggestion that, in the passage quoted, omnia (omens) should be substituted for omnia (all/everything). This is not accepted by modern editors.

(February 1740. A Defence of Moses’s Account of the Land of Judea, against Strabo the Greek Geographer, Servetus who was burnt for Atheism at Geneva, and Toland’s Origines Hebraicae. This is not signed by Lamotte but it is very much in his style.)

August 1740. Of the Appeal of St Paul to Caesar.

After a eulogy of Roman jurisprudence, Lamotte considers St Paul’s motivation in appealing his case to Rome where, says Lamotte, the apostle expected a favourable reception; (correctly according to Acts 28:16). Most of the material here was recycled in the June 1741 essay or had already been used in that of July 1738.

November 1740. A Dissertation on the Name of Chrestus in Suetonius; shewing it was by that writer meant of our Saviour Christ; against the Opinions of Bishop Usher, Vandale, and Le Clerc. 37

It is difficult to summarise the arguments in this essay which appear anyway to be less than conclusive. Much revolves round particular verses in the Acts of the Apostles which are quoted usually without context and sometimes anachronistically. Lamotte nevertheless cites

37 James Ussher (1581-1656), Archbishop of Armagh. Antonius van Dale (1638-1708), author of De Oraculis ethnorum Dissertationes duae. Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736), Professor of Philosophy and Hebrew at the [Remonstrant] College of the Arminians at Amsterdam and a prolific writer. The passage referred to is in chapter 25 of Claudius in The Twelve Caesars.
Tertullian and Justin Martyr, not to mention Bishop Pearson, to support his case which is broadly accepted by modern scholars.

January 1741. *Remarks on the Antiquity of the Sea Compass, and some other Inventions useful and necessary in human Life.*

Lamotte argues that many of the advances in the modern world are actually just rediscoveries; the ancients had stirrups, spectacles etc. and perhaps also the compass. The evidence for this is the remarkable voyages undertaken by the ancients.

April 1741. *Remarks on the Character of Japis in Virgil, and on the Reflections of Dr Atterbury, late Bishop of Rochester, upon that Passage; shewing that the Poet, under that Character, did not draw that of Antonius Musa, Physician to Augustus.*

This is a review of a work by Francis Atterbury in which Atterbury identified Japis, apparently Aeneas’ personal physician (Aeneid XII, 420-25), with Antonius Musa, the physician to the Emperor Augustus. Lamotte argued that this was hardly likely, given that Musa (an advocate of cold baths) was later held responsible for the death of Augustus’s son, Marcellus.

June 1741. *A Dissertation upon the Conduct of Gallio in the Acts, in relation to the Apostle St Paul, with a vindication of that Magistrate.*

In the Acts of the Apostles (18:12-17) it is recorded that the apostle Paul was brought before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, by the Jews of Corinth. Gallio dismissed the charges saying that the Jews were “bickering about words and names and your Jewish law… I do not intend to be a judge of these matters.” Lamotte begins by giving the family background, mentioning that this Gallio (his full name was Lucius Junius Gallio Annaeanus) was the brother of Seneca. The details of the case above are then set out together with the fact that, after it, Sosthenes, “the president of the synagogue,” was beaten, by the Greeks asserts Lamotte (which reading is in accordance with the Authorised Version but not with the Revised English Bible). The identification of this Sosthenes with the co-author of the *Letter to the Corinthians* is rejected. But Lamotte does suggest that Gallio may have been a closet Christian to which fact he attributes the (lost) letters between St Paul and Seneca which both St Augustine and St Jerome declared they had seen. He then considers Gallio’s actions, emphasising the lack of knowledge of the Roman historians about Judaism in general and Christianity in particular. The fair treatment of St Paul in Rome (Acts 28:30-31) shows that there was no law against Christianity at this time. He concludes that Gallio acted entirely properly.

November 1741. *An Essay upon Criticks and Criticism, in relation to the correcting ancient Authors.*

This essay runs to 34 pages and is a “double” contribution, it also falls into two approximately equal parts. The first deals with those critics (editors) who have tried to restore and amend classical texts and the heat and disagreements this has produced. The second part contains three amendments suggested by Lamotte himself to passages in the last verse of Virgil’s 3rd *Eclogue*, in Book 4 verse 7 of the *Georgics* and in verse 10 of Juvenal’s 4th *Satire*.

February 1742. *Remarks upon the Pleasure, Usefulness and Advantage of Fables; with a vindication* 38

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38 Antonius Musa’s character, represented by Virgil, in the person of Iapis: a dissertation: by F. Atterbury, late Bishop of Rochester. Publish’d from His Lordship’s manuscript…. This 52-page pamphlet was published in 1740, some eight years after Atterbury’s death.
of Aesop, whose Person and Writings have by Painters and Poets been very much abused. Lamotte describes his pleasure in reading Aesop, “my first Master of Morality”, and commends the translation by the late Sir Roger L'Estrange. He then proceeds to attack Planudes’ Life of Aesop, “a heap of Blunders and Absurdities”. In particular he ridicules Planudes’ claim that Aesop was deformed. A statue in the Villa Albani, however, suggests that Planudes was right. A good deal of this material had already been used by Lamotte in his Essay on Poetry and Painting (pp. 179-82).

39 Sir Roger L'Estrange (1616-1704) published his translation of Aesop’s fables in 1692. It was reissued many times in the course of the eighteenth century.
40 Maximus Planudes/Maximos Planoudes (c.1260-c.1310) was a Greek monk who translated Greek works into Latin and Latin works into Greek. These latter were sometimes used as textbooks by western students of Greek.
“Feloniously Slain”:
Murder and Village Society in Fourteenth-Century
Northamptonshire

MIKE THORNTON

On the night of Wednesday 10 December 1343, John le Neubonde of Yardley Hastings went to play a game called *penyprikke* with John Wylk in the house of Roger de Eston. An argument arose and John Wylk struck John le Neubonde with a knife. He survived until the following day when he died from his injury, having received the last rites. This sworn account of events was given on the following Friday to Andrew de Landwhat, a king’s coroner for Northamptonshire, by a jury of good and lawful men, summoned by the sheriff from Yardley, Castle Ashby, Chadstone, Denton and Grendon. Meanwhile, the suspect had fled and the jurors did not know his whereabouts, but they appraised the value of his knife at 1d. The clerk recorded that the victim had been feloniously slain.¹

Homicide was a culpable felony in medieval England, pardonable only by the crown in cases of accident, insanity or, rigorously defined, self-defence.² It occurred sufficiently often in everyday circumstances for it to have had a considerable immediacy in and impact on the lives of Northamptonshire villagers. This article examines homicide in village society and the role of peasant farmers and artisans in dealing with it. Men of gentry status supervised the criminal justice system of medieval England, but in the countryside it was ordinary villagers who served as the tithing-men, constables, pledges and jurors who were essential to make it work.

The evidence is drawn from the rolls of fourteenth-century coroners and itinerant royal justices of gaol delivery. It focuses particularly on the 25 years between 1343 and 1368 from which there survives a significant number of coroners’ inquests held by Andrew de Landwhat, 1343–62, William de Haldenby, 1350–53 and 1356–64, William Tyndale, 1356–60, and John de Nunton 1363–68.³

R.F. Hunnisett is sceptical about the use of such evidence to illuminate social and economic history.⁴ This is based, in part, on the discrepancies he discovered between the accounts of a number of suspicious deaths in Warwickshire, between 1365 and 1373, as recorded initially in the file copy of the coroner’s records and later in the enrolled documents prepared for a visitation of the royal justices. On the other hand, he acknowledges that there is broad agreement between the two sources on the circumstances in which death occurred and whether it was a consequence of felony or misadventure. It is detail such as the weapons used, the names of jurors and field names ascribed to the locations where bodies were found about which he is particularly sceptical, together with the aggregation of the evidence for statistical purposes.

¹ The National Archives (TNA), JUST 2/113, m.1.
³ TNA, JUST 2/113, 114, 115 & 116.
For Northamptonshire (Northampton had its own coroners whose rolls are not considered here) there survive both files and enrolments of two inquests in which the records correspond in some detail. One is into a murder at Welton in 1333.\(^5\) Ironically, the victim was John, son of John de Tuwe a coroner of the county, who conducted the inquest jointly with a colleague, Richard de Oxendon. Both records are unusually detailed, correspond in almost every particular, and display no significant contradiction. The identity and social status of the victim may be one reason for the detailed initial record but it was accurately transferred on to the later roll, which is unlikely to have been written much before the spring of 1336, in preparation for the Northamptonshire Eyre held in May. A second example is an inquest at Tansor, on 27 April 1340, held by Ranulph de Veer, into the death of John, the son of Elias de Tyndale de Tansor.\(^6\)

However, to compile reliable homicide-related statistics for medieval Northamptonshire from the coroners’ rolls is not possible. Even the extant documents may be incomplete, since between December 1343 and December 1368 there are seventy-seven months when no inquest was recorded. In turn, this may be related to the fact that the records of some other contemporary Northamptonshire coroners have been lost. Writs were issued in the 1340s to replace Walter Parles, William de Nowers and Nicholas de Clipston, and the rolls of gaol delivery, held at Northampton Castle and Peterborough, refer to William de Huendon in 1351, William de Lyveden in 1353 and Thomas Lovet and John de Hauton in 1356-7 as coroners. Neither the files nor the rolls of any these men have survived.\(^7\)

On the other hand, the extant rolls provide strong indicative evidence. For example, they record 240 alleged homicides, of which 93 were said to have been carried out with a knife, all of which may reasonably be seen as a clear indication that violence was a feature of everyday life in the villages and small towns of the county, and that men habitually carried knives.

The office of coroner was established in 1194 and by the middle of the fourteenth century Northamptonshire, like most other counties, had four coroners.\(^8\) Their sole qualification was to hold sufficient land in the county in which they acted. Upon receipt of a chancery writ directed to the sheriff, they were elected for life by their peers in the county court. They undertook various responsibilities, all of which are reflected in the Northamptonshire rolls, but most entries record an inquest on a dead body. Such occasions were the coroner’s most frequent responsibility. As Hunnisett put it: “...[h]e had to view or hold an inquest upon the bodies of all those who died unnaturally, suddenly or in prison, or about whose death there might be or was said to have been any special circumstances.”\(^9\)

Inquests took place in more than 230 Northamptonshire settlements between 1343 and 1368, so there will have been widespread awareness of the coroner and the demands his visits imposed on village communities. Two hundred and forty inquests, (about 45% of the total) which reached a verdict of homicide, were held in about 150 different villages and

\(^5\) TNA, JUST 2/111, m.18 & m.20.
\(^6\) TNA, JUST 2/255, Ranulf de Veer, m.2 & m.3.
small towns, and the rolls of Andrew de Landwhat alone record a further 84 from which men were summoned as jurors. The population of medieval Northamptonshire is unknown, but the tax return of 1334 lists about 300 vills of which 28 are *cum membris*.\(^\text{10}\) Assuming 350 rural settlements it is arguable that as many as two-thirds of those communities either experienced murder having taken place within their environs or were familiar with the details from relatives or neighbours who had served as jurors. Jurors would have been privy to considerable detail with which to entertain or horrify their audience. They were responsible for gathering an account of events leading to homicide so these could be sworn before the coroner, and participated in the rudimentary post-mortem procedure of viewing the naked corpse. They also put monetary values on the murder weapon and chattels of the indicted suspect.

The circumstances in which murder took place were often recorded briefly or not at all, and little or nothing was said about possible motivation. About 60 inquests match this description. For example, in August 1359 William Pennesson of Wellebryght slew Nicholas the Thresher from Staffordshire before fleeing from Peterborough.\(^\text{11}\) Their names may hint at a quarrel between migrant workers but the record is silent on this possibility.

At a further 60 inquests the jurors said on oath that there had been an argument or quarrel between victim and perpetrator shortly before the killing took place, and it is clear that arguments often arose and degenerated into fatal violence in the fields, on the highway, in taverns or private houses, wherever everyday life and work took place. Details of these arguments were seldom recorded and the statement that William Ayde quarrelled with Robert Gybbes at Harringworth in 1366 about a dog is unusual.\(^\text{12}\) On occasion, where the argument took place provides some indication of how circumstances that led to the killing may have arisen. For example, the death of Donel de Gretton, in 1345, followed an argument at night in a tavern.\(^\text{13}\)

Rarely does the record provide anything like a complete explanation of events. An exception is the death of John Threshere at Peakirk in May 1365. John, the jurors said, came by night to the house of Adam de Karlil in Peakirk to have sex with Elena, a servant of Adam. The jurors also expressed the view that John was of good repute and had no ill intent. Adam, however, objected (Elena’s opinion is unrecorded) and sent William, another of his servants, to summon John at Strete, one of the constables of Peakirk. The constable appears to have tried to calm the situation but Adam insisted he ought to arrest John, who initially demurred but then said he would surrender to the king’s peace. Adam then reappeared at his door flourishing a sword, at which point John Threshere drew his knife and attacked both the constable and Adam. In the ensuing struggle, however, he died instantly from a blow to the head from Adam’s sword. The jurors appear to have sympathised with the dead man, having described him as being of good character; they also concluded that Adam had killed him with malice aforethought.\(^\text{14}\) The concept of malice aforethought was not firmly established and when it appeared, as here, seems to have been something of an afterthought.\(^\text{15}\)

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11 TNA, JUST 2/115, m.10.
12 TNA, JUST 2/116, m.9.
13 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.3.
14 TNA, JUST 2/116, m.6.
15 TNA, JUST 2/116, mm.2, 6 &8.
Self-defence was, however, a defence to homicide at trial and at eleven inquests this was said to have been the case. At Staverton, for example, in 1362 an argument occurred between John Blaby and Nicholas le Straunge, a servant of William le Frenshe, a village constable. The hue and cry was raised and William went to attach both men. John refused to cooperate and, in his own defence, William struck him on the head with a rake and he died three weeks later.16 In another case at Aldwincle in 1369, the jurors made it clear that the dead man, John Philip, had been the aggressor, and that Thomas Smyth had no alternative but to defend himself.17

In contrast to homicides arising from inter-personal arguments, about 25 were a consequence of either robbery on the highway or in the fields, or the breaking and entering into houses, usually at night. Travellers likely to be carrying goods or cash were clearly vulnerable. Unknown thieves killed Nicholas the Chapman, presumably a travelling pedlar, in the fields at Kislingbury in 1345; and Thomas Marcaunt, a merchant, was attacked at Markyate on the king’s highway as he travelled from London, dying three days later from his wounds at Everdon in December 1347. Establishments where food or valuables might be found may also have attracted thieves in the night; in February 1362, unknown men entered the environs of Catesby priory, and Richard Brewester, presumably a servant of the nuns, was wounded by an arrow and subsequently died.18

Householders were also targeted. In December 1360 Roger Laurence of Ecton came to the close of William Aleyn and stole six capons valued at 12d. William, presumably woken by noise outside, pursued Roger who first threatened him and then struck him on the head with a broche so that he died.19 At Naseby, nine years previously, it was the thief who had been slain by the householder: the jurors said that Philip le Milnere of Kenilworth came by night at an unknown hour and feloniously broke into the house of Adam Rose. He raped Joan, Adam’s wife, and took her away with him into the fields of Adam’s goods and chattels to the value of 40d. Adam pursued them into the fields and angry words were spoken between the two men, whereupon Adam struck Philip dead with a pykfork. He then fled; the record is silent as to whether Joan accompanied him.20

Irrespective of motive, homicide was strongly gendered; perpetrators and victims alike were most frequently men. There were, however, twenty female victims and seven women were said by the jurors to have killed or been accomplices.

Two of the dead women were ignota (unknown to the jury).21 The record says little of the circumstances of eight others except that four were married. Amicia, for example, who died at Blatherwick in 1356 at the hand of Walter de Islip wielding a sword, was the wife of Robert Savage.22 Thieves in the night were responsible for the deaths of several women: Felicia Wane and John, her servant, at Harringworth; Emma Mundeyn at Yardley; Emma, a widow, whose house was torched in Kingsthorpe near Northampton; Isabelle Ball and

16 TNA, JUST 2/114, m.10.
17 TNA, JUST 2/116, m.2.
18 TNA, JUST 2/113, mm.3, 16 & 52.
19 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.45.
20 TNA, JUST 2/114, m.22.
21 TNA, JUST 2/113, mm.26; & 116, m.5.
22 TNA, JUST 2/115, m.2; 113, m.25; & 115, m.8.
William her son at Barby; and Agnes Haukyns with her husband John, at Grimsbury.\(^{23}\)

The deaths of two female children were also recorded as homicides. At Litchborough, in March 1347, an unknown female child was found dead, the jurors saying only that she had been drowned by an unknown man.\(^{24}\) In 1368, at Peterborough, the inquest was held on 26 November into the stillbirth of a child, named Joan, on the previous day. The mother, Joan, wife of John of Chesterfield, was said by the jury to have fallen into an argument with Agnes, the wife of John Spis, on 9 October. This had degenerated into fisticuffs; Agnes had struck Joan in the stomach and so caused the stillbirth. The coroner accepted this explanation and the bailiff was ordered to seize Agnes.\(^{25}\)

Only two women were said by a jury to have killed another adult. At Brixworth, in August 1347, Matillis, the wife of John Dunstal, was said to have struck Emma, the daughter of Richard Handeman, on the head with a stick so that she died, probably some two days later. Matillis, unlike many men in a similar situation, had not fled but was escorted by the constable, the tithing men and other men of Brixworth to the gaol at Northampton. The size of Matillis’s escort suggests a certain self-importance among the men of Brixworth, but the episode is unique in the surviving records as the only fatal wounding of one woman by another.\(^{26}\) The second woman indicted for murder, in 1351, Agnes, the wife of Simon Chotte of Walgrave, may have acted in self-defence when the man she killed, William Lerton, entered Simon’s house and an altercation took place between him and Agnes who took a stick and struck him on the head.\(^{27}\)

Four women were recorded as having been accomplices to murder but how actively they participated may have varied. In 1362, at Coton near Guilsborough, William de Watton struck Richard Wylles on the head with a sword and fled. It appears almost as an afterthought in the record, that Dionisia de Byllodesdon and a male servant of William, were accomplices, but whether Dionisia played an active role is unclear. Four years previously, at Cransley, it was unequivocally recorded that Richard le Hunte of Cransley and Juliana, probably his mother, had struck John, son of John of Maidwell of Rothwell, on the head with a baselard so that he died a few days later.\(^{28}\) The degree of responsibility of two other women indicted as accomplices seems clearer. At Southwick, in June 1357, Richard Frankeleyn entered the house of Adam White by night, abetted by Henry Page of Southwick and Agnes, Adam’s wife. Henry slew Adam with an axe. A decade later, at Barnwell, Ralph Roper and Joan his wife murdered John Webster. The jurors said that Ralph had struck John to the right of his heart with a shoemaker’s awl, while Joan had struck him with a wooden staff on his legs.\(^{29}\)

Irrespective of gender, the individuals recorded as victims or perpetrators of unlawful killing were usually peasants, there being only two or three who may have been gentry, and fourteen engaged in the religious life, of whom only two had the status of beneficed clergy.

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23 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.12.
24 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.12.
25 TNA, JUST 2/116, m.3.
26 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.15.
27 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.27.
28 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.42; & 114, m.11.
29 TNA, JUST 2/115, m.4; & 116, m.4.
George de Dungen’yle, found slain in Little Billing church in 1357, was *chivaler*, and Geoffrey…………*miles*, killed 12 months later at Maxey, may have been a knight, although membrane damage leaves some uncertainty about his status. Among those who committed murder there are no comparable examples, but when John le Soutere, *capellanus* (chaplain) slew John Teysard at Harrington in 1355 he was abetted by Richard Kynnesman of Arthingworth who bore a high-status name in the area. Twenty years later a, perhaps different, Richard Kynnesman was steward of the Seyton family estates in Kelmarsh with his own manor at Lodddington and, indeed, was a county coroner. The geographical proximity of the four settlements suggests at least some degree of kinship between the alleged accessory to murder of 1355 and the coroner of the 1370s.

Of the clerics, no fewer than six murderers and two victims were described as *capellanus*, economically and socially little different from the villagers among whom they lived. John, a chaplain identified only as the son of Philip Hoggis of Halse, when he was accused of having murdered Thomas Gillemay at Brackley in 1347, was recorded as having no chattels. John le Soutere was also probably typical and may have hoped to improve his lot by association with the Kynnesman family. Robert Edward of Upton, *capellanus*, was a victim of murder, slain by a trio of whom two were also clerics, Thomas Wycok of Upton, *capellanus*, and John, a brother of the order of St Augustine in the convent at Northampton. Two other members of a religious community, at Sulby Abbey, quarrelled so violently in 1362 that brother John Halle of Brampton slew brother Robert Groby with a knife. Only two clergy in possession of livings appear in the rolls. John Gibbes, vicar of Guilsborough, quarrelled in 1356 with Thomas Hereward of Dalby resulting in the deaths of both men from knife wounds. Six years later, John Smythes, the vicar of Canons Ashby, was struck dead by Adam, a hundredal bailiff.

Most of the protagonists, victims and suspects alike, were peasants. Twenty-five carried on artisan trades, such as miller, shoemaker or weaver. Fifteen were identified by their roles in arable farming or animal husbandry such as threshing or herding cattle and more than 20 fatal arguments took place in the fields. Eleven were defined as servants; ten carried on food-related trades with meat, bread or fish; eight were manorial officials and, although two of them were bailiffs, the others fulfilled the humble role of hayward; and six carried or sold goods. Of the last, Thomas Marcaunt may have had some claim to higher status but the others were pedlars or carters.

This evidence is reinforced by the low valuation placed on suspects’ chattels and by the weapons they most often used. Chattels, or their value, were potentially forfeit to the crown after the case had been determined before the royal justices. As recorded in coroners’ rolls, they appear to have been loosely defined and might include livestock; carts and associated equipment; tools; grain whether harvested, standing or recently sown; timber and straw;
household utensils, furniture, ornaments and clothing; and also the value placed on land or tenements held by the accused. Hunnisett suggested that the chattels of felons were seldom valued at more than £1.0s.0d at a time when skilled workers, such as carpenters and masons, will have earned no more than 4d per day.  

Chattels have been evaluated here with reference to the rolls of Andrew de Landwhat who, over about twenty years, conducted 135 homicide inquests at eighty-four of which the clerk recorded the suspect’s chattels. Thirty-six were said to have none; thirty-five had items valued at less than £1 and ranging in value from 3d, (John and Geoffrey Walsheman in September 1357), to 16s.10d (Robert Tayl 1355). Nine of the accused were rather more prosperous, having goods ranging in value between £1.11s.10d (Richard son of Simon le Hunte at Cransley in September 1358) and £3.16s.8d. (Roger le Fysshere at Higham Ferrers in August 1358).  

Murder weapons appear in the majority of cases to have been everyday items of equipment, used because they were conveniently to hand, emphasising the peasant status of most of the protagonists. A record of the weapon or weapons used survives in 213 of the mid-century inquests considered. A *cultellus*, a knife, was used on ninety-three occasions and, in contrast, a *baselard* or dagger, designed for fighting, on only four. A *baculus*, a staff, stick or cudgel, was used on a further forty-nine. Two-thirds of the weapons used were, therefore, essentially plebeian tools valued at 2d, 1d or less. Others, which appear occasionally in the record, were similar: hammers, various types of axe, pitchforks and other iron forks, a saw, a spit and a shoemaker’s awl. Apart from the four daggers, the only weapons used that were designed to kill were the bow-and-arrow (nine times) and the sword (fifteen).  

Neither fulfilment nor neglect of all the various duties incumbent on the village community in the event of a suspected homicide are consistently recorded in the rolls, but examples like raising the hue, testifying and delivering the suspect to gaol have been noted above in particular circumstances.  

Essentially, the first-finder of the body raised the hue so setting in train the process of summoning the coroner. Meanwhile, the men of the village were required to capture the suspect and to guard the body and, given the invariably brief interval between discovery and inquest, must have collected information about the circumstances of the death. Where the victim did not die immediately it was assumed that he would have given his account of what had transpired and in enrolled inquests from earlier in the century it is made clear that he had done so. In parallel with all this activity the sheriff, at the behest of the coroner, summoned the men from three or four neighbouring villages as jurors.  

In the presence of the coroner the body was viewed, a jury selected, the first finder appeared with two pledges of his probity, and the jury delivered its narrative and verdict. When a suspect was indicted by the jury but had fled, the sheriff was ordered to seize him, except in the liberty of the abbot of Peterborough where the coroner issued a warrant to the bailiff to

38 TNA, JUST 3/113, m.41 & m.35.  
39 TNA, JUST 3/113, m.42.  
40 TNA, JUST 2/106 & 107.
do so. Cash values were placed on the murder weapon and the chattels of the suspect, and the village responsible for payment to the crown in the event of a conviction was recorded.\textsuperscript{41} The judicial outcome of inquests, considered here, which had recorded a verdict of homicide can be confirmed in only a small number of cases although it is certain that only a minority of those indicted will have been found guilty and hanged. It is the case that throughout the medieval period for which written records are extant the great majority of defendants who stood trial for homicide were acquitted.\textsuperscript{42}

Northamptonshire evidence from the period considered confirms this. Extant rolls of the justices of gaol delivery at Northampton Castle and Peterborough record the outcome of ninety-three trials for homicides that took place between February 1344 and June 1367. Ninety-five victims are listed and 110 men and women stood accused of killing them. Of those, two had died in prison, one had escaped from custody and the name of a fourth man survives only on a list of presentments and his judicial fate is lost. Only fifteen of the accused were found guilty, of whom three escaped hanging having proved they were in holy orders and so were delivered to the ecclesiastical authorities. In marked contrast, thirty-nine were pardoned following verdicts of self-defence and fifty-two were acquitted.

Of the ninety-three trials at gaol delivery twenty-two can be traced back to inquests recorded in the rolls of the four coroners. Twenty-four individuals stood accused of murder at those trials but even this much smaller sample reflects a similar pattern of judicial outcome. Only two were found guilty, twelve were found to have acted in self-defence and pardoned, and ten were acquitted.

At only four trials that can be traced back to an inquest did the two juries reach precisely the same conclusion. Thomas de Elde... was indicted for the murder of John le Walsheman at Oundle at an inquest in August 1357 and the subsequent trial jury found him guilty.\textsuperscript{43} On two occasions, in 1362, the coroner’s juries said that the men they indicted had acted in self-defence and it was recorded that both had surrendered immediately afterwards. These were Henry Hosecotes, responsible for the death of Adam Judde at Nethercote in May, and John de Greton for the death of William Bakere at East Haddon in June. In both cases the trial jury concurred.\textsuperscript{44} The fourth instance was the death in the butts at Raunds in 1365 when Richard Maly shot and killed John Dye with one of his arrows. Both juries found this to have been an accident and Richard was pardoned.\textsuperscript{45}

At three trials the jury reached verdicts which in some measure, but not entirely, matched the findings of the earlier inquest. In 1357, at Southwick, the inquest jury found that Richard Frankeleyn had killed Adam White but also that he had been aided by Henry Page and Adam’s wife, Agnes. Henry had fled but the constable had taken Richard and Agnes. Neither of the two men appear in the extant gaol delivery rolls but Agnes was found guilty and sentenced to burn.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{41} The previous two paragraphs are based on Hunnisett, \textit{Medieval Coroner}, pp. 19-26.
\textsuperscript{43} TNA, JUST 2/115, m.4 & 3/140, m.8d.
\textsuperscript{44} TNA, JUST 2/114, m.11 & 3/149, mm. 32 &32d.
\textsuperscript{45} TNA, JUST 2/116, m.6 & 3/149, m.31.
\textsuperscript{46} TNA, JUST 2/115, m.4 &3/140, m.8d.
The second case also involved a woman, said by the coroner’s jury to be responsible for murder but the trial jury found her not guilty. This was the killing of John, son of John of Maidwell of Rothwell, at Cransley in September 1358. The inquest jury alleged that Richard, son of Simon le Hunte and Juliana, who appears to have been Richard’s mother or step-mother, had killed John, and the clerk’s use of a plural verb appears to emphasise the joint nature of the deed in which they enjoyed a measure of support from a certain John le Smyth, whom the trial jury also found not guilty. However, the trial jurors concurred with the original indictment of Richard, who remained at large, and reiterated the order that he be taken to stand trial. The third case was that of the death of John Blaby at Staverton in April 1362, described above (p. 49). The trial jury simply declared William not culpable.

In all of the above cases there is at least a measure of congruence between the original indictment by the coroner’s jury and the verdict of the trial jury. In a further fourteen cases there was none at all. Eight men whom a coroner’s jury indicted as having committed homicide before immediately fleeing the scene, with no suggestion that they had acted in self-defence, were found to be not culpable at gaol delivery. A typical example is the alleged killing of Robert Bateman by Roger Boy at Cottesbrooke, where both men lived, in 1361. A further six individuals who were indicted by the coroner’s jury were found at gaol delivery to have acted in self-defence, although the coroner’s jury had made no such suggestion. The killing by Adam Leulyn of Richard of Cold Ashby, one of his servants, at Lilbourne in 1350, is one example.

The reluctance of trial juries to convict in cases of homicide, irrespective of any indictment laid by the coroner’s jury, has been explained in terms of custom so that only those who had especially offended against the standards of the community – wives murdering their husbands or servants their master were thought particularly reprehensible – were found guilty. It has also been argued that jurors manipulated homicide verdicts in order to present killings done in hot blood as acts of self-defence. Neither of these contentions, however valid, entirely explains the contrast between the original indictment and the trial jury’s verdict.

Coroners’ juries were drawn from villages near the settlement where death had occurred and trial juries from the wider area of the administrative hundred in which the felony had taken place. It is likely that there was some social distinction between the two bodies. Over 2,000 men are named as jurors at the extant Northamptonshire homicide inquests between 1343 and 1368; none is indicated as being of gentry status. Three-hundred men are listed as sworn trial jurors before Geoffrey le Scrop and his fellow royal justices at Northampton in November 1329. Some names such as Thomas atte Grene, John le Cartere, Ralph Chapeman, Roger Cokeman, and John Milnere suggest peasant status. On
the other hand thirteen were listed with the honorific miles attached and a further five bore
the names of local gentry families: Kynne, Mallore, Mulsho, Rabaz and Stratton. Influenced
by local men of high status it is less likely that trial juries would have been automatically
convinced by previous indictments. Scepticism may well, on occasion, have been justified.

From the beginning, villagers before the coroner may not always have been as united in
their views as the usual summary indictments suggest. In the inquest records, which form
the main evidence for this article, there is no hint of conflicting views but it is occasionally
explicit in some earlier rolls. In July 1301 William de Swinford died in Titchmarsh from a
head wound during a brawl involving a number of men. Among those summoned to testify,
the men of Thrapston and Clopton said that the fatal blow had been struck by William,
rector of the church of Achurch, but the men from Titchmarsh and Thorpe cum Achurch
said John the rector of All Saints in Aldewincle was the guilty man. William had fled, his
whereabouts unknown, and John had sought sanctuary in his own church. Unusually, two
coroners presided and ordered the attachment of both priests’ chattels.55

In any case it is likely that, sometimes conflicting, accounts of what had transpired would
have spread well before any trial took place and the jurors at gaol delivery may well have
formed settled views of their own long before they were called upon to deliver a verdict.
Orlincbury Hundred was an administrative area in which these varied influences may have
come together. It was small, having only seventeen taxation vills in 1334, so that news and
gossip would have spread quickly across it. In 1329 its trial jurors included John Russell,
miles, as well as more modest sounding men like Simon in the Willows. Certainly, its trial
jurors appear consistently to have rejected homicide indictments reached by village inquests
in the 1350s. In 1350 John Patoun at Scaldwell, in 1357 John Pye at Faxton and in 1358
Juliana and John le Smyth at Cransley were all indicted for homicide but the trial juries
found them all not guilty. Also, Richard Pymor of Old was found to have acted in self-
defence, although the inquest jury had made no such suggestion, and so pardoned.56

Violence was commonplace at all levels of medieval society. The coroners’ rolls are evidence
of that being so in village communities as are the frequent presentments at views of
frankpledge of incidents involving non-fatal violence. However, the response of village
communities confirms widespread recognition and acceptance of the rule of law and
awareness of the part that individuals of modest status were expected to play in it. The
behaviour of suspects was that of individuals aware of the force of law. Homicide suspects
did not stand their ground and attempt to brazen it out; many fled, aware that the village
community would otherwise fulfil its obligation to arrest them. Others sought sanctuary
knowing that this provided protection from arrest and trial, albeit austere and time-limited,
and the opportunity to abjure the realm; the latter was a grim process but would have been
seen as preferable to death by hanging. A few surrendered voluntarily, suggesting individual
awareness of due process and, arguably, a measure of confidence in it.

At village level the structure of law-enforcement was based on membership and mutual
responsibility of tithing groups comprising all males over the age of twelve, while the

55 TNA, JUST 2/106, m.1; a comparable example, at Barnwell, is in m.2.
56 TNA, JUST 2/113, m.25 & JUST 3/137a, m.10; 2/113, m.40 & 3/140, m.8d; 2/113, m.42 & 3/146, mm.5
& 5d; 2/113, m.26 & 3/137a, m.16.
obligation to raise the hue and cry devolved on all adults. Attempts were made to evade the system: at Pilsgate, in 1314, a brother and sister conspired to bury the sister’s violent husband and so avoid a coroner’s inquest; and in 1302, after Philip Sutor of Gayton had been murdered and left in a well, five named men of Gayton were said to have moved the body over the township boundary into the fields of Blisworth. That such irregularities found their way into the record is evidence that the system, at least on those occasions, had worked. On the other hand, there is ample evidence of weaknesses in it. Sometimes, the men from a particular village, although summoned to the coroner’s jury, failed to appear, and the regularity with which suspects fled makes it clear that, initially at least, they were infrequently captured. Nevertheless, the system worked, in that unexplained deaths were recorded and accounted for, suspects indicted and orders issued for their apprehension pending trial at the next appearance of the royal justices. In a society with neither police-force nor, at local level, a paid bureaucracy, this was a remarkable achievement in which village communities played a considerable part.

57 TNA, JUST 2/107, mm.7 & 11.
Arthingworth Parliamentary Enclosure 1766-8

DAVID HALL

Many Northamptonshire parishes have no enclosure map to show what happened to their open fields when they were converted to severalty farms divided by hedges. Those that were enclosed by the Parliamentary process, appointing commissioners, have awards which list all the new allotments giving abuttal descriptions. These descriptions can be used to reconstruct a plan; the following account provides a “map” of Arthingworth as it was in 1768. Documents relating to the enclosure preserved in the Kelmarsh Hall archive reveal interesting aspects of the state of agriculture in 1767 and how the enclosure was achieved. (Figure 1)

Manorial lands
The complicated manorial history of Arthingworth is outlined by Bridges. In 1086 there was one main manor, held by the Count of Mortain, and two smaller holdings belonging to the king and Bury St Edmunds abbey. The Count’s principal manor was at Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire, and he had many other manors including much of Cornwall. The estate, later called the Berkhamstead Fee, was often subsequently in the hands of the crown and given to favourites or royal princes, some of whom were created dukes of Cornwall. It was permanently annexed to the Duchy of Cornwall in 1337. The stewardship of the estate was leased out for many centuries, the Northamptonshire part being administered, in the seventeenth century, by the earls of Bridgewater at Brackley, as part of the manor of Blakesley. Quit rents were due from the component manors, but many were in arrears and the Berkhamstead Fee lapsed as manorial overlord. In effect the properties became freehold.

In c.1125 Arthingworth was duly stated to belong to the Berkhamstead Fee, as it was in 1235–6 and 1428. A few details of the holdings were given in a brief survey of 1284, when the Berkhamstead Fee, held by the Count of Cornwall, was let to two local tenants, Stephen Rabas, 25 virgates (yardlands), and Henry Wardedeu, 9 yardlands. The Hospital of St John of Jerusalem at Harrington possessed 5 yardlands. Bridges gives further information on the descent of these holdings. Hugh Catesby was living at Arthingworth in 1430 and the family acquired lands in the village, including the Rabas lands. In 1541 Thomas Catesby of Whiston was in possession of the confiscated monastic lands of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, which he held of Edward Saunders of Harrington. He also had property called Laundehall, formerly belonging to St James’ abbey, Northampton in 1541. The Bury St Edmunds abbey lands in Arthingworth were granted, with all of its Northampton-
shire property, to Sir Edward Montagu also in 1541. Presumably the Arthingworth Bury lands were sold soon after, since the lands held by the Catesbys passed with all these former monastic lands to Edward Haselrigg before 1604.

In that year Edward Haselrigg sold much of Arthingworth to Sir John Stanhope, vice-chancellor to James I, for £5,400. It then consisted of a manor house in the tenure of Edward Haselrigg, and closes called Grett Close, Kyll Close, Newe Close, Barretts Close and Buckbeys Close adjacent to the Hall Croft. Seven yardlands belonged to the manor house, and there were five cottages with 9 ¼ yardlands, in all 16 ¼ yardlands. All this was previously the property of Thomas Catesby of Whiston and George his son. The manor

Figure 1. Plan of Arthingworth enclosure allotments, 1778, placed on a background of the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:10560 scale (1884) to show the subsequent infilling to make smaller fields.

11 Idem, 678 (56); Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO), IL 984.
called Rabas, consisted of a messuage late in the tenure of Edward Haselrigg, a close called Hall Croft, a spinney and hopyard adjacent, with other small properties, a windmill in the fields of Arthingworth, and 7½ yardlands formerly the inheritance of Maurice Freeman. Also there were five cottages and 4½ yardlands, with Lawnd Close and Lawnd Field, lately St James’ Abbey; in all 28½ yardlands were purchased. A survey of 1623 shows that Stanhopes’ manor accounted for 28½ yardlands, 14½ of which belonged to the manor-house (Hall yardlands).

Sir John Stanhope, created Lord Stanhope of Harrington in 1606, died in 1620. Charles his son sold the manor to the Langham family for £7,000 in 1668. Thomas Langham of London, apothecary, increased his Arthingworth holdings by several purchases as well as acquiring part of Cleper Close from Thomas Underwood in 1677 and Hill Close from Thomas Charles, cordwainer, in 1696, which previously belonged to Edward Marriot of Arthingworth. Eleanor Langham, daughter of Thomas, married Benjamin Rokeby, a Spanish merchant. In his will of 1700 her father left Arthingworth to his grandson, Langham Rokeby who was lord of the manor in c.1720; Thomas Rokeby was the chief landowner in 1767 (see Table 1). The Kelmarsh family of Hanbury acquired property in Arthingworth in 1621 when Sir John Hanbury bought an estate in the hands of Richard Biggs for £876. 13s.4d. In 1723, Serjant Hanbury paid £1,372.19s.0d for Marriot’s farm. This purchasing activity shows an active land-market, leading to 65 per cent of the property being consolidated into the hands of two gentry prior to the enclosure.

The agricultural land
In the Middle Ages, Arthingworth had a high percentage of arable with limited pasture and meadow lying in slades draining into the upstream River Ise (see the published open-field plan). The lack of pasture was partly accommodated in the eighteenth century (and probably earlier) by converting many arable lands to grass (called leys), being 39 per cent in 1710. Including meadow and pasture, there was 60 per cent grass in 1767. A three-field system of agriculture operated by 1685 and continued until enclosure.

Most of the parish remained open field except for a core of medieval enclosure in the village, with Wood Close at the south-west and a block of old enclosure at the south, contiguous with the village closes. This last belonged to St James’ Abbey, Northampton, until the Dissolution and was probably a block demesne with a messuage called Lundehall

12 NRO, Box 1178; BH(K) 114–5 is an abstract.
13 NRO, ZA 4191.
14 NRO, BH(K) 114–5; Clayton 5.
15 NRO, BH(K) 97, 101, 103–4, 106–9, 112.
16 NRO, BH(K) 102.
17 NRO, BH(K) 104.
18 Bridges, ii 2.
19 The family continued to live at Arthingworth, the Rev. Henry Ralph Rokeby being rector and proprietor of Arthingworth manor in 1870 and in 1914 (Directories of Whellan p. 821, and Kelly p. 22).
20 NRO, H(K) 138.
22 From a terrier of land belonging to Mears Ashby School Charity; information from W. Callis, 1982.
23 NRO, H(K) 132.
and Laund Close, Laund Field, and hedges and ditches, mounds and a way to it.²⁵ The abbey seems to have treated it as a small park and warren according to the field-names of Lawn Field, Warren Hill and Rabbit Hill.²⁶ Earthwork ridge and furrow in Clarke’s Spinney and Rabbit Hill Spinney shows that the land had previously been under arable cultivation.

Arthingworth was enclosed by a Parliamentary Act passed in May 1767, and much of the business to arrange an enclosure had already been dealt with, so that it was quickly effected, the Award being made on 7 February 1768.²⁷ In January 1767 it was agreed to petition Parliament. The petition contained the usual clauses noting that there were several proprietors in the open and common fields and that the lands were incapable of improvement.²⁸

The two major landowners were Thomas Rokeby of Arthingworth Hall and William Hanbury of Kelmarsh Hall. In February William Hanbury opposed some parts of the bill, saying that property should be measured in acres and not yardlands, and he objected to a quorum of the appointed commissioners to be only two.²⁹ On 8 March he received a “most virulent & ungrateful letter from Mr. Rokeby” and because of it he would “oppose his bill in the house & shall desire to be heard by my council against it”.³⁰ However, agreement was reached provided that the rector should receive 2/15 of the land for tithes and that Rokeby should appoint one of the commissioners and the other proprietors were to appoint three.³¹ Langham Rokeby, father of Thomas, had presented the Rev. Rokeby Scott as rector but the advowson was now in possession of Thomas.³² Rokeby Scott died before the Award was made and was replaced by the Rev. Robert Stockdale.³³ The advowson, formerly in the gift of Laund Abbey, Leicestershire (before 1233) had come to the Rokebys via Sir Edward Griffin who possessed it in 1595.³⁴

The committee at the House of Commons set up to deal with the bill when it was presented to Parliament consisted of the following MPs (March 1767).³⁵

Archer, Henry, lawyer, Warwick.
Bacon, Edmund, lawyer (known for committee work), Norwich.
Beauchamp Proctor, Sir William, Middlesex.
Burke, William, lawyer, Great Bedworth.
Campbell, Lord Frederick, lawyer, Glasgow Burghs.
Cavendish, Lord John, Knaresborough.
Mr Connant, not identified.
Coutts, James, banker, Edinburgh.
Delaval, George, Northumberland.

²⁵ NRO, BH(K) 114–5, Rabas manor.
²⁶ NRO, 1932 field-name map and Map 3572/12.
²⁷ Award, NRO, Incl. 1.
²⁸ NRO, H(K) 116.
²⁹ NRO, H(K) 119.
³⁰ NRO, H(K) 121; from which it appears that Thomas Rokeby had instigated the enclosure.
³¹ NRO, H(K) 122.
³² NRO, H(K) 128.
³³ Award.
³⁴ NRO, BH(K) 101.
³⁵ NRO, H(K) 123. This list includes the names of the members added on 27 March, showing that William Hanbury kept a close interest in the progress of the Bill through Parliament from his London residence. The MPs sat for the 1761–68 Parliament; biographic details have been taken from L. Namier and J. Brooke, History of Parliament, 1754–90 (1964).
Eames, John, lawyer, from “Stoke” Northamptonshire; Yarmouth.
Fitzherbert, William, lawyer, Derby.
Grant, Alexander, Bart., colonial merchant, Inverness Burghs.
Grey, Lord George Harry, Staffordshire.
Hanbury, John, Monmouth.
Hardy, Sir Charles, married to Mary Tate of Delapré Abbey, Northampton; Rochester.
Howe, Colonel William, Nottinghamshire.
Howe, Viscount Richard, Dartmouth.
Jennings, George, Whitchurch.
Knight, Thomas? New Romney.
Kynaston, Edward, lawyer, Montgomery.
Lambton, General John, Durham.
Catherlough, earl (Robert Knight), lawyer, Great Grimsby.
Mexborough, Lord (John Savile), New Shoreham.
Montagu, Frederick (presented Arthingworth Bill to Parliament), second cousin to Earl Halifax of Horton, Northampton.36
Penton, Henry, lawyer, Winchester.
Plumer, William, Lewes.
Ridley, Matthew, lawyer, Newcastle upon Tyne.
Ryder, Nathaniel, Tiverton.
Sargent, John, Director of Bank of, England, West Looe.
Scawen, James, had a Maidwell connection, Mitchell.
Shafto, Robert, Durham county.
Shiffner, Henry, merchant, Minehead.
Mr Tuller not identified.
White, John, East Retford.
Wilbraham Bootle, Richard, lawyer, Chester.
Wilson, William, lawyer, Ilchester.
Wynn, Thomas, Caernarvon.

Also added to the list were “the members for Northampton, Lincoln, Warwick, Nottingham and York.” These were Frederick Montagu and Lucy Knightley (Northampton) and George Monson (Lincoln). Henry Archer, MP for Warwick, was married to Elizabeth Montagu, daughter of the earl of Halifax of Horton. William Howe represented Nottingham and Sir George Armysjage and Robert Lane were the members for York.

It can be seen that most of the MPs were lawyers and gentry, with a few merchants and financiers. Some of them had Northamptonshire connections, but most did not and they represented constituencies in all parts of the country. Many of them sat for areas that had been enclosed for centuries by private means and were not involved in parliamentary enclosure. It would seem that the MPs served in a neutral capacity to ensure that matters were carried out according to the law and standards of the day. Suggestions that MPs sitting on committees were there mainly to serve the personal interests of their friends in nearby parishes who were undertaking enclosure are not justified in this case. For instance, Alexander Grant, a Scotsman sitting for Inverness, had widespread imperial financial interests, and Henry

36 NRO, HK 122.
Shiffner, an iron merchant of Russian origin, represented Minehead. It is difficult to see what personal knowledge or interest these MPs could have had in Arthingworth.

The petition was read to the House of Commons on 16 January 1767 and leave given to present a bill. On 27 March 1767, at the second reading, it was ordered that the names of Lord Burghersh, Sir Charles Hardy and Messrs Fuller, Hanbury, Plumer, Sargent, Shiffner and Wilson be added to the committee examining the Bill and that they should meet at 5pm that day in the Speaker’s Chamber. A report from the committee was received on 7 April when amendments were read twice and approved and the Bill engrossed. The Bill had a third reading and was passed on 10 April. Frederick Montagu carried it to the House of Lords.

The committee for the House of Lords comprised the Dukes and Marquesses of Westmorland, Shaftesbury, Irving, Dartmouth, Sussex and Guildford; Viscount Ward; the baronets of Delamer, Trevor, Anchor, Vernon; and the bishops of Durham, Winchester, Peterborough, Worcester, St David’s, Litchfield and Carlisle. The House of Lords received the Bill from the Commons on 10 April. It was read three times – 13 April (when it was ordered that the committee or any five of them should deal with it), 15 April (with no amendments), 29 April (“it shall pass”) The Royal Assent was given in the presence of the king on 20 May 1767 and so the Bill became a Private Act (7 George III, c.84).

Commissioners appointed to undertake the business of enclosure were the Reverend Henry Jephcott of Kislingbury, clerk, William Pywell of Barnwell, John Saltzer of Barton Overy, Leicestershire, William Freeman of North Kilworth, Leicestershire, and Tresham Chapman of Old. Samuel Rouse of Market Harborough sought the post of surveyor in a letter sent to William Hanbury in February 1767 at his London residence in Mortimer Street, saying he was “furnished with best instruments for that purpose… and as to the principles of ye art I can say that no person in these parts knows them so well as I … according to ye strict rules of geometry”. Hanbury approved of Rouse and sent him to see Rokeby who was shown “the principal instruments in my surveying apparatus” and Rouse was further sent to get approval of proprietors Wood and Nethercote; however, Rouse later declined the post and Thomas Roleyman of Great Glen, Leicestershire, performed the task. The commissioners appointed (William) Wartnaby of Market Harborough as solicitor. They probably made use of a map of Arthingworth open field land referred to in December 1766, which no longer survives. The surveyor measured and valued all the land and a summary of this survey survives which provides the state of the property and its ownership in 1767 (Table 1).

The first column measures the land in open-field yardlands, the others are in acres. A yardland contained just over 23 acres made up of arable open field strips, leys, and pieces of

38 NRO, H(K) 125.
39 Journal of the House of Lords 31 (1767), 564b, 575b, 580b, 609b.
40 Award.
41 NRO, H(K) 117.
42 NRO, H(K) 118.
43 NRO, H(K) 119, 120.
44 NRO, H(K) 115.
Table 1. Ownership of Arthingworth Open Field Land in 1767.\textsuperscript{45}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Yardlands</th>
<th>Arable acres</th>
<th>Pasture acres</th>
<th>Total acres</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rokeby, Thomas</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanbury, William</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood, Thomas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nethercote, John</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East, Edward</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glebe\textsuperscript{46}</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mears Ashby School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church, for the poor</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>6.75</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>511.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>900</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,413</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

meadow in slades, comprising 60 per cent of pasture in all.\textsuperscript{47} The common has not been located and most likely was dispersed as small pieces alongside roads. The high amount of pasture had been formed by allowing arable to revert to pasture after the Middle Ages and was typical of this part of the county where there was very little riverine meadow.\textsuperscript{48}

Other papers deal with proposals for the rectorial tithes to be replaced by an allotment equal in value to \(\frac{2}{15}\) (13.3 per cent) of the land to be enclosed, made up of \(\frac{3}{10}\) of the arable land and \(\frac{1}{10}\) of the grass. John Nethercote thought the cost would be \(£100\) per 20 acres to enclose.\textsuperscript{49}

The Award made in February 1768 was enrolled in the Court of Chancery and lists the new allotments, stating how many yardlands each represents giving the abuttal descriptions to identify them. From these it is possible to work out the newly created landscape of Arthingworth as shown on Figure 1.

There was no allotment for manorial rights, showing that the Commissioners considered that the Berkhamstead Fee had lapsed. The 13 allotments awarded belonged to nine proprietors, three of them institutional (Table 2). There was no mention of commoners and any rights relating to ancient cottages must have been previously bought out. No allotment for the poor was made other than five acres arising from open field land vested

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Owner & Yardlands & Arable acres & Pasture acres & Total acres & Per cent \\
\hline
Rokeby, Thomas & 29 & 245 & 437 & 683 & 48.3 \\
Hanbury, William & 10.5 & 104 & 132 & 236 & 16.7 \\
Wood, Thomas & 6 & 60 & 80 & 140 & 9.9 \\
Nethercote, John & 4 & 39 & 54 & 93 & 6.6 \\
East, Edward & 3 & 30 & 36 & 66 & 4.7 \\
Glebe\textsuperscript{46} & 2 & 22 & 24 & 46 & 3.3 \\
Mears Ashby School & 1 & 10.5 & 12.5 & 23 & 1.6 \\
Church, for the poor & & 1.25 & 6.75 & 8 & 0.6 \\
Common & & & & 118 & 8.4 \\
**Total** & **55.5** & **511.8** & **900** & **1,413** & **100** \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{45} NRO, H(K) 131, 132.
\textsuperscript{46} These two yardlands were probably those in possession of the prior and canons of Laund before 1331, entered in the record after the gift of the advowson (\textit{Cal. Charter Rolls 1-14 Edward 3, AD 1327-1341}, Vol. 4, 202 (1912)).
\textsuperscript{47} NRO, H(K) 131, 132.
\textsuperscript{49} NRO, H(K) 131. This is close on ten times the cost realised, so perhaps the document has acquired a superfluous “ten”.


in the church-wardens. The Militia List for 1777\(^5\) shows there were at Arthingworth 37 men aged 18-45 years, eight of them described as labourers. Four labourers were excused service because they had three or more children and there were three other persons excused for the same reason. There was probably sufficient employment assisting with 1,388 acres of agricultural farmland; some men were occupied as weavers and servants, as likely were their womenfolk.

**Comment**

The enclosure was completed in the short time of eight months after the Act was passed. This was primarily because there were only nine owners, two of them institutional, so that agreement was relatively simple (after the fall-out between Rokeby and Hanbury). The rector and the bishop of Peterborough ensured that the glebe and tithes were adequately compensated by allotments. An amount of \(\frac{2}{5}\) was common practice at the time, as shown by the national list of all parliamentary enclosure tithe awards 1756-1835.\(^5\)\(^1\) The rector must have welcomed the income from an allotment instead of having to negotiate an annual modus with the farmers, or go round the fields to collect hay and corn in kind with suspicion that there was evasion. The costs of the whole enclosure process – passing the Act, commissioners’ and lawyers’ expenses, surveying, allotting plots and setting hedges – were


£742.7s.6d. These were paid for proportionally by the new allotment holders excluding those for glebe and tithe, as was customary.\textsuperscript{52}

The economic driving force for enclosure is clear from the land rental values. In 1767, Arthingworth open field land was let for 4s.8d an acre but was expected to rise to 16s.6d when enclosed.\textsuperscript{53} If rentals did increase by that much (354 per cent) the cost of the enclosure would be met in a few years. The process was inevitable; enclosure was well under way nationally and more than 80 per cent of England had been enclosed previously at various dates, most of it long before the eighteenth century.

The list giving the names of the MPs who considered the bill in the committee stage is an unusual survival. It shows that men from all over the country took part and were not likely to be partisan in their decisions.

\textit{Acknowledgements}

The staff of the Northamptonshire Record Office for production of documents and Bill Franklin for preparation of Figure 1.

\textsuperscript{52} NRO, Award, m.7.
\textsuperscript{53} NRO, H(K) 131.
Bishop Charles Dudley Cary–Elwes of Billing and Northampton: a Reappraisal

MARGARET OSBORNE

The obituaries of modest Charles Dudley Cary–Elwes, fifth Roman Catholic bishop of Northampton, scarcely do him justice. Written as they were after his long illness, they were correct to emphasize his qualities of self-sacrifice, kindness, considerateness, and his musicianship, but his valuable contributions in diplomatic, intellectual and social fields were not mentioned.¹ His family background was one of conversion from Anglicanism.

Naturally highly strung and sensitive, he was overwhelmed when appointed bishop of Northampton shortly after the death of his handsome and charismatic elder brother, Gervase, who in addition to holding the position of squire of the family Billing and Brigg estates had become internationally famous as a professional singer for his rendition of Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius.*² Charles Dudley retreated to the family estates and, steadied by the support of his remaining relations, was ordained at Northampton cathedral with his brother’s wedding ring, adapted to include some of their mother’s jewels. He promised to continue the family’s tradition of public service.³ (Figure 1)

Kindness and a sense of duty had been instilled into their children by the new bishop’s well-connected aristocratic parents. His mother, the daughter of the Honourable Reverend Henry Ward, a cousin of the earl of Bangor, was a charming but also formidable woman of high moral character. Like her friend and neighbour, Sir Hereward Wake, her family had Plantagenet origins. Charles Dudley’s father, Valentine Cary–Elwes, was descended from a Tudor chancellor of the Bank of England and a Lincolnshire family which occasionally reared religious philosophers, including Thomas Helwys, an advocate of religious toleration in the seventeenth century. The pair belonged to a class schooled to govern.⁴ The children were trained from their formative years to take responsibility for the spiritual and temporal needs of those in their care, especially on the family estates. As “squire” and his good lady, his parents established a regime of traditional country life; they were welcomed by their tenants “with flags flying in their honour”. They saw their tenants as a “noble race of yeoman essentially English”; in return for their service the tenants were visited, nursed, educated and recommended for positions in gentry households. In tactful awareness of other’s feelings, the traditional ringing of bells to celebrate family celebrations was postponed when villagers were in mourning. At Billing once a week, when a bell was rung, any material wants of the villagers were attended to, including food and clothing. During the shooting season every September at Brigg in the flat lands of Lincolnshire, game was distributed by the shooters to all their friends and acquaintances.⁵ (Figure 2)

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¹ The Tablet newspaper 7 May 1932 page 22 The Northampton Herald newspaper 6 May 1932 page 14; anon. Newspaper cutting Northampton Library; Elwes file.
² Cary–Elwes, Charles Dudley; Peterborough Mission Book (PMB) 13 January 1921 Northampton Record Office (NRO) shelf 9L, anon. newspaper cutting Northern Whig Belfast 23 November 1907 in Cary–Elwes papers NRO e(gb) 1639.
³ PMB ibid. 7 November to end December 1921. The Tablet newspaper on line 24 December 1921 page 16.
These principles were reinforced by Cardinal Newman at the Oratory school in Edgbaston who, as well as overseeing their general education, taught the two boys to play string quartets (Charles later was taught the cello by Professor Rheinburger and his pupil Mr Gherl, two of the leading musicians of the time). As bishop, Charles continued his ingrained practice of good works, for instance advocating charity to Northampton’s widows and fatherless children in his first Christmas message (the town suffered the demise of one in ten of its soldiers in the First World War) alongside a message from the bishop of Peterborough. Though he discontinued his cello performances in local concerts as he could no longer spare the time, he was fully utilized helping Canon Ashmole of Northampton to organise memorable religious services in the Catholic cathedral including the celebration of the centenary of Catholic Emancipation in 1929; the diocesan magazine account reported “anything more soul stirring is scarcely possible to conceive.”

The new bishop’s astute diplomatic skills were essential in continuing the good relations with the town’s Anglican community and corporation begun when Gervase was the high

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6 PMB op. cit. 21 March 1912.
sheriff of the county in 1917. Then, as his chaplain, Charles Dudley escorted his brother as far as Catholic law allowed, though he was forbidden to attend services in an Anglican church. During the speeches following his Episcopal consecration in 1921, the mayor of Northampton remembered the family fondly and hoped that despite their religious differences, the broadest sense of toleration could be established so that he and the bishop could stand together against social evils and they publicly shook hands in friendship.

Although he was forbidden to pray in other Christian churches, Bishop Cary-Elwes had already demonstrated that he could refuse invitations without giving offence. As the Catholic priest at Peterborough, in a spirit of solidarity he organised services in his church simultaneously with others in Christian fellowship to commemorate national events such as the death of Edward VII and the accession of George V, and occasionally accepted invitations to dine at the Anglican bishop’s palace.

He regretted that he was unable to attend the unveiling of a memorial in Peterborough cathedral for those who had died in the Boer War. He had had many cousins and friends fighting in South Africa, including Hereward and Godwin Wake. Instead he gained a front line position in the street outside of the cathedral and took a personal salute from Lord Roberts who led the military procession. Charles joined other Peterborough churches in supporting the local infirmary and, though in separate places, joined in the national days of prayer requested by King George V during the Great War.

The obituaries were correct that Bishop Cary-Elwes was a wise governor of a large poor diocese, in a mainly rural setting of “little towns and villages, grasslands, potatoes, corn and turnip fields far away from the City of London and its environs.” He had had a lifetime’s personal knowledge of the district, remembering the hardships of the missionary priests with little money and tiny congregations, who managed to build churches, schools and presbyteries and had doubled the number of Catholics in the region from 1865 to 1925, partly by a high percentage of conversions. He was fortunate that he knew the clergy of the diocese, some of whom had helped him when a church student, and that as the inspector of schools he was already a familiar figure to the congregations. He proved adept at placing staff in positions suitable for them; for instance, Canon Ernest Garnett, who had attended the same small school as the bishop and was later his curate at Peterborough, was chosen to take care of the Bury St Edmunds parish when the Jesuits relinquished the charge, an inspired choice as one of his ancestors had been a Jesuit in Elizabethan times so he had sympathy with the order and could make the transition as smooth as possible.

The steady solid growth of the Northampton diocese begun by his predecessors continued under Bishop Cary-Elwes from 1921-1932. Its numbers grew from 17,000 to 22,400 and despite clergy shortages he was able to provide seven centres with their first resident priests. He also began 12 new outstations, including those at the newly formed Royal Air Force

8 PMB ibid. 11 June 1917
9 PMB ibid. 13 June 1917. The Tablet op. cit. 24 December 1921 page 16.
10 PMB ibid. 10 January 1910 and 7-13 May 1910; accession of new King.
11 PMB ibid. 1 August 1918, 29 September 1903, The Tablet op. cit. 24 December 1921 page 14
12 PMB ibid. 28 October 1903, 3 January 1915.
13 Cary-Elwes; Bishop Charles Dudley Pastoral letter Lent 1925 NDA D1.
centres in Henlow and Bircham Newton, not closed at the end of the First World War. At Kesgrave a church was built in memory of Squadron Leader Rope who perished in the R.101 airship tragedy, which directly affected the diocese as the ships were associated with the Cardington works in Bedfordshire.15

Charles Dudley continued the pattern of previous bishops in sending priests to residential centres to form the nucleus of a congregation; he sent Father Cyril Banham, who was recovering from tuberculosis, to the healthy residential Woburn Sands, a town less than fifty years old with only a handful of Catholics. From his first mass centre in the Fir Trees Hotel, the priest established a presbytery with money loaned from the diocese; he then utilised a redundant wooden hut, which had done good service at St Neots, as its first church and began Whit Sunday processions in the small market square.16

But the obituaries do not contain information of the bishop’s innovations. He followed his father’s ideas on increasing lay participation in the process of evangelization in a world they perceived as threatened by atheistic secular thought, infidelity, ignorance and sin. The bishop allowed laymen, including Harold Cox, to establish and manage the building fund for a church in the new Abington estate situated between the Northampton cathedral and Billing

15 The Tablet newspaper op. cit. 7 May 1932 page 22 and 26 December 1931 page 21.
16 Diocesan mission and clergy books FIV .5 NDA. Collin’s collected papers; Woburn Sands NDA Collin’s papers.
whilst he sold the original building plot in order to purchase a new site located in Park Avenue North, the centre of the new suburb. At Princes Risborough he took an interest in the work of a convert, Alan Turner, in his endeavours to finance the establishment of a Catholic congregation, beginning with twenty people, by organizing good quality music concerts in London. Mr Turner, who owned electrical and textile factories in High Wycombe, London and Derbyshire making parts for the newly developed aircraft industry, later organised a model “factory family”, with pensions, benefits and social activities for his community including the opera and film-making clubs, putting into practice the bishop’s hopes for harmonious relations between employers and employees. The ideas were based on the teachings of Pope Leo XIII. No evidence has come to light of discussions between the two men over these plans, but in practice he mirrored the example of the Cary-Elwes estate at Billing.

Bishop Cary-Elwes did not have the authority to create the position of lay helper, which his father had desired, but he did not need to create an organization under priestly prayer and guidance to train men to visit the sick, teach and help run parishes and schools. In Northampton, Peterborough and elsewhere in his diocese, the Saint Vincent de Paul societies had already been established by his predecessor, Bishop F.W. Keating, and were doing such work. However, while in charge of the Peterborough congregation, Charles Dudley created a group of laymen, mainly drawn from the middle and upper working class, who, active in prayer and charity, supported him in organising religious and secular events, clubs and activities.

Unlike previous bishops of Northampton, Bishop Cary-Elwes happily entrusted the establishment of new ventures in the diocese to religious orders. He had worked alongside them as a youth in the Nottingham diocese, and had used them as supply priests when a canon in Peterborough. The Dominican order opened a school at Laxton Hall in Northamptonshire and the Canon Regular of the Lateran from Potters Bar in the Westminster Archdiocese took charge of the Dunstable congregation, who had travelled to Luton for Sunday services under his predecessors. The same order increased their activities near Eton by opening a school/chapel in Datchet.

The bishop also understood the specific requirements of mature church students who would become priests after serving in the armed forces in a time of war. As older men they required a different type of guidance from the church students entering seminaries from school. He wrote regularly to the church students entrusted to him, including his nephew Valentine Aubrey Elwes, giving them sensitive support and understanding including wise health advice. He was especially supportive after Valentine suffered a physical collapse trying his vocation in an austere Carthusian monastery, sending him practical advice as he was nursed back to health and enabling him to finish his priestly vocation at the University of Fribourg. He offered his cousin Father Cuthbert Cary-Elwes, a missionary to the Indians

17 Cathedral and Abington files Parish Records NDA.
20 Diocesan Centenary Souvenir op. cit. pages 43 and 65.
of South America, the quiet position of priest at Billing whilst he recuperated from being poisoned by the wife of a tribesman.22

As bishop, Charles Dudley utilized his studies of history and pageantry to introduce a new Guild for East Anglia, allowing Canons Davidson and St Leger Mason to organize annual pilgrimages to Dunwich, the See of St Edmund, most of which was now submerged under the North Sea, pray for the reconversion of the region, and begin a magazine to inform the present generation of its Catholic heritage. 23 His own pastoral letters shared his knowledge of the development of Catholicism in England, its martyrs, and local recusants including

22 Death of Father Cary-Elwes SJ Catholic Herald op. cit. 31 August 1945 page 1.
23 The Tablet op. cit. 17 March 1928 page 2. The East Anglian Guild magazines church publication 1936-1945 NDA.
the A. Preece family of Washingly, and the growth of the Catholic organization worldwide in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries with his diocese.\textsuperscript{24} The canonization of the English martyrs St John Fisher and St Thomas More he hoped would inspire his contemporaries to evangelize, in the same way that he had been affected by a visit to the Coliseum, when in his imagination he shared the experiences of the early martyrs.\textsuperscript{25}

The bishop’s parents’ closest friends in Northamptonshire were the Anglo-Irish Gunning family of Horton, the Arkwrights of Knuston Hall and the family of Sir Hereward Wake, the twelfth baronet who resided at Courteenhall within easy travelling distance of Billing Hall. Sir Hereward shared the Cary-Ewes’ simple but profound piety. Though personally a committed member of the Church of England, he did not allow the conversion of the Cary-Ewes to Catholicism to interfere with their friendship in any way. They attended parties together, their sons played cricket for the same local teams and the men both lectured to the local nature and field sport society. They shared common values, taking responsibility for the rural environment, their workforce and the agricultural community. The bishop wrote an appreciation of the twelfth baronet for the nature society journal after his death; he had reinforced the values which his own parents had instilled in him.\textsuperscript{26}

Miss Joan Wake, Sir Hereward’s daughter, also attended the Cary-Ewes’ music and hunting activities.\textsuperscript{27} She studied music at the Northampton school, then based in the Drapery; it was patronised by Gervase and his wife, Lady Winifrede. She conducted the Anglican choir at Courteenhall while Charles Dudley was leading the Catholic choristers in Peterborough. They also supported each other’s charity concerts. Canon Cary-Ewes organised assembly room concerts at Peterborough to clear the parish debt. He dealt with the publicity, ticket sales, and front-of-house staff that sported rosettes of the Elwes racing colours. The internationally-renowned performers were led by Gervase and Charles Dudley. The patrons included Sir Hereward Wake, and occasionally Joan joined the audience, pleasing the crowds by arriving from the Anglican bishop’s palace in a carriage and pair.\textsuperscript{28} The brothers performed in Northampton at charity concerts organized by the Wakes\textsuperscript{29}, and the canon shared Miss Joan’s interest in the preservation of historical material in an attempt to preserve a balanced and accurate account of history, dispelling ignorance, prejudice and myths.

Charles Dudley researched the history of Mary Queen of Scots, who was buried in Peterborough cathedral after her execution. A chance meeting with the Scottish nationalist, Thomas Napier, with long blond hair and dressed in full Scottish costume on his way to lay a wreath at Fotheringhay, aroused the canon’s interest while the Anglicans of Peterborough were arranging exhibitions in her memory.\textsuperscript{30} Charles Dudley collected evidence of Catholic survival in the Rockingham Forest region of the county before he

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{24} Cary-Elwes, Bishop Charles Dudley Pastoral letters 1929-1930, especially 1922, Advent on Rome and 1923 Advent, the A. Preece recusants of Washingly. NDA D1.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Cary-Elwes; Pastoral letter Advent 1925 NDA D1 Cary-Elwes, Charles Dudley diary; NRO ce (b) 41; April 1881.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} Cary-Elwes, Alice Diaries, op. cit.; (13) 26 September 1873, (20) 5 August 1884. Wake, Joan; letter to her Mother 29 October 1896; Wake Box 1 NRO, Correspondence Wake-Elwes 28 January 1908 NRO. e(gb) 493. Cary-Elwes, Dudley Charles Journal of Northamptonshire Naturalist Society, volume 18, pages 139-141.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} Wake to her mother op. cit.
  \item \textsuperscript{28} PMB op. cit. January 1906.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} PMB ibid. 8 February 1904.
  \item \textsuperscript{30} PMB ibid. 19 October 1904 and 9 February 1910.
\end{itemize}
attended the unveiling of a memorial on the Great North Road at Norman’s Cross in August 1914 to commemorate, in a spirit of reconciliation, the French prisoners of war held there during the Napoleonic Wars. It was deeply ironic that the French diplomats invited were unable to attend as unsuccessfully they attempted to avert another European conflict.31

Then, despite the duties of wartime, in which his language and diplomatic skills were invaluable in housing and schooling the Belgian refugees residing in Peterborough and Oundle, visiting German prisoners of war at Wakerely as well as arranging services for the congregation and soldiers stationed in the city and enduring the rationing and blackouts imposed on the public, the canon managed to find time to access Oundle records in the possession of the Monketon family. They were aiding Joan Wake in her exploration of the area’s manorial rolls, with the help of a refugee Belgian priest resident with Canon Cary-Elwes, Pere Sleewayen, who taught her to read Medieval Latin.32 Joan also accompanied the canon on a visit to the Peterborough cathedral library to study some of the sixteenth-century manuscripts relating to the Catholic proto martyr, Henry Heath.33

As bishop, Charles Dudley had less time for his historical researches other than those necessary for his pastoral letters. But as Catholic landowners sold their estates and closed their private chapels, he established a repository for their records at Bishop’s House, including those of the Hothorpe estate, and stored their church furnishings until they could be incorporated in other buildings. Following the sale and demolition of the house, stained glass windows and the high altar from the Sir Edgar Hibberts family chapel at Ashby Lodge in Ashby St Ledgers were used in the remodelling of Daventry church. The Pugin altar from Danesfield chapel belonging to the Scott-Murray family is still in existence in the Henley church.34

The bishop also rejoined the Northamptonshire Record Society begun by Joan Wake with similar motives, to preserve intact as much as possible of the county’s heritage. She used her influence to gather collections of the papers of estate owners, including those of the bishop’s nephew, Geoffrey Elwes, who sold Billing Hall in 1930 when the Abington suburb of Northampton was expanded, and removed to Lincolnshire to become a member of their Record Society.35 Joan also joined the British Record Society, whilst Charles Dudley presided at meetings for the Catholic Record Society; one of the founder members was his school colleague, John H. Pollen.36

The bishop’s work for Catholic education was not adequately developed in the obituaries. Despite his natural sensitivity, he manfully campaigned in local and national politics for the rights of parents to decide what religious precepts their children were taught. He believed that school teachers were entrusted with other people’s children and that the parents

32 Wake letter to Miss Monckton NRO Wake Box 1 16 November 1915 PMB 1914–19.
33 PMB op. cit. October 1917.
35 Record Society Membership lists, 1926 Box 1 Northamptonshire Record Society, note in catalogue of Cary-Elwes collection, NRO.
36 Wake Joan Card index NRO. The Tablet op. cit. 16 July 1927, page 22.
working under the guidance of their priests had the ultimate responsibility for their education. He opposed government plans to raise the school leaving age to fourteen without providing adequate funding to extend the religious school buildings, another burden to be borne by the already struggling church communities. He believed that he had a duty to the next generation to hand down his faith without modification as it had been handed down to him, and he spoke at the Albert Hall on the issue.⁷

The bishop’s important contribution to national British organizations was not mentioned by his biographers. He developed greatly the provision of Catholic education for the Catholic male students in Cambridge, strengthening the provision of a moral and religious perspective into the heart of English intellectual life. He reorganized the Catholic chaplaincy as the Fisher Society, which was moved to larger premises after the purchase of the cluster of buildings of the Black Swan Inn and permitted its affiliation to the newly formed Students Union. He promised to help its new chaplain, Father Lopes, in any way necessary and blessed his work when he presided at its annual dinner parties.³⁸

Charles Dudley also organised, presided over and sang the services at a series of summer schools at the university to further his ideas of establishing a well-educated Catholic lay presence in the centre of British government and artistic life. The most eminent lecturers in their fields were invited to lead discussions on Saint Thomas Aquinas’ teaching, still underpinning Catholic philosophy, the Bible, the nature of God, the papacy and the English martyrs. The work of the schools continued after his early death.³⁹ The bishop also used his acute judgement to approve a work of theology by Messenger, which attempted to marry Christian tradition with twentieth-century scientific discoveries, then a very sensitive field of study. Once convinced that the book in no way challenged accepted church teaching, the bishop gave it his imprimatur.⁴⁰

The bishop also used his diplomatic skills to establish international structures in order to avoid another world war, whilst memorials were soberly being erected across the world. At Great Billing, whose population was drawn from a variety of Christian bodies, the memorial was positioned in the road between the Catholic presbytery and church so that its ceremonies would be accessible to everyone. (Figure 4) It was unveiled by the bishop’s brother in law, Lord Denbigh, who seriously warned that a desire for peace was not enough to secure it; the underlying causes of conflict would need to be addressed before sustainable stability could be achieved.⁴¹

Bishop Cary-Elwes’ relations had held diplomatic positions for the British government throughout Europe, South America and the British colonies. He had been accustomed from his earliest years to listening to international diplomats, including Sir Linton Simmons, the first post-reformation envoy from Britain to the Vatican whom he had met whilst holidaying with his uncle, Vice Admiral Ward, at Malta. In Bavaria the family associated with the court

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³⁸ The Tablet op. cit. 15 July 1922 page 6.
⁴⁰ Messenger Evolution and theology; the problems of man’s origins London Oates and Washborne 1931.
⁴¹ Northampton Mercury 7 July 1922, page 13 c 3 Northampton Central Library.
party striving unsuccessfully to lessen the Prussian nationalistic values in the newly formed German empire. Before settling on a clerical vocation, the bishop had once considered a career in the service.\textsuperscript{42}

Appointed bishop, he supported the work of the newly-formed Roman Catholic Council for International Relations, the League of Nations and advocated peace overtures with the Eastern Orthodox Church through the formation of the Society of Saint Jerome with Cardinal Bourne of Westminster. He had become interested in the Eastern church when as a church student in Rome he had attended their January services. He attempted to begin a dialogue between the two churches, alienated for centuries, and he warned that the first task facing them all was to ensure that they did not give undue offence through ignorance. He emphasised the importance of listening carefully, so as to become aware of differences of language and interpretation that could create misunderstanding. He had observed the harmful effects of his father’s use of words after his conversion on his friendship with his relation by marriage, the Reverend Thomas Field who had held the family living at Rigby in Lincolnshire and strived that any words he used would reconcile rather than alienate.\textsuperscript{43}

\textsuperscript{42} Cary-Elwes, Charles Dudley diary (42) March 1887 and June 1887 op. cit.
\textsuperscript{43} The Tablet op. cit. 21 September 1927, 30; 3 April 1926, 14, Cary-Elwes, Dudley Diary op. cit. (44) 9 January 1889. Tom Field to Valentine Cary-Elwes NRO E(GB) 605.
The bishop also withstood movements to weaken the institution of marriage at a time when traditional values were being tested, and he advocated protection of purity of thought when artists and authors were crossing the barriers of what had been perceived in Victorian England as decency and wholesome literature. He publicly rebuked the Catholic author, Shane Leslie, a family friend, when he published *The Cantab*, which the bishop judged to be an unworthy novel for a Christian author to write. The book was withdrawn by the author with a public apology. In a pastoral letter the bishop also explained the reasoning behind his attitude. He believed that by filling one’s head with unsuitable images, one could imperil one’s immortal soul, the salvation of which was one’s primary duty, as heaven was one’s final destiny after this short space of time on earth.44

The bishop’s position on the economic problems of society in the postwar era is less easy to gauge. He was deeply conservative in his outlook and unionist in his politics, as were his parents and their acquaintances. His maternal relations in Ulster had been personally affected by the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and had witnessed first hand the social unrest caused, they believed, by the British government’s misunderstanding of the Irish economy. His mother was a neighbour of the liberal diplomat Lord Dufferin, once based at Rome, but believed that she was “not of their set, and never would be.”45 In Europe on the Riviera, Malta, Florence and Bavaria the family had associated with members of the English and Russian royal families, who were to become victims of revolutionaries.46 Charles Dudley was further alienated from nationalist and republican movements when as a church student in Rome he witnessed violent anti-clericalism.47 A great grandson of the Earl of Bangor, he was naturally a supporter of aristocratic government.

He had little sympathy for political agitators when parish priest at Peterborough. He disapproved of strikes as a means of settling disputes and supported the government during the national strike. He vented his fears in his mission book rather than publicly, but he was exasperated by the personal inconveniences he endured because of rail strikes. He wished for a process of arbitration to resolve disputes without innocent passengers suffering, and wished that companies would be firm but fair. Observing the unrest in Europe, he was apprehensive that disputes could lead to riots. Unfortunately, fairness and mutual understanding was not to be gained just by wishful thinking, but the bishop was correct that better education of employers and employees to increase their understanding of their responsibilities for each other could lead to improved industrial relations. He believed the established Catholic teaching that employers had a duty to take an interest in the welfare in their employees, but left the matter to the region of individual conscience.48

A sensitive man, Bishop Cary-Elwes cared for the plight of the poor and expected those blessed with means to alleviate poverty. Whilst at Peterborough he had become aware of the poverty of the itinerant farm workers who laboured in the summer months in the Fenlands.

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46 Cary-Elwes, Dudley Diary op. cit. (41) 1886-87.
47 Cary-Elwes, Dudley Diary op. cit. (44) 2 May 1890.
As bishop he helped Father Lopes of Cambridge University to organise health and food services for the Fen fruit pickers, including a crèche for the children, work that had a secondary effect of bringing people from different ways of life in contact with each other.\footnote{The Tablet 7 June 1924 op. cit., page 6. PMB op. cit. 29 January and February 1905.}

Charles was a countryman who, after his ordination, still frequented clay shooting competitions in Billing dressed in an old comfortable hat; the sale of country estates of his family and neighbours due to low agricultural prices and high taxation personally saddened him. Characteristically, the Cary-Elwes estate houses at Billing were sold to their occupiers and the Elwes Arms to their trusted servants, the Palethorpes.\footnote{The Northampton Independent 28 August 1931, page 6, 1 August 1925, page 15, NRO Lucy Caroline Linnett “The memories of a villager” NRO ROP 3461.}

The bishop also looked favourably on attempts to stem the depopulation of the countryside as families drifted into the towns in search of employment. He was a member of the Catholic Emigration Society providing Catholic contacts for families voluntarily going abroad in search of a more sustainable future than that open to them in the English countryside. In this he followed the practice of his grandfather, the Reverend Henry Ward, who had sent his elder sons and some of the Killinchy villagers to found the Anglican Canterbury settlement in New Zealand. The Wilson family began work in the new colony as servants of the Ward brothers. His paternal uncle by marriage, Mr Charles Fitzgerald, as Governor of Western Australia had also advocated emigration as a means of settling the colony. But the economic pressures driving urbanization were too strong to be counteracted.

The bishop’s experiences as rector of Peterborough had given him an insight into the poverty caused by urban temporary employment, where sudden reverses could lead to dependence on private charity or eventually residence in the workhouse; he does not seem to have considered any other remedy for the problem other than private charitable efforts. But, as a school fellow of Hilaire Belloc and as the bishop who confirmed G.K. Chesterton at Beaconsfield following his reception into the Catholic church, Charles Dudley must have been aware of their calls for a just and fair society based on a redistribution of the nation’s resources.\footnote{The Tablet op. cit. 30 September 1922, page 32 and Oratory midsummer examination results NRO e(gb) 1632.}

He strived as bishop of Northampton to form a sustainable and peaceable society. His obituaries were right to emphasise that he worked beyond his strength in public service as did many of his generation. Never robust, he was weakened by the austerities of wartime, and as a bishop succumbed to influenza and never recovered his strength. He became dangerously ill at Bordeaux while leading the Catholic Associations’ annual pilgrimage to Lourdes. Instead of heading the ceremony for the blessing of the sick as was his normal practice, he attended it on a stretcher as a meek pilgrim in need of succour. His last public act was to bless the crowds as he was placed into an ambulance on his arrival back in London.\footnote{The Tablet 19 September 1931, page 13.}

He died seven months later and was buried in his beloved Billing. Imbued deeply with the Catholic heritage of Western Europe, the bishop perceived himself as a link in a chain of
Christians. At his ordination he promised faithfully to preserve and communicate the teachings of his forebears to another generation. With his inherent charm, gentleness and courtesy, not natural to him as he had inherited his father’s tetchiness but acquired through hard practise, he managed to fulfil his duties as a Catholic bishop while maintaining cordial and affectionate relations with leaders of other Christian traditions. He pursued as far as possible joint charitable ventures, no mean achievement in the 1920s. His diplomatic skills helped to make Roman Catholicism more acceptable to his fellow Englishmen, who had inherited suspicions against “popery”. His patient development of the Northampton Diocese despite the shortages of manpower and resources established a strong structure upon which it expanded following the emigration of Catholics into the region during and after the Second World War.53

The bishop was in practice a diplomat and gentleman of high calibre whose well thought out principles, based on those of Cardinal Henry Newman and his own father on the education of lay people, the importance of better ecumenical relations between the Christian churches and the need for world peace, gained a high profile at the Second Vatican Council in 1962.

He was not schooled enough in economics to evolve a synthesis on the distribution of the world’s resources, another matter of concern at the Council. He was aware that the rural hierarchical world in which he was most at ease, and which Bishop Keating of Northampton recognised, had produced a laity most generous to the Catholic church in the region was under threat from seemingly unstoppable economic forces. He tried to ensure that the sterling values of dedication to the welfare of others instilled in him continued to be implanted in men’s consciences into a new era. The obvious self-sacrifice of his health in serving others, his personal integrity and generosity meant that he was sincerely mourned in Northampton, not just by its Catholics but also by other prominent members of the borough and county. He was eminently qualified to lead the Roman Catholic diocese of Northampton in the 1920s before its transformation due to political and social changes during and following the Second World War.54

53 Diocesan Statistics 1941-1950 NDA B1
54 Keating, F.W., Bishop of Northampton Pastoral letter Advent 1920 NDA The Tablet op. cit. 16 September 1933 page 13.
Labour and Socialism in Northampton during the Great War

MATTHEW KIDD

The First World War proved to be a turning point in Northampton’s political history. Prior to 1914, the continuing popularity of the Liberal party amongst the town’s working class delayed the formation of a Labour party in the borough, and there was little indication that the political landscape would have changed significantly after the proposed 1915 general election.¹ The failure to form a Labour party was also influenced by the divided nature of the local socialist movement. The British Socialist Party (BSP) and the Independent Labour Party (ILP) had been only moderately successful in municipal and parliamentary elections, and there were even signs that they were in a state of decline. This local context contributed to the absence of a Labour party before 1914, and it was only due to the persistent efforts of individual socialists that a more united organisation was formed at all.²

Things had changed considerably by the time of the “coupon election” in 1918.³ A Labour party, now composed of the major trade unions and socialist parties, confidently asserted its independence and achieved a creditable result against the combined forces of Liberalism and Conservatism. With increasing success at subsequent elections, the Labour party succeeded in displacing the once-dominant Liberal party as the main progressive force in Northampton, and won its first election in the town in 1923. The Liberals, who had won every parliamentary election in the borough since 1880, have never won a parliamentary contest in Northampton since.

How, and why, did this rapid reconfiguration of politics take place? The answer can be found in three closely related developments. Firstly, the experiences of the war years unified the different sections of the local Labour party. Pacifist sentiments were confined to a small minority, and the majority of the local party remained supportive of the government and the war effort. Secondly, this unity was demonstrated through the broad participation of the party’s leaders in various cross-party efforts at relieving distress, encouraging recruitment, and approving of candidates for military service. These activities played a crucial role in convincing local voters of Labour’s legitimacy as a viable political party, and increased the popularity of its local leaders. Thirdly, divisions within the Liberal party during these years provided Labour with an opportunity to present itself as the most viable and effective reforming organisation.

The post-war electoral progress of the Labour party in Northampton was based upon the internal unity established during the war. The formation of the party in 1914 had finally brought together the trade unions, the BSP and the ILP into a political alliance, but only after a tense and protracted negotiation process.⁴ With the outbreak of war, however, lingering political differences were quickly set aside. The trades’ council, which represented

¹ D. Tanner, Political change and the Labour party, 1900-1918 (Cambridge, 1990), p. 311.
² Northampton Trades’ Council (NTC), Minutes 1909-1913, 30 November 1913, in NTC 2 (acc 1977/44), in Northampton, Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO).
³ Coalition government leaders sent letters of endorsement, known as “coupons”, to parliamentary candidates they approved of.
⁴ The secretary of the national Labour party sent a letter of congratulations on formation of the local party in October 1914. See NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 21 October 1914, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44).
the town’s trade union movement, interpreted the war as a defence of the “rights of small nations”, and supported the government’s efforts to defeat “Prussian militarism”. The local BSP were also strongly pro-war, and contended that “Socialism, Patriotism, and Internationalism” were “perfectly reconcilable”. Individual socialists often went even further in their war fervour. During a particularly heated controversy over the manager of the tramways, one BSP councillor called for the removal of Mr. Gottschalk due to his place of birth. Speaking on a Conservative platform, he further urged the authorities to lock up all other “enemies” in Britain because he did “not trust a German”.

Anti-war and pacifist opinions were not entirely absent within the Labour party. J. Flinton-Harris, a member of the local ILP, resigned from his prominent positions within the movement due to his opposition to the war effort. Harold Crofts, a colleague of Flinton-Harris in the ILP, also adhered to his principles and was militarily imprisoned for disobedience in 1916. These were, however, exceptions. Frederik Roberts, chairman of the local ILP and the future Minister of Pensions in the first Labour Government, refused to follow his party’s anti-war attitude. At the outbreak of war, the ILP had discussed holding a meeting of protest, but due to a lack of interest, no further action was taken.

The strong support for the war effort within the local movement led to the participation of Labour members in various war-related committees. At different times throughout the war, individual trade unionists and socialists joined the Northampton Committee for the Prevention of Distress During War-Time, the War Pensions Committee, and the Food Control Committee. After initial hesitation, Labour party delegates also joined the voluntary recruitment campaign. Fearful of the threat of enforced conscription, these “Labour patriots”, as the Northampton Mercury described them, joined employers, local politicians and other charitable organisations on the Northampton Recruiting Committee. When military conscription was finally introduced in 1916, the local party overcame its strong hostility to the principle and sent delegates to the related tribunal. (Figure 1)

The presence of Labour delegates on these cross-party committees enhanced their prestige within local political circles. This was especially the case with the Allied War Fund Committee, a scheme that channelled funds to war-related causes. Devised by James

5 NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 1 October 1914, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44).
7 NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 1 October 1914, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44).
8 NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 17 November 1915, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44); Buckell, “The Early Socialists in Northampton”, p. 43.
9 Northampton Mercury, 3 January 1919.
16 NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 21 April 1915, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44).
Gribble, a founding member of the local Labour party, the scheme raised a total of £27,778 through its subscriptions by the end of the war. Colloquially known as the “Gribble fund”, its leading committee included representatives from the Free Churches, the Church of England, the Manufacturers’ Association, the Trades’ Association, various trade unions, and the Town Council. This example of public service was commended by a wide-range of eminent individuals and organisations, an expression of gratitude that Gribble, a militant socialist, would not have been used to. He had, after all, been “preaching simple things to Northampton for 25 years, but this was the first time he had been able to induce people to take any notice of them!”

The Labour party’s growing confidence and increasing participation in the public life corresponded with divisions in the once-dominant Liberal party. This development was most clearly demonstrated through the divergent attitudes and actions of the two local MPs, Charles McCurdy and Hastings Lees-Smith. McCurdy, who remained a loyal supporter of David Lloyd George, participated enthusiastically in the various recruitment and conscription campaigns throughout the war. By 1918, he was broadly sympathetic to Woodrow Wilson’s war aims, but believed these questions could only be considered after the enemy had been defeated. Lees-Smith, on the other hand, was far from comfortable with the Lloyd George-led coalition. Active military service in France had left a deep impression on him, and it was from this time on that he became increasingly disillusioned with the government, the war, and the Liberal party. These experiences influenced his

17 Northampton Mercury, 28 June 18.
19 Northampton Mercury, 30 June 1916.
20 Until 1918 Northampton was a two-member constituency.
21 Northampton Mercury, 30 August 1918.
22 Northampton Mercury, 26 July 1918.
decision to oppose conscription in the House of Commons, and also led to his involvement in the Union of Democratic Control, an organisation which displayed broad scepticism to the conduct of the war.23

These differences were brought to a head during the “coupon election” in December 1918. Electoral reform had turned Northampton into a single-member constituency, but there was to be no contest for the Liberal nomination. The disillusioned Lees-Smith announced he had no desire to stand again, and McCurdy was subsequently selected to run with the support of the Conservatives.24 Divisions amongst Liberals gave the young Labour party an electoral opportunity, and the growing confidence and strength of its affiliated sections convinced members to put forward a candidate. The local branch of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives (NUBSO), which had experienced an unprecedented rise in membership during the war, wanted a member of their “trade and class in Parliament”.25 The National Union of Railway-men wanted an ILP-affiliated candidate, and nominated one of their organisers, Walter Halls.26 A third candidate was also put forward, but in a shock move, the local Labour party ultimately selected Halls.27 This decision did not, however, go down particularly well with many NUBSO members in the movement.28

In spite of these differences, the Labour party presented a united front and put forward a comprehensive political programme. In campaign speeches, Halls focused on questions of domestic policy, and urged voters to see that “the Labour and Socialist movement was… the only gospel that could save humanity to-day”.29 However, this refusal to discuss the war led to accusations of pacifism from his opponents.30 Halls and many of his supporters were, McCurdy claimed, “punny imitators of the Bolshevists of Russia” and would, if elected, “hoist the Bolshevist banner and show themselves in their true colours”.31 As he had not

23 Northampton Mercury, 5 May 1916; NTC, Minutes 1913-1916, 10 January 1916, in NRO, NTC 3 (acc. 1977/44).
24 Northampton Mercury, 11 October 1918.
25 Northampton Mercury, 7 June 1918.
26 Northampton Mercury, 14 June 1918.
27 Northampton Mercury, 5 July 1918; Nottingham Evening Post, 5 July 1918.
28 Northampton Mercury, 9 August 1918; Northampton Mercury, 4 October 1918.
29 Northampton Mercury, 19 July 1918.
30 Leicester Daily Post, 9 August 1918.
31 Northampton Mercury, 6 December 1918.
“lifted a finger” to help his country in the war, the Northampton Mercury urged voters to defeat Halls by returning the Coalition candidate.\(^{32}\)

Even with these negative campaign tactics, Halls received a respectable 10,735 votes against McCurdy’s 18,010. This result far surpassed the electoral performance of socialist candidates before the war, and laid the basis for Labour’s subsequent growth. In a 1920 by-election, the party considered standing Hasting Lees-Smith, who had now joined from the Liberals, but ultimately chose Margaret Bondfield to run. (Figure 2) Bondfield managed to reduce McCurdy’s majority with a campaign primarily focused on rising prices and profiteering, and continued to put “a lot of work” into the constituency. After unsuccessfully contesting the seat again, she was finally successful in 1923. With the announcement of the results, Bondfield recalled that “the constituency went nearly crazy with joy” and she was carried around the streets by supporters. The election of Bondfield proved to be a significant turning point in the town’s history. Labour, not the Liberals, were now the main progressive political alternative in Northampton politics.

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\(^{32}\) Northampton Mercury, 18 October 1918.

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* The Liberal total includes the votes for an independent Liberal candidate.
† Northampton became a one-member constituency in 1918.
‡ The Liberal total includes the votes for an independent Liberal candidate.
BOOK REVIEWS

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS BRIXWORTH:
SURVEY, EXCAVATIONS AND ANALYSIS 1972-2010
by David Parsons and D.S. Sutherland
ISBN 978-1-84217-531-6
Hardback, 336 pp., illus.
Price £90.00

This is an impressive and beautifully produced volume which on first acquaintance looks much too complicated and daunting for the general reader – indeed, when I first looked at this book, I thought: “Do I really need to get into this?” – but have courage, gentle reader, and delve into it and you will not be disappointed. Yes, there are sections that are complicated and designed for the specialist reader and I wish the publishers had not given us ten pages of detailed listing of contents and illustrations right at the beginning. This is enough to put anyone off! What you need to do is to go straight to numbered page 1, which is Section 1, Introduction (I wonder why they have called them sections rather than chapters?) and then p. 3, Section 3, Brief General Description, which are both exceptionally readable and rewarding. Section 4 describes the various antiquarian accounts from the 18th to the late 19th centuries and this is fascinating.

Then comes Diana Sutherland’s survey of building materials beginning with a general introduction followed by a very detailed analysis which really needs a geological mind since it takes apart every wall of the building – something for the general reader to wonder at since every stone in each wall is not only described but is illustrated. There cannot be many buildings where this has been done, indeed there cannot be many buildings where such a detailed dissection would even be justified. So the general reader can delve into this but will want to move on to Section 8 which summarizes archaeological investigations since the 1950s.

Section 10 (we are now at p. 147) gives us the significance of the various building materials and is again fascinating. Section 11 Interpretation reveals the development of the structure and attempts a reconstruction of the appearance of the church as first built, and this is really rewarding and beautifully illustrated.

There then follows a discussion of where Brixworth stands in a European context. The volume ends with a series of Appendices, essays recording various aspects of the various building materials and some splendid pull-out colour drawings of the church’s walls, where every single stone can be seen. These are brilliantly done and the publishers deserve the highest praise for their production.

This is a remarkable book and testament to the labours of its two principal authors, David Parsons and Diana Sutherland. It is a triumph. You may not wish to own it, you may not want to read it, but if you have any interest in Brixworth church and Anglo-Saxon architecture, you should certainly dip into it.

Bruce A. Bailey
This study of an account book from Browne’s Hospital, Stamford, the manuscript of which, Rawlinson B 352, is in the Bodleian Library, has been a long time in coming to fruition. The work of Canon J. Paul Hoskins, formerly rector of two of Stamford’s splendid churches and then confrater of the Hospital until 1958, is combined with more recent work by Mrs Winifred Bowman, Ann Matthews and other members of the Stamford Survey Group. Dr Alan Rogers has written the introduction and is editor of the volume, which he has dedicated to the late Canon Hoskins and to whom he pays tribute.

It was William Browne and his wife Margaret, of Stamford, who in 1475 originally endowed and managed the Clement Hospital, which had almshouse accommodation for ten men and two women. It was to be built in the grounds of Browne’s house. The plot proposed was formerly “a most vile dung-pit”, and given that description it hardly sounds the choicest plot of land on which to lay foundations for an almshouse that was also to facilitate a Hall for the Gild of All Saints Church in Stamford.

William Browne was a Life Alderman of this Gild and after his death in 1489 the patronage of the Hospital endowment, now renamed “The Hospital of William Browne of Stamford for ever”, came to Thomas Stokes, the brother of Margaret Browne; that of the Aldermanry of the Gild going to Browne’s grandson and heir, a lawyer, William Elmes.

As the years down the endowment descended, the Gild came into dissention with the Hospital. The “spat” resulted in a court case in 1506 and the book of accounts, of the title, was created by John Taylor, the current warden, in Stamford during and for the lawsuit against the Gild. It is written in English with Latin used for headings. It was intended to be tabled in court but it was not retained among the court records and was taken back to Stamford afterwards.

The editor traces the effective management of the Hospital fraternity and the Estate by the warden who was, although a non-monastic priest, a strategic financier who needed to reduce the costs for the care of the elderly paupers. This was a continuing problem, and necessarily it was a tight “ship” that he ran.

With an annual income of only 50 marks (£33.6s.8d), from which the warden’s stipend was 10 marks per annum and the confrater’s 8 marks, ten poor bedesmen and two bedeswomen each had 7d per week paid on a Friday, which came to £18.4s.0d. Added to this was £3 per annum for maintenance of the property and what we would today call contingencies.

For the confrater, his role is not fully explained. Was he there just to administer, as a non-secular priest, the daily masses, or was his role that of a “keeper of the peace” in the fraternity of the almshouse, especially when the warden was attending and visiting places of the Estate and not in residence?
Founder’s Day at the hospital was celebrated in April each year on the anniversary of William Browne’s death. Daily masses were said at 7am by the warden, confrater and all the poor of the house had to attend. At 2pm, prayers for the Souls of the benefactors were said. Attendance was mandatory.

The paupers had to swear an oath on admittance to the Hospital that from henceforth “they would not show nor outwardly disclose, the secret and councils of the almshouse, to the hurt and prejudice of the same.”

Women attendants at the hospital were paid 7d a week, with accommodation including their own kitchen and hall. They were to be “mother figures” and had to wash the clothes, obtain and prepare the food and to wait on the bedesmen.

All, the warden, confrater and the twelve poor, were held by the statutes not to be a fornicator, adulterer, a frequenter of taverns or a keeper or breeder of hawks and hounds! No leprous man or woman was to be admitted. If a pauper came into a living of 4 marks (£2.13s.4d) he was to be removed from the almshouse. (Costs for various spices are recorded over a period of 25 years. One pound of pepper paid in rent in 1498 cost 16d a pound. In 1501 it had doubled to 32d a pound.) Curfew was at the Great Gate at 8pm in summertime and 7pm in the winter.

As for the Estate, the warden was running a major business. He had two yards – one at the Hospital and another at Scotgate in the town. An important point made was that the Hospital paid the going price for goods from the Estate. The tenet being that the Hospital did not live off its estates but off the rents from its estates!

Almost self-sufficient in resources, the Estate had its own slate pits and a number of building-stone quarries. The artisans, craftsmen and tradesmen used by the Estate came from villages within an eight-mile radius of Stamford. For the local historians of Stamford and other parishes where the Hospital held land, this account book is of great import as to names of those persons.

Repairs were ongoing on all the properties. In 1501/2 the flooding of the River Welland, “aftyr the gret water”, resulted in a number of properties of the Hospital estate requiring underpinning, and the house next to the vicar of All Hallows in Stamford had problems with sewerage in the house and yard. Item “for having away the dong in the yard and the chawnbyrs and clensyng the gutter bytwene bothe howsys”. A vivid remembrance of the after-effects of this year’s flooding in Somerset and many other places in England.

The dating of buildings within the Estate holdings is assisted by the information contained within the pages of the account book. For as at North Luffenham, Rutland, where today a farm bought by William Browne in the 15th century, “does remain almost untouched”, according to English Heritage 2013.

But who was John Taylor that he became involved with the Hospital before becoming warden in 1497? We are told that he was the personal chaplain to William Browne but what was his relationship with the Browne family? Did the family pay for his education? Appointed warden whilst undertaking his studies at Oxford, and during his subsequent
position as Treasurer at Oriel and other roles, he was not at Stamford full time until 1502 and then only until 1504 when he became vicar of St Martin’s parish. But he remained involved with the Hospital until his death in 1517. I would have welcomed further information of him.

Endowed with a very necessary glossary, there is a great wealth of historical data to be found within the twenty-three years of the account book folios.

It is open for debate that some villages around the town of Stamford have become rather urbanised, as recorded by the editor. But Collyweston, Easton on the Hill and the environs of Stamford, are still viewed most favourably when approached from Northamptonshire!

Rosemary Eady

BRITISH MILITARY SERVICE TRIBUNALS, 1916-1918
by James McDermott
Manchester University Press, 2011
Hardback, 254 pp.
Price £60.00

Any book that extends our understanding of the less familiar aspects of the county’s history is to be welcomed. And this is certainly true of James McDermott’s exploration of the British state’s management of compulsory conscription during the Great War in *British Military Service Tribunals, 1916-1918*. Military Service Tribunals (MSTs) became part of the state’s weak manpower “management” within the wartime economy, acting as “…the only non-military staging post between heath and front line…” (p. 7). This intensification of the state’s direction over labour within the wartime economy extended to all aspects of labour utilisation in the economy, leading to the influx of many women into paid employment and into jobs previously the preserve of men, who were freed for war service (see Adrian Gregory’s comments on this shift in state control in “Military Service Tribunals: Civil Society in Action”, in Jose Harris’s *Civil Society in British History* (2003), pp. 177-191). Together with other restrictive legislation, MSTs contributed to a significant loss of civil liberties through the war and beyond. They “…were intended to secure as many men as possible for the armed forces. Nothing in the Acts acknowledged the competing claims of the domestic economy, of personal circumstance, or the moral exception beyond the legal discretion vested in tribunal members…” (p. 222).

Standing as they did between the short term demands of “…a voracious war-machine…” (p. 1) and the accusation of too great a sensitivity towards local concerns about conscription, tribunal members not only faced inevitable criticism but equally the burden of a cascade of cases. This onerous work was largely trusted to locally-elected councillors and JPs, together with labour and military representatives. Some viewed them as petty tyrants, but tribunal evidence shows them working more precisely in the interests of national security and local conditions.

At Northampton, footwear manufacturers Harry Manfield and A.E. Marlow included work
for the local tribunal amongst their exacting war activities (see my comments on Harry Manfield’s and A.E. Marlow’s premature deaths attributed to onerous war work in “The First Northamptonshire County Council Revisited” NP&P (2013) 66). Inevitably, too, discretion brought variation in decision making between individual tribunals and local concerns about fairness. Thus the social impact of conscription was to vary between different localities and possibly social groups. In the matter of cases relating to the medical fitness to serve there was greater unanimity, which led to the reform of medical testing of recruits in 1917.

But McDermott asks whether this “much abused body of men” deserved this epitaph, and this is the focus of his detailed case study of Northamptonshire MSTs that helps increase our understanding of the county’s wartime experience. This, like a growing number of books about the Great War, increases our understanding of the conflict, not so much in terms of national politico-military strategies, but of the impact on people’s lives. Discussion of the social challenges brought by conscription offers insights into why some sought not to enlist, and this stands in contrast to accounts like John Buckell’s Sacrifice, Service & Survival: Weston Favell in the First World War (2013) about the war experience of men who saw active military service.

The core of McDermott’s book is an account of the workings of MSTs based on the author’s doctoral thesis of the Northamptonshire experience. Fighting a substantial land war against large European land forces compelled maritime Britain to transform its small standing army. The traditional use of volunteers and militiamen was no solution for the thirst for manpower unleashed by the industrial scale of the Great War’s slaughter. Initially in 1914, Britain sent just 150,000 professional soldiers to France from a standing army of the 700,000 men garrisoning the Empire. By 1918 the number who served – professionals, Territorials, reservists, volunteers and conscripts – stood at c.4.8 million men from the British Isles alone, in addition to 88,000 women; that figure swells to 7.8 million men when Empire enlistments are included. Of these, 705,000 died and c.1.7 million were wounded.

From the outset, conscripts could seek exemption from the draft and a total of 2,086 local MSTs were formed across Britain to hear their cases. Appeal was allowed to one of the 83 county appeal tribunals and a Central Tribunal in London dealt with complex cases that could set precedents. The link between tribunals and conscientious objection has often been stressed and remains in the popular memory due to the rigorous, unfavourable treatment of conscientious objectors. This was captured well in the descriptions of Lytton Strachey’s famous appearance before the tribunal at Hampstead by J. Atkin’s A War of Individuals: Bloomsbury Attitudes to the Great War (2002) p. 27-29, and Michael Holroyd’s Lytton Strachey: A Biography (1967: revised 1994). McDermott’s own “Conscience and the Military Service Tribunals during the First World War: Experiences in Northamptonshire” War in History (2010) 17: I pp. 60-85 focuses on conscientious objectors and MSTs.

But in reality they made up only 2% of claimants. By far the greater portion of cases came from those seeking military exemption on the basis of family, health, or economic needs. Claimants could be granted permanent, conditional, or temporary exemption; or non-combatant service. As the war progressed, exemptions became subject to tighter controls. More temporary exemptions were made to permit claimants to manage transitional domestic arrangements and for firms to find alternative labour. Labour in the local footwear
industry enjoyed a relatively sympathetic hearing when compared with local agriculture due to the political influence of the county’s staple industry.

McDermott’s findings are based upon rarely surviving tribunal records. From a discussion on the structure and purpose of MSTs, he analyses each of the grounds for exemption and these form a substantive part of the book. Of these, the chapters on conscience, class, and fitness are the most absorbing, and provide some thoughtful observations on what grounds individuals could stand aside from the maelstrom of industrial warfare that was sweeping European society.

But beyond this thorough, detailed study of the machinery of tribunals lies the social impact of conscription on conscripts and their families. And here, McDermott is less informative. My reading of this absorbing book has left me considering just how our forebears in the county and elsewhere tried to balance the call of King and Country with their existing workaday lives and commitments. Between an unconditional patriotic fervour on the one hand and conscientious objection to war on the other, was the middle mass of the county’s willing conscripts forced to try to accommodate the call of duty bursting unsuspected upon their world. What the book hints at but leaves unmentioned are the echoes to be found in tribunal records about their frame of mind towards war service and the wider social and emotional dislocations war brought to their way of life. Clearer information of this can be found, for example, at http://www.rushdenheritage.co.uk/war/tribunal1917.html. What begins to emerge from the detail are glimpses of how the initial raw, committed patriotism of 1914 became balanced, both by a more guarded view of patriotism as the carnage mounted, and the sheer practical everyday problems that lay behind enlistment. For war broke into ordinary lives already absorbed by life’s enjoyments, plans and vitality by the cares of earning a living; of running a business; of caring for a family; of facing illness; and everything else that bounded everyday life.

Keith Brooker

THE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
VOLUME VII: CORBY AND GREAT OAKLEY
edited by Mark Page and Matthew Bristow
Institute of Historical Research, 2013
ISBN: 978-1-90435-637-0
A4, xiv + 247 pp.
Price £95.00

This volume is the third funded largely by the resources of the Northamptonshire VCH Trust, now under the chairmanship of Lord Boswell of Aynho. It is dedicated to the memory of the late John Coales whose ancestors came from the Aldwincle area and who was always a generous benefactor to the Record Society and to county historical matters generally.

Volume VII is a volume with a difference, as graphically shown on p. vii, which maps the county Hundreds showing the progress of the VCH publication. Unlike previous volumes, which describe the histories of one or a few hundreds, this covers two parishes, Corby and Great Oakley, part of the Corby Hundred. The first 114 pages deal with the largely “conventional” history of the manors, churches, enclosure and economic development to
1932, but begins with an overall summary that prepares the reader for the industrial history that follows. Pages 115-224 describe the modern history “Industrial Corby and New Town 1932-79”, and “Post-industrial Corby 1980-2012”.

The earlier part of the volume deals well with the many themes discussed, but continues assertions frequently made over the years. One, that the block manorial demesnes (as opposed to dispersed ones) were formed by an exchange between villein strips and those of the lord of the manor (p. 32). No evidence is here given and there is no recorded example of such an event anywhere in the country at any date. On p. 6 we read that the smallholders of Corby resisted enclosure, but looking with interest for the expected detail and references on p. 38 none is given.

Industrial Corby and the New Town are fully described with some fine photographs of the various stages of iron and steel production and the wide expanses of plant and railway lines necessary to support it. On social aspects such as housing there were temporary “camps” built in the 1930s initially, but architecture improved with streets of “semis” and public buildings such as the Odeon Cinema built in 1936 in an Art Deco style. Corby was designated a New Town in 1950 and received central government funding (master plan p. 155). It was the first New Town in England to begin a town centre, and Corporation Street and the Market Square were complete by 1956. Other public buildings were erected in the 1960s and 1970s, and the Corby Development Corporation’s work was finished in 1979. In that year the disaster of closure of the steelworks was announced and the section on “Post-Industrial Corby” explains how it was dealt with.

Of personal reminiscences, in the 1950s school trips from various parts of the county were permitted and brought home the scale and the noise of the process. Ten-ton hoppers were grabbed off the railway line with giant “tongs”, turned upside down, sending the ore to be crushed, mixed with limestone flux and coke before reaching the blast furnace. Tall chimneys burned off noxious fumes from the plant and there were eerie flickering blue flames visible at night for miles around. In the daytime, ore exposed in the quarries had to be loosened up before loading into railway hoppers. This was done, mining fashion, with dynamite; it was always detonated at 11.00am so that people living within hearing distance (several miles) would know what it was.

Outside the remit of the volume are the political and economic effects of planting an industrial town in rural Northamptonshire and the interaction between them (probably very little). The Parliamentary Constituency comprising Corby Town added to all of rural East Northamptonshire must make it difficult for the MP to represent adequately the very disparate halves.

For those wishing to pursue modern economic and social studies there is a full list of the copious records available (pp. 229-34). The format and content of the volume must have presented editorial difficulties, and the authors and the VCH authorities are to be congratulated on providing a volume on a very complex subject.

David Hall
This is the publication of the author’s researches into the establishment of the first public parks and sports grounds in his home town of Kettering. If an avowedly local study, it is part of a much bigger and universal subject – the rise of sport for players and spectators and the provision of other places of recreation in the 1870s and 1880s. From then to the present, the importance of sport and of many other forms of recreation has increased and spread to almost every country in the world. As I write, the FIFA’s football World Cup is currently taking place in Brazil, watched by countless millions on global TV.

The rise of sport and leisure for ordinary people was not inevitable. For most of the nineteenth century the economic ideology was that the modern working week should be six days. The prevailing influence of religion generally and of Sabbath Observance was that people’s one free day, Sunday, should be spent in church or chapel going, and in other sober and rational ways (although Sabbatarians never managed to persuade parliament to close the pubs on Sunday). Sport on Sunday was, however, banned. Participation in sport was for the more leisured classes, who, it should be said, did so much to invent and popularise new sports. What democratised sport was the introduction of the shorter working week in the 1870s, whereby vast numbers of factory and other workers finished at 1pm on a Saturday, freeing those who wanted to play or watch sport to do so. What got the idea of sports and recreation grounds going was a combination of the spread of football, rugby and other ball sports, middle-class goodwill, plus a spirit of entrepreneurship in individuals who saw profit (and altruism) in land development for uses other than for new factories, shops, houses, places of worship, and so on, all of which proceeded apace as Kettering went through its great leap-forward in industrial expansion.

Out to Play in Kettering is mainly concerned with three developments between 1891 and 1921 – North Park, east of Rockingham Road, which became an important sporting and leisure venue; the Rockingham Road Pleasure Park not far from North Park; and Wicksteed Park, south of the town in Barton Seagrave.

Mr Addis points out that Kettering was not in the forefront of community efforts to provide spaces for open-air enjoyment. A great chance to make a start came with plans to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. However, opposition to the cost of purchasing land came from the town’s Local Government Board and from curmudgeonly citizens, although several prominent industrial businessmen were in favour, and there were arguments as to the location of the project.

Readers of this journal will already know much about North Park from Mr Addis’s article on the life of William Cattell in issue 65. Cattell, a notable sportsman in his day who subsequently had a public house and a footwear business, was its “onlie begetter”. Out of a mixture of wanting to provide space for sporting activities and at the time seeing it as a business opportunity, North Park was his creation.
The next development was the Rockingham Road Pleasure park and this time the Kettering Local Government Board was involved, purchasing over ten acres of land in 1891. The intention was that “the rougher sports which the main element could take part in elsewhere” and would not be catered for, but that it would be a place for women and children to come and enjoy themselves amid the new park’s trees, flower beds and grassy spaces. Garden seats were plentifully provided and there was a bandstand. Apart from impromptu football and cricket matches by local lads, and later tennis, bowls and miniature golf, this park was never used as a sports field. Mr Addis outlines the history of the Park through its golden years in the twentieth century and its decline, from Council neglect in the 1960s to vandalism. It celebrated its centenary in 1998. With the aid of the Friends of Rockingham Road Park and a substantial grant from Wren (a charity which awards grants to community projects) an indoor gymnasium and a children’s play area were installed and the park revived.

The third of Mr Addis’s subjects is Wicksteed Park, entirely the work of one man, Charles Wicksteed, a successful engineer and businessman. As early as 1882 he had been pressing for facilities for children in other than the streets of the town. After purchasing a large block of land at the sale of the Barton Seagrave estate in 1914, he drew up plans for a garden suburb estate with a large recreation park in its centre. Two years later the Wicksteed Village Trust was set up to carry on the work after the founder’s death in 1931. To this day the park continues to be a popular place of resort for people and their children from far and near.

Mr Addis’s book is a labour of love. Lavishly produced and nicely designed, with numerous maps, documents and grainy evocative pictures from the newspapers, it is handsome to look at and well worth the price. My only reservation is that the author might perhaps have waited until his other researches were complete, and published it all in one volume. But that is a minor quibble.

Ron Greenall

THE BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND: NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
by Bruce Bailey, Nikolaus Pevsner and Bridget Cherry
Yale University Press, 2013
Hardback, 757 pp., illus.
Price £35.00

Bruce Bailey should be congratulated on his revised 757-page version of this great gem The Buildings of England: Northamptonshire. What wonders such a book can bring to anyone interested in Northamptonshire history.

The introduction includes details on the historical development of the county in the context of buildings, architectural and artistic overviews, before swiftly moving on to the Gazetteer of villages and towns. Here we find, as in previous editions, a flurry of fascinating facts. Churches and chapels, the great stately and country houses of the county, cottages and farmhouses, rectories and vicarages, civic and public buildings, hotels and public houses, and so many more buildings jump off the pages to explain their architectural features, development, historical connections and contexts.
Bruce Bailey has further added to the work more humble homes, commercial, retail and industrial buildings from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries and should be commended for these inclusions as we have perhaps learned more as time passes to appreciate their contribution to the landscape and development of Northamptonshire.

All the larger towns in the county have a perambulation which allows the reader to explore a location through the pages of the book or follow the trail. Also included are maps, outlined building plans, black and white images and over 100 colour photographs of some of the key Northamptonshire buildings. This work should be included on the bookshelf of anyone who appreciates the historic county of Northamptonshire and wishes to discover more about its architectural treasures.

Jon-Paul Carr
Lionel Stopford Sackville was the son of Colonel Nigel Stopford Sackville. He was educated at Eton and became a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in 1959. He was chairman or director of a number of companies and Managing Director of Charter Consolidated whom he worked with for 17 years. He served as High Sheriff for Northamptonshire in 1976. He was married three times: firstly in 1966 to Susan Jenkin Coles, secondly in 1980 to the Hon. Teresa Pearson, and thirdly in 1997 to Mary Soames. He died peacefully at home on 2 November 2013. He left three living children and five grandchildren.

An enduring memorial to his life will be the restoration of his home, Drayton House at Lowick, which he inherited in 1972. The house had survived the war years and while being requisitioned was not used by the army but, like neighbouring Boughton House, as storage for items from the British and Natural History Museums. This saved it from any major damage but it was, in 1972, still largely in the state it had been prior to the last war. His father had been in discussions with the National Trust as he did not expect Lionel to come and live there. There were acres of ginger-brown grained woodwork and heating, electricity and other services were antique. Lionel scuppered the National Trust negotiation and set about reviving the house and its services and surroundings with consummate care so that the historical aspects of the house were not lost. Pictures were cleaned, furniture restored so that today Drayton stands as one of the best preserved privately-owned houses in the county.

Bruce A. Bailey
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Cover illustration:
The Church of St John the Baptist, Hellidon. Memorial window with photographic images of the four dedicatees shown as knights in shining armour. A Flanders poppy is incorporated into the tracery. The window is by Messrs Daniels and Fricker of London, dated c.1920. (Photo by Paul Sharpling)