



NEWS REVIEW

Lincoln Record Society



HONORARY EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the third edition of the News Review



There is much of interest in this issue. The launch of Volume 102 at Riby Church last October was a very happy occasion, and the Society is most grateful to the churchwardens and other members of the congregation who gave us such a warm welcome and provided a sumptuous tea.

The Society's next publication will be the first part of *Lincolnshire Parish Clergy: A Biographical Register c.1214-1968*, covering the rural deaneries of Aslaoce and Aveland. This is now with the Society's publisher, Boydell and Brewer, and is expected to be issued to members in the autumn. In addition, plans are advanced for the first volumes in the Society's new Kathleen Major Series (for medieval records) and Occasional Series (for other publications relating to the Society's aims and objectives). Watch out for further details of these new developments in future issues of the *News Review*.

In this issue Rod Ambler continues his valuable series of notes on Lincolnshire material tucked away in the publications of other record societies; a Surtees Society volume sheds light on the career of a West Rasen rector in the Restoration period. Janice Musson gives an account of her research into medieval legal records for Lincolnshire, which formed a significant strand in the Society's early publications. Matthew Mesley, an early career researcher at the University of Zurich, shares his Lincoln research interests. This issue's short transcript of a primary source is by Rob Wheeler, who has transcribed resolutions agreed at a meeting of proprietors of lands in the second district for drainage by the river Witham, from 1796.

Finally, details of this year's Conference are included with this *News Review*. The registration form is enclosed and it is also available to download from the Lincoln Record Society website (<http://www.lincoln-record-society.org.uk/lrs/>).

This will be an event of much importance in the Society's calendar and the organisers have put together a very attractive and varied programme. Places will be limited, so book early to avoid disappointment!

Nicholas Bennett

Hon. General Editor





THE LEGAL ENFORCEMENT OF VILLEINAGE IN MEDIEVAL LINCOLNSHIRE

Several of the Society's volumes are editions of the Lincolnshire eyre rolls, records of royal circuit courts which dealt with, among other issues, property disputes.

Many of these actions were brought under the assize of novel disseisin, or recent dispossession, which is the focus of my research, particularly the involvement of peasants.

At the Lincoln eyre of 1202, probably held in the castle, a routine suit of novel disseisin was spectacularly transformed into a courtroom drama by the spirited opposition of the plaintiff to his lord's charge of villeinage against him.¹ Robert Drop of Croft, near Skegness, was suing his overlord for dispossession of his holding. The lord, Hawisa of Kyme, was represented by her nephew and heir Simon, who immediately seized the initiative by accusing Robert of being unfree by birth. If true, the case would have been thrown out, because villeins were barred from using both the assize and the royal courts. Proof was required for so serious a charge, often through the production of near-kin to the accused, who would confess to being unfree. Simon produced three such men whom Robert acknowledged as his close relatives, but then launched into a lengthy defence, ending with the suggestion that his relations had been bribed to convict him. Simon immediately offered the bench three marks to reach an agreement with his tenant, six times the usual amount. Additionally, his bailiff undertook to return the holding.

It is particularly interesting that the case was won through the action of the defendant and not the decision of the court. Lady Stenton observed that Simon was 'anxious to end the suit'.² He may have deliberately prevented a verdict that would almost certainly have set a precedent, for the proceedings could not have done other than reverberate around north Lincolnshire. If Robert had won outright, Simon's future dealings with other freeholding tenants could have been severely tested. His quick reaction disabled the suit as a test case, if that is what it was.³ Given the circumstances, the whole episode may have been planned from the start to destroy Robert's free status, since the assize had the effect of sharply distinguishing free peasants from the unfree, categories which were previously blurred. Whether or not this result was foreseen by those who formulated the law, it would be surprising if some, perhaps many, lords did not make use of it and Simon's motives, although they cannot be known for sure, are certainly not above suspicion. The rolls hold many similar, though not always so blatant, examples of potential peasant suppression into villeinage, and the reactions which they provoked.

Janice Musson

¹ *The Earliest Lincolnshire Assize Rolls A.D. 1202-1209*, ed. by Doris M. Stenton, Lincoln Record Society Volume 22 (Lincoln: Lincoln Record Society, 1924), c. 423.

² *Ibid.*, pp. lxxvii-lxxviii.

³ Hilton suggests that some early actions were brought as test cases for groups of tenants: 'Peasant Movements in England before 1381' in *Economic History Review*, Second Series, Volume II, No. 2 (1949), 124.



BOOK LAUNCH AT ST EDMUND'S CHURCH, RIBY, 12TH OCTOBER 2013

The launch of the latest Lincoln Record Society volume, entitled *The Country Justice and the Case of the Blackamoor's Head, The Practice of the Law in Lincolnshire 1787-1838*, volume 102, was held on Friday 12th October 2013 in St Edmund's Church, Riby.

A talk was given by Dr Brian Davey, editor of the first part of the volume, which focuses on the justicing notebooks of Thomas Dixon of Riby. This rare survival of Dixon's notes on his work outside the sessions of the magistrates court on which he sat provide an enlightening window into the eighteenth century justice system at its lowest level. The Society is grateful to the parishioners of St Edmund's Church for their hospitality and the lovely spread of sandwiches, cakes and tea which they provided for us after the talk.

The co-editor of this volume, Dr Rob Wheeler gave a talk at the Annual General Meeting of the Society at the University of Lincoln on Saturday 27th October 2012 about the second part of the volume. This section presents papers from an arbitration of 1838 between the licensee of a remote beer house ("The Blackamoor's Head") and the son of the local squire, with the former pressing the latter for repayment of a debt. There are other interesting discoveries from these papers; the inn also provided hospitality to drovers who stopped



Over two hundred volumes have been published by the Surtees Society since its foundation in 1834 and several of these have extended beyond its original concern with 'unedited manuscripts, illustrative of the intellectual, the moral, the religious and the social condition of those parts of England and Scotland ... between the Humber and the Firth of Forth' into the areas with which the Lincoln Record Society is concerned.

These have included the *Diary of Abraham de la Pryme, the Yorkshire Antiquary* (54, 1870) the title of which provides no indication of the wealth of material on north Lincolnshire contained within, and also three volumes of the correspondence of William Stukeley (73, 76, 80, 1882-87).

The Letters of George Davenport, 1651-1677 edited by Brenda M. Pask with Margaret Harvey (215, 2011) adds to the number of Surtees Society volumes that have material of Lincolnshire interest. George was the third son of John and Elizabeth Davenport of Wigston Magna, Leicestershire. His older brother, John, married Sarah Thompson, the widowed daughter of the rector of West Rasen, in 1657. John had succeeded his future father-in-law by September 1656, and remained at West Rasen until he became vicar of Wigston in 1693.

The 148 letters in this volume – all written by George – are principally concerned with his clerical career, family, and friendships but there are a number of references to John: frequently in connection with financial matters and book purchases. The constancy of George and John's churchmanship in a period of change and uncertainty found expression in their episcopal ordinations – illegal acts at the time – and the political and religious concerns of the period are the leitmotif for the letters. Yet there is also, in the day to day transactions that the letters record, a sense of continuity during a period of considerable change and uncertainty.

The steady rhythm of Lincolnshire parish life is evidence of continuity at another level. George wrote from West Rasen in 1657 that his brother was 'fast seated in a living

of good reverence; & amongst people of quiet and good conversation. For they tell me that there is not a man in the parish (the Papists excepted ...) but is a good churchgoinger, and hath good respect for their minister, & pay their tithes as willingly as any papist in the parish.'

Traditional customs continued in West Rasen, with their potential to embarrass the rector. According to George, John would have liked him to have stayed and preached for him there on the three Sundays when John's banns of marriage were called. For 'when the poor register tells the neighbours that N & N are in a way of marriage, it is the unhandsome custom of the youth of the parishes to turn towards one of the porches & with acclamations say, God give you joy.' John was 'affrayed he shall blush.'

The index of this edition is patchy with regard to Lincolnshire place-names, and the Lincolnshire reader will need to search the volume carefully to discover, for example, the Long Sutton connections of John Davenport's wife's family, the Thompsons, as well as the not entirely sympathetic account of George's encounter with a group of clergymen who were probably gathered for the Tuesday lecture that was a feature of the religious life of Grantham in the seventeenth century. It cost him nineteen pence, 'as they sat prophesying ... over ale in my chamber'. But, setting aside local preoccupations, an exploration of this volume will provide fascinating insights into clerical life in the period in general – another valuable addition to the rich range of Surtees Society publications.

Rod Ambler

overnight with their beasts en route from Scotland, and their bills provide rare quantitative evidence of the final years of this trade.

I look forward to meeting members of the Society at the next book launch. The LRS volume for 2013 will be the first in a series of biographical registers of Lincolnshire parish clergy, completed by our honorary general editor, Dr Nicholas Bennett. The date of this launch will be announced in the next mailing.

Marianne Wilson

Left to right: Dr Brian Davey, Dr Nicholas Bennett and Dr Rob Wheeler outside St Edmund's Church, Riby, with the latest Lincoln Record Society volume





NEW PERSPECTIVES (2013): RELIGIOUS LIFE IN MEDIEVAL LINCOLNSHIRE 12-13 APRIL, 2013

Lincoln Cathedral Centre, 4 Priory Gate, Lincoln, LN2 1PL

Organised by Alan Kissane and Marianne Wilson

Contact information: Alan Kissane at ahxak3@nottingham.ac.uk or Marianne Wilson at ahxmw2@nottingham.ac.uk

FRIDAY 12 APRIL

9.00-9.30

Registration and Coffee

9.30-10.50

Session 1: Introduction and First Keynote Speaker

David Stocker (Hon Visiting Professor of Medieval Studies, University of Leeds)
Lincoln before the Cathedral. What can we say about the foundation of churches in the town?

10.50-11.15

Coffee

11.15-12.30

Session 2: Art and Archaeology

Ellie Pridgeon (University of Leicester) Lay Monuments in Sacred Spaces: The Function and Composition of Monumental Brasses in Lincolnshire and Beyond

Elizabeth Popescu and Rob Atkins (Oxford Archaeology East) The Hospital of St Mary Magdalen, Partney, Lincolnshire

12.30-13.30

Lunch

13.30-3.00

Session 3: Patronage and Networks I

Brian Hodgkinson (University of Nottingham)

'Where there's a Will there's a Way': The Use of Testaments in Determining the Destination of Ecclesiastical Patronage in Lincolnshire: 1500-1540

Marianne Wilson (University of Nottingham) Friends or foes? Social networks within Lincoln Cathedral Chapter 1450 - 1460

Hanna Kilpi (University of Glasgow) Exploring the Role of Aristocratic Women in Religious Patronage in Twelfth-Century Lincolnshire

3.00-3.30

Coffee

3.30-5.00

Session 4: Patronage and Networks II

Alan Kissane (University of Nottingham)

Lay Perpetual Chantry Foundations in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century Lincoln

Mike Jefferson (University of Nottingham)

The Inquest of 1185 and the Templars in Lincolnshire

Nicholas Bennett (Lincoln Cathedral Library)

'True and laudable service': the beneficed clergy of Lincolnshire and their patrons in the early fourteenth century

7.30

Conference Dinner



SATURDAY 13 APRIL

9.00-9.25

Coffee

9.25-10.25

Session 5: Second Keynote Speaker

Philippa Hoskin

(University of Lincoln)

Robert Grosseteste and the Dangerous Clerks

10.25-10.50

Coffee

10.50-12.20

Session 6: Saints' Lives

Jack Cunningham (Bishop Grosseteste University)
Lateran IV, Robert Grosseteste and the Reformation of
the Diocese of Lincoln

Angelo Mario Silvestri (Cardiff University) Robert
Grosseteste: Heresy or Sanctity?

Philippa Byrne (University of Oxford) The Ordinarity
of Robert Grosseteste: Pastoral Care in Lincoln and
Beyond

12.20-13.20

Lunch

1.20-2.50

Session 6: Saints Lives

Sara Mederos (University of Lincoln) Untying the Knot:
Canon Law and the Marriage of Christina of Markyate

Matthew Mesley (University of Zurich) The Lay
Perspective? Religious Life in the Medieval Miracles of
Lincoln's Saints

Claire Trenery (Royal Holloway, University of London)
Medicine and Religion: The Impact of Medical Theories
on the Representation of the Mentally Ill in the
Thirteenth-Century Miracles of Saint Hugh of Lincoln

2.50-3.10

Coffee

3.10-4.10

Session 7: Religious Houses

Judith A Frost (University of York) Affray at the Abbey:
Thornton Abbey and the Violence of the Fourteenth
Century

Philip Morgan (Keele University) The Chronicle of Louth
Park

4.20-5.20

Session 8: Third Keynote Speaker

Alison McHardy (University of Nottingham) Bishop
Buckingham: Lincoln's Unknown Medieval Bishop

5.20

Closing Remarks



Images from the Luttrell Psalter (fols.149r, 174v)



FRIENDLY STIMULATION OF SUPINE NEIGHBOURS, 1796

It seems to have been common in the 1790s for meetings of proprietors in support of some public purpose to run through a series of resolutions prepared by the chairman which would command general support. Few were as long as the succession of 21 resolutions from this meeting of 1796.

Meetings in support of inclosure were no doubt quite common; meetings pressing for proprietors elsewhere to inclose must be rare. The explanation here is that under the Witham Act of 1762 inclosed lands paid higher drainage taxes, and the extra income would have reduced the pressure for an increase in these taxes (which would require a new Act). The proprietors of the Witham 2nd District, covering Holland Fen, opposed any such increase because they received relatively little benefit.

TLE 32/7/4

At a meeting of Proprietors of Lands in the Second District for Drainage by the River Witham called by public advertisement and held on Wednesday the 6th of April at the White Hart Inn, Boston.

Present John Cartwright Esq [in chair, and nine others, plus two from the 6th District].

Resolved unanimously:

1. *That about one hundred thousand Acres of Lands and Fens (including the West and Wildmore Fens, which contain about twenty eight thousand acres) were intended to be drained under the authority of the Witham Act of 1762 and that the Revenue depended on for executing and completing all the necessary works of general Drainage for this great object, was to arise from the Taxes agreed on to which the said lands would be Subject when the whole should come to be inclosed.*

2. *That in consequence of the Circumstance of the Proprietors of the said West and Wildmore Fens not having divided and inclosed the same, there is a defalcation from the said proposed Revenue of above £800 per Annum, which Sum if collected would make the whole Sum about £4100 instead of only £3300 as it now stands.*

3. *That the object of the proposed General Meeting of the 16th of May next is to undertake embankments in the first and third Districts, the Expence of which is reputed to be estimated at £28,000; so that the real Expence may probable amount to £30,000, requiring a Taxation of £1500 to defray the Interest of that Sum, while the additional Revenue thereby gained in the said Districts will not exceed about £100 per Annum.*

4. *That until the said General Drainage Revenue shall be raised to its full amount and efficiency by means of the £800 per Annum which it ought to receive from the said West and Wildmore Fens it will be utterly inconsistent with Justice, and contrary to the clear Intention of the said Witham Act, to add to the present Drainage Taxes of*

the Union in general, new Taxes to the Amount of £1400 per Annum exclusive of the £100 per Annum to come in from the first and third Districts.

5. *That supposing the Proprietors of the said West and Wildmore Fens to have taken full seven years from the passing of the said Witham Act for adjusting their respective Interests and accomplishing an Inclosure of the said Fens, and to have done it in that time so as that a full Taxation on the same had commenced in the year 1770, the Trust from thence only would by this Time have received about twenty thousand pounds more than it has received.*

6. *That Taxing the Low Lands and Fens so long as they should remain uninclosed at only four pence per Acre instead of one Shilling per Acre on inclosing the same was merely for the purpose of allowing all Parties a reasonable Time for settling the Terms and Arrangements under which they should severally inclose, and to prevent too great a burthen before the said Lands could be brought into profitable cultivation, but such a difference between the two Rates of Taxation cannot be construed into a Licence to any particular District, to defeat in any material Degree the full accomplishment of those works of general Drainage, which were the direct object of the Union and of the said Witham Act.*

7. *That if any proper works of General Drainage yet remain to be executed for the benefit of the Proprietors of Lands in the first and third Districts, and the present Funds of the Union are inadequate to the execution and support of such works, it is the opinion of this Meeting, that, in order to relieve the Parties aggrieved, the Proprietors of the West and Wildmore Fens ought first, by Authority of Parliament, to be taxed to the full amount of one shilling per Acre, whether they inclose or not, and that the full Taxes also should be raised from the uninclosed Lands in the said first and third Districts: And if the proper Revenue of the whole Union so raised to its intended Amount shall still prove insufficient that then, but not 'till then, a further Taxation on all the Lands in the Union now subject to Drainage Taxes under the Witham Act ought to be levied.*

8. *That in pointing out the Taxation we have proposed on the Proprietors of the West and Wildmore Fens, we are by no means actuated by a narrow and selfish Policy nor by any Spirit of ill Neighbourhood. Neither are we without precedent. In respect of a selfish Interest it might be better Policy rather to contribute in Silence to a general Tax on the Union than to rouse and stimulate the Proprietors of twenty eight thousand Acres of rich land to assist in*

lowering the Markets at which the produce of our land is sold. In regard to our Conduct as Neighbours, it would be wholly in the option of the Parties to be taxed whether the increased Tax should become a Fine for nonperformance of Duty as members of the Union, or a contribution towards an immense improvement of their Estates. And in relation to precedent, we ourselves are members of another Drainage Union under the Black Sluice Acts in which Union, although there are Districts paying higher or lower Taxes in respect of situation yet in each of the said Districts respectively all Lands whether inclosed or open are taxed to an equal Amount and when that Drainage was first undertaken there were more than forty thousand Acres of uninclosed Commons so taxed, and to this Day there remain seven thousand Acres in the same Condition. And this meeting thinks itself the more justified in proposing such a stimulating Tax on twenty eight thousand Acres of neglected Lands, since, independent of its justice as a Drainage measure, and of its true friendliness to supine neighbours, it at the same time embraces the important Object of national relief at a period of public Alarm on account of scarcity of Provisions.

...

21. That a Copy of the foregoing Resolutions be presented by our Chairman to the Chairman of the said General Meeting to be holden on the 16th of next month and that our Chairman also at the same time move that the said Copy be read before the Business of the Day be proceeded in.

It is not recorded whether the General Commissioners at their next meeting did indeed have the pleasure of hearing all 21 resolutions before they got down to business. What is known is that they regretfully concluded on 5 July that the "sense of the proprietors at large" is decidedly against increasing taxes to embank the river, and the idea of a new Witham Act was abandoned.

Rob Wheeler



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN ANNUAL MEDIEVAL LECTURE

The University of Lincoln is delighted that this year's Annual Medieval Lecture will be given by Professor Anne Curry. Professor Curry has an international reputation for her work on medieval military history in the fifteenth century, and is well known as an expert on television and radio as well as an inspiring lecturer and presenter. Professor Curry's current work is on Henry V, and we are privileged to have her speak to us on the minority of Henry V on the 600th anniversary of his accession. If you would like to join us in hearing Professor Curry speak, please register via the Events Team by emailing events@lincoln.ac.uk or by calling 01522 837100.



BOOK REVIEW: 'BRITONS AND ANGLO-SAXONS: LINCOLNSHIRE AD 400- 650' BY THOMAS GREEN

In his previous book *Concepts of Arthur* (Tempus 2007) Thomas Green suggests that there may be an Arthurian connection with Lindsey.

He speculates that the Battle of Badon may have been fought at Baumber rather than at Badbury Rings in Dorset or at Bath. A second battle was fought at the mouth of the River Glein 'pure or clear (water)'. There are two locations for this battle: one in Northumberland and the other in south-west Lincolnshire. In this book he argues that the region of *Linnuis* where these two Arthurian battles were fought is the post-Roman territory of the *Lindes*, the people of Lincoln and said that he will be developing this theme in a forthcoming book. This has now arrived.

In 2012 The History of Lincolnshire Committee published *Britons and Anglo-Saxons: Lincolnshire AD 400-650* admirably edited by LRS member Dr. Wendy Atkin. Tom Green draws on a wide range of sources including archaeological evidence, place-name studies, linguistics and etymology to produce his thought provoking volume. In the early chapters he sets the scene for the Lincoln region in the post-Roman period. He examines in some detail the origins of the modern place-names Lincoln and Lindsey and traces a reference to early ninth-century Wales, 'something which is obviously of considerable significance in the present context' (p 60) but you will not find a reference to Wales in the index.

The suggestion that the battles in *Linnuis* may have been fought against the invading Anglo-Saxons is developed as is the Welsh connection through *Y Gododdin*. This leads to a discussion on the origins of Lindsey and Kesteven and whether the Anglo-Saxons took over the territories of the Britons rather than forming new ones. He concludes by saying that 'there seems to be good reason to think that the Britons based at Lincoln in the fifth and sixth centuries left a political, administrative, cultural, and even potentially a symbolic, legacy for the succeeding centuries'. In the final chapter *Lindisfarne, the Lindisfaran and the origins of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria* Tom Green suggests that Lindisfarne was settled by the peoples from Lindissi, modern Lindsey. The foreword to the book was written by Dr. Kevin Leahy who says that it is 'Well researched and carefully argued, this is an important book and it gives me enormous pleasure to see the study of the 'Lost Kingdom' moving on'.

Ken Hollamby





RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Matthew Mesley is currently at the University of Zürich working on a project funded by the Swiss National Foundation, investigating the roles of celibate men in power during the middle ages – his part of the project concerns the leaders of the Church – bishops, and he is particularly interested in the extent to which contemporary understandings of gender may have influenced their practices and how they were represented.



However, when not looking at troublesome bishops on the continent, he is very much still interested in the history of medieval Lincoln, particularly its early bishops, the secular chapter, Christian-Jewish relations within the city, and its urban institutions. For his PhD, he examined the lives of St Remigius and St Hugh, which were composed by the secular canon and

courtier Gerald of Wales (c. 1146 – c. 1223), known to some as Giraldus Cambrensis. These saints' lives have often been neglected in the past, seen as pithy or of poor quality, but the texts shine an important light on the way the secular chapter of canons at Lincoln Cathedral sought to direct and maintain control over how their saints were presented in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They also provide a useful perspective into the cultural worlds of the secular canons and what they wanted from their prospective bishops. In the life of St Remigius for instance there is a long section on the contemporary heroes of the church, including that of St Thomas Becket, martyred archbishop of Canterbury, and Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester and brother to King Stephen, under the heading 'De episcopis Anglicae tergemini'.

Such saints' lives have often been mined for factual information in the past, but these stories provide a useful entree into the beliefs and values of Christian

contemporaries. Neglected gems like the miracle of the mute and deaf Jewish woman found in the *Life of St Remigius* (see M. Mesley 'De Judaea, Muta et Surda': Jewish Conversion in Gerald of Wales's *Life of Saint Remigius* (eds.) S. R. Jones and S. Watson *Christians and Jews in Angevin England: The York Massacre of 1190, Narratives and Contexts* (forthcoming, 2013)) point to the everyday and sometimes less pleasant sides of human interaction. He hopes at some point to work more on the Jewish community of Lincoln. Currently Matthew is exploring the ways in which the laity responded to Lincoln's saints' cults, particularly the urban elites. He will present his findings at the Lincoln Record Society funded conference *New Perspectives* (2013): *Religious Life in Medieval Lincolnshire*.

Matthew Mesley
University of Zurich



THE LRS PRIZE FOR THE BEST DISSERTATION ON THE HISTORY MA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

This year we have awarded the prize to Ross Pollard for his dissertation 'Aspects of Accumulation by Dispossession in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain: the Devaluation of Assets during the Agricultural Depression, c. 1875-1897'. Despite its somewhat intimidating title it is actually about the agricultural depression in late nineteenth century Lincolnshire.

Ian Packer

