



NEWS REVIEW

Lincoln Record Society



THE COUNCIL AND OFFICERS

Welcome to the ninth edition of the News Review

This is the second edition I have had the pleasure to introduce. That time has now come when each of the officers and members of the Finance and Publications Committee (FPC) has taken their turn. We all hope you find the News Review a valuable addition to the benefits that membership of the Lincoln Record Society offers. In his introduction to News Review 8 earlier this year the Society's new president, Professor David Stocker, gave a personal view of his relationship with the Society and some of its great names. Here, as we prepare the annual accounts and documentation for the October annual general meeting, which you have received with this edition, I would like to give you an insight into the management of the Society and the work of the Finance and Publications Committee.

As Honorary Secretary it has been my privilege for six years to help take the LRS forward. An even greater privilege has been to work with some of the most knowledgeable, passionate and committed people in record publishing in this country. The Lincoln Record Society is managed by a council of trustees consisting of a president, secretary, general editor, treasurer and up to twenty other members elected at the AGM. In practical terms, though, the finances, publication strategy and day-to-day operations are managed by a committee of the officers and, currently, four other members (Dr David Crook, Professor Philippa Hoskin, Dr Rob Wheeler and Dr Marianne Wilson). Council delegates authority to the FPC to take key decisions on business as it comes up during the year, but all major decisions on finances, broad publications strategy and Society governance are referred to Council before any change is recommended to members to vote on at the AGM. The FPC meets four times a year. It decides on grant applications, monitors progress with editions and discusses new proposals, plans communications and marketing campaigns, including modifications to the website and our new Twitter feed (@LincolnRecSoc) and Mailchimp email service to members, and organises book launches and conferences. All such business requires commitment →



Honorary Secretary, Dr Paul Dryburgh



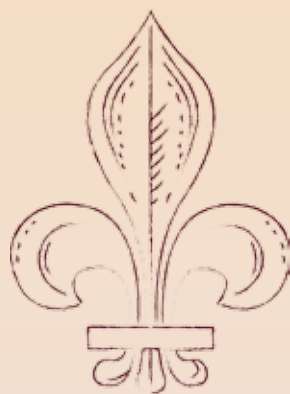
of finances and the FPC pays rigorous attention to how the Society's money is spent in both the long and short term. Committee members pay considerable attention to membership issues, subscriptions and investment of funds, as well as, in more recent times, the proper management of risk as a charitable institution. The FPC is, as you can imagine, a robust forum leavened by the traditional servings of tea and cake!

This edition provides a typically eclectic mix of articles, reflecting the diversity of research interests which members of the LRS share. Jack Cunningham profiles The Ordered Universe Project, which explores the scientific thinking of Bishop Robert Grosseteste. Clerical careers form a major theme too: Brian Hodgkinson examines the career of a less renowned but nevertheless important sixteenth-century chapter clerk Peter Effard; while the Society's General Editor Nicholas Bennett reveals a tennis match that led to murder, a story he unearthed as part of his monumental series of Lincolnshire Parish Clergy biographies. Rob Wheeler looks at church choirs and odd documents, proving records can come in many shapes and sizes. John Manterfield introduces volume 106, his edition of *The*

Grantham Hall Book, 1649-1662, about which he will present the annual AGM lecture on 29 October. Look out for news of two exciting events: firstly, Professor David Carpenter's lecture on King John on the evening of the AGM; and, secondly, our plans for an international research conference to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest, to be held next September at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln. A panel of internally-recognised experts has already been invited and other activities, including a field trip to Clipstone and Laxton, prepared. Further details will be shared through forthcoming News Reviews and emails.

This edition accompanies the Society's Annual Report for 2015/16. I hope you will agree that the Society remains in robust health and continues to offer a uniquely stimulating set of publications, conferences, launches and other events for its members. As I said in edition 2, these are exciting times for the LRS, with numerous projects and initiatives in progress or in planning. The News Review will continue to be the main forum where these are shared with you.

Paul Dryburgh, Honorary Secretary



106TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 106th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in Teaching Room 1 of the Robert Hardy Building at Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln (LN1 3DY), on Saturday, 29 October 2016 at 2.30pm.

This will be followed by a lecture by Dr John Manterfield on *Borough Government in Newton's Grantham – The Hall Book of Grantham, 1649-1662*. Afternoon tea will be served afterwards. Parking is available on site, accessed from Longdales Road, and in local streets.

All members, their friends and relatives are warmly invited to attend a special evening public lecture in the same venue from 6.30pm-8pm. Professor David Carpenter (King's College London), will speak on "King John: The Man and His Legacy", to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the death at Newark of England's most reviled medieval monarch.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2015
3. Matters arising
4. Adoption of Annual Report and Accounts
5. Election of Officers and Council
6. Election of Independent Examiner
7. Honorary General Editor's report
8. Honorary Treasurer's report
9. Honorary Secretary's report
10. Any other business
11. Date of the 2017 Annual General Meeting

ON CHURCH CHOIRS AND ODD DOCUMENTS

RISH CHURCH.			
Collection	Sep 20		1885
For	Choir		
EVENING SERVICE.			
	£	s.	d.
SOVEREIGNS			
HALF-SOVEREIGNS			
HALF-CROWNS			
FLORINS			
3 SHILLINGS	3	-	
5 SIXPENCES	2	6	
7 FOURPENCES	-	-	
11 THREEPENCES	2	9	
2 PENNIES	2	8	
19 HALF-PENNIES			9½
10 COINS	11	8½	
Ellison Vicar			

Printed cash slip from Bracebridge church, 1885

When counting cash, it is useful to have a printed slip with the different denominations of notes and coins on which one can record the numbers of each. The slip of 1885 from Bracebridge church shown above is remarkably similar to ones in use today, although it comes as a surprise to see the list of coins headed by sovereigns and half-sovereigns. One wonders how often such valuable coins appeared in the collection plate. Perhaps the vicar included them for completeness, in which case it is interesting to see that the crown was left out: the coin was legal tender but was inconveniently heavy. The farthing is excluded too. The fourpenny piece was thought worthy of inclusion but there seem to have been very few in circulation.

This slip was printed on card and the vicar, C. C. Ellison, found the blank reverses useful. This one (or rather this *half*, because only the *evening* side of the card remains) was used by him for notes in connection with his hobby of ornamental turning. It is one of the joys of looking through old records to come across papers that have been re-used; quite often the discarded original is as interesting as what it was used for subsequently.

In this case, the collection was made for *the Choir*. Robed choirs had been appearing in parish churches in increasing numbers, and incumbents generally found that the most effective way of ensuring regularity of attendance by choir boys was to pay them. A nominal sum was usually sufficient. Establishing just how many churches in this period had choirs, and the proportion that were paid, is difficult:

records do not usually survive, though a parish magazine may provide information. Spending money on choirs was often regarded as something that certain parishioners might object to (being frivolous or Romish compared to heating or roof repairs), so dedicated collections might be made. The 1880s were a time when the taking of collections at all church services, as opposed to just communion services, was starting to become the norm; and these additional collections were often dedicated to specific purposes.

A different approach was taken at Little Cawthorpe in the 1860s, where again unusual evidence survives, in the form of a brightly-coloured plaque by the door (below). In fact, perusal of the parish records in LAO and newspaper accounts on BNA shows that Little Cawthorpe was very different indeed from Bracebridge. The choir was established in 1860, after the church had been rebuilt in a spiky gothic style by R J Withers. The patron, Lys Parker, had contributed substantially towards the rebuilding and, it is said, was anxious that a choir should be established. The rector, Edmund Huff, was a noted tractarian and ritualist and he must have decided that there was little prospect of recruitment within the village, because he placed an advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury*

Wanted: An organist and Four Singing Boys, or Two Singing Men and Four Boys, for [services] twice a Sunday. 20 or 25 £ a year guaranteed for their use.

It is an odd advertisement, implying that a choir might offer its services *en bloc*. Louth is only 3 miles away, so perhaps he expected a group from there to apply.

By one means or another, a choir was formed. Its purpose was to sing the psalter to plainsong, so the small number envisaged in the advertisement may have been adequate. In 1862 Huff advertised for a boy - presumably to fill a vacancy. His enthusiasm for plainsong was so extreme that 'the boy will not be allowed to sing elsewhere so-called "Anglican chants"'. His original draft for the advertisement went on to describe these as *the discoveries of an* →



Brightly-coloured plaque, Little Cawthorpe church, 1860s

experimental squadron of organists, choirmen, and amateur composers - not a description that would have gone down well at Bracebridge in the 1880s. Boys were fined a shilling for every Sunday they failed to attend the practice and the two services. If they failed to attend on the anniversary Sunday, they would lose their whole share of that year's offering. The newspaper reports of these anniversary Sundays make it clear they were great occasions, with no fewer than four services, attended by a great assembly of clergy and with the choir often augmented from far away: St Philip's, Clerkenwell, one of the great centres of ritualism, was regularly represented. The collections on these anniversaries were devoted to paying the choir and seem to have been the main source for it. As for the inhabitants of Little Cawthorpe, the only reference in the newspaper reports (which appear to be written by the rector) is to their lack of support for the rebuilding.

The third *odd document* I want to describe is the choir attendance register for Little Cawthorpe (LAO Little Cawthorpe Par 23/1) from which the draft for the advertisement has already been quoted. What makes it odd is that the pages used as a register have been cut out, leaving just stubs. However, the names remain, so one

can see that the number of boys on the books varied from 4 to 6. Attendance was lower than this, some but not all the absences (on the few Sundays that have not been cut away) being explained as 'ill' or 'leave'. On 8 November 1863, attendance was zero, explained by 'wet all day'. On 13 November 1864, attendance was just 1, explained by 'wet'. Now if £25 is divided between 5 boys, that amounts to about 2s each per Sunday; even if half the sum goes to an organist, the boys are still receiving a shilling a week - a respectable day's wage for a boy. So it is interesting that in 1863 all of them were prepared to lose one or perhaps two shillings because they did not want to get wet. It seems likely that these are Louth boys from middle-class families to whom such a sum is indeed not worth getting wet for. This is borne out by the requirement noted on one of the endpapers that no boy is to be admitted, even on probation, unless he can sing psalms on a monotone - which implies good reading ability and a measure of confidence.

All of this seems to show that Little Cawthorpe choir was not at all similar to the sort of village church choir one might expect to find thirty years later. And that scrappy survivals can sometimes provide invaluable evidence.

Rob Wheeler



DEATH ON COURT

European football, test match cricket, Wimbledon, the Open golf championship and now the Olympic Games – the world of sport has rarely been out of the news during recent months. The rewards for sporting success are now so great that competitors train longer and strive harder, and sometimes it would appear that their tempers reach boiling point. The once gracious game of tennis may now be punctuated by loud grunts, unprintable language, broken racquets and the hurling of abuse at match officials. Those of us who grew up in what we like to remember as gentler times will greet these antics with raised eyebrows and tut-tutting.

The behaviour of tennis players at twenty-first-century Wimbledon, however, is a model of gentility compared with that found in fourteenth-century Lincolnshire. Miss Rosamond Sillem's edition of *Records of Some Sessions of the Peace, 1360-1375*, published by the Lincoln Record Society in 1936 as Volume 30, includes the sad story of a game which went horribly wrong.

In 1374, on the Sunday after the feast of the Beheading of St John Baptist (3 September), two Flemings named Geoffrey Braban and Reginald Webster met at Great Limber to play 'a ball game called *tenes*' (*pilam vocatam tenes*). In doing so they were acting in breach of a decree issued nine years previously, that commoners should spend their spare time on Sundays practising archery rather than playing tennis or gambling.

During the course of the game, a quarrel arose between the two men, provoked (it was said) by Reginald, who drew

out his knife ('called a baselard') with which he attempted to strike Geoffrey, chasing his opponent into a corner between two earthen walls. This description suggests that the two men were playing a form of what is now known as 'real tennis'.

Having thus cornered Geoffrey, Reginald struck at him continuously with his dagger, attempting to kill him. Geoffrey, realising he had no means of escape, drew his own dagger ('called a *quetil*') with which he struck Reginald in the stomach, causing his death. At the subsequent sessions of the peace for Lindsey, the jurors of Yarborough wapentake presented that Geoffrey had feloniously killed Reginald. The case was referred to the Court of King's Bench and Geoffrey was taken from Lincoln Castle to London where he was committed to the Marshalsea.

When the case was heard, it was determined that Geoffrey had killed Reginald not from malice aforethought but in self-defence. Eventually, on 6 December 1375, King Edward III granted Geoffrey a royal pardon and letters patent were issued to that effect.

This story of a game of tennis ending in tragedy serves to remind us that it is perhaps unwise to take sporting contests too seriously. It also provides a vivid glimpse of leisure activities in fourteenth-century Lincolnshire and an example of the countless historical treasures to be found among the hundred-plus volumes so far published by the Lincoln Record Society.

Nicholas Bennett



THE ORDERED UNIVERSE PROJECT

The Ordered Universe Project began life at Durham University in 2012 when Dr Giles Gasper from the History Department and Prof. Tom McLeish from the Physics Department hit upon the unique, and actually quite daring, idea of bringing together a team of academics from the Humanities and Sciences to form a group that would be 'dedicated to a fresh and original examination of medieval science.' After a university wide call for expressions of interest, a group was formed of medievalists, literature specialists, philosophical historians, cosmologists and physicists. Principally they set about looking at medieval science in general; one early meeting wrestling with St Bede's ideas on earthquakes. Robert Grosseteste (bishop of Lincoln from 1235-1253) was initially intended to be only one of several thinkers on their agenda, however once they began to examine his *De luce* the realisation began to emerge that they were on to someone who was so potentially important that he ought to be the sole focus of their endeavours.

Thus began the Ordered Universe Project which set itself the task of producing an interdisciplinary reading of all of Grosseteste's scientific works. From its origins in Durham, it grew so that now it is based jointly at Durham and Pembroke College Oxford, with partnerships in McGill University (Montreal), Georgetown University (Washington), the American University, Beirut, Tor Vergata (Rome) and Bishop Grosseteste University (Lincoln). The Project holds their symposia about twice a year and each time they tackle at least one of the great man's short Latin treatises on the natural world. The ultimate aim is to produce as good a Latin text as possible based on the available manuscripts. These are then published with a clear and accurate a translation. Finally, the Latin and English texts are commented on by the members of the Project, each bringing their own perspectives and expertise as linguistic, scientists, cosmologists, modern physicists, medieval historians, philosophers or theologians. In 2015, the Project received a huge boost when they were successful in attracting an AHRC grant for £1 million, which will allow them to continue their work until 2019, when they aim to have prepared all of Grosseteste's scientific works for publication. The Project has recently signed a contract with Oxford University Press, who will publish all of their outputs.

The crux of the Project's work takes place in their four day symposia, where members gather and systematically work their way through a single piece of work by

Grosseteste. These fascinating encounters provide some intense scrutiny of the text and some lively discussion on translation and interpretation. Lengthy debates can ensue and wonderful interchanges take place as, for example, Latinists translate the Bishop's ideas on the formation of rainbows, while the physicists are drawing diagrammatical representations on whiteboards. Work so far has covered an incredibly diverse array of material, indicative of the polymathic genius of Grosseteste's mind. *De iride* (On the Rainbow) is an immensely impressive description of the workings of a rainbow, in which we read the first ever understanding that its cause lies in refraction. There are clear Arabic scientific influences on this work and Prof Nader El-Bizri, the Project's expert in this area, proved very useful in tracing these important sources. They have also covered the *De generatione sonorum* (On the Generation of Sound) in which we find an intriguing and complex theory of the human production of voice. The *De artibus liberalibus* (On the Liberal Arts) where we encounter a description of the redemptive effects of a sound education. More recently the group worked on the fiendishly difficult *De sphaera* (On the Sphere), which presents a description of the globe. Giving the lie, of course, to the common misconception that the pre-Columbian world conceived of the Earth as flat.

Up until the end of the nineteenth century Robert Grosseteste was thought of, if he was thought of at all, as an important and conscientious Churchman. People who wrote about him showed little or no concern for him as a scientific thinker. Yet we now know that he is highly significant in the history of thought. He was the first scientist to press the *experimentatus* as fundamental to methodology. We now appreciate that this did not mean the modern controlled experiment that is now the cornerstone of modern science, however it did mean an insistence on using sense to acquire new knowledge - an extremely important advance. Add to this his assertion that lines, angles and figures were the unifying feature that underpinned all reality and we can appreciate that Grosseteste's towering intellect provided him with insights far in advance of his time. In 1922, the Oxford philosopher John Alexander Smith addressed the British Academy and predicted that there would soon be a rediscovery of the importance of Grosseteste as a scientific thinker. Almost one hundred years later we still have a long way to go in bringing him the attention he really deserves, however the work of the Ordered Universe Project is set to play a vital role in the recovery of Robert Grosseteste's reputation.

Dr Jack Cunningham is Academic Coordinator for Theology at Bishop Grosseteste University, core member of the Ordered Universe Project and member of the Lincoln Record Society.





The Grantham Hall Book

BOROUGH GOVERNANCE IN NEWTON'S GRANTHAM

The Grantham Hall Book 1649-62

The meetings of the town's Corporation or governing body in the seventeenth-century took place in the Guild Hall or Common Hall, as it was then known, which stood in Grantham's High Street at the corner of Guildhall Street where the Goose at the Bank now stands. It was this Hall that gave the name to the Hall Book in which the deliberations of the Corporation are recorded. The earliest surviving volume spans the period from 1633 to 1704 and is held at Lincolnshire Archives.

Part of the Hall Book, for the period 1641-49, was edited by the late Bill Couth and was published as Volume 83 by the Lincoln Record Society in 1995. The volume shortly to be launched as Volume 106 continues the transcription for a further thirteen years and includes the period that the young Isaac Newton attended Grantham's grammar school.

This volume, that I have had the privilege of editing, arose from conversations in the 2012 Gravity Fields Festival in Grantham involving Professor Rob Iliffe of the Newton Project at the University of Sussex and a group of volunteers, supported through the Grantham U3A and co-ordinated by John Down. This group began the transcription and our first aim was to make the transcription more widely available on the LincstothePast website, which was achieved by the end of 2014. The present volume not only includes the full transcription of the original text, amounting to over 1500 entries, but includes an introduction that sets out the background to Newton's Grantham, its governance structure, finances, the management of the school and its endowed estates.

So what can we learn about Newton's Grantham from the Hall Book?

Grantham in the 1650s had some striking similarities with Grantham and other Lincolnshire towns today. The town

experienced residents refusing to pay Council taxes or behind with instalments; the Council was constantly in need of cash; local roads in need of repair; rubbish in the streets; some council properties unoccupied and proving hard to let and there were concerns about foreigners taking away work from local men (albeit that in this context, a foreigner was anyone who had not been born in the town – even men from Lincoln were foreigners!).

Newton's Grantham however was at a turning point in its history. The English Civil War had resulted in this town being occupied first by the Royalists in January 1643, and then by Parliamentary troops in May 1644. Prisoners, including members of the town's Corporation, had been taken by both sides and Grantham's inhabitants had been heavily taxed by both Royalists and Parliamentarians. However, by the mid-1640s, Grantham was firmly in Parliamentary hands.

In 1647, Parliament had decreed that anyone who had been in arms against it, or who had supported royalist forces with money or provisions, should be removed from public office. Accordingly, Grantham's Council was purged of 16 royalists. For the next 13 years, the town was governed by a pro-parliamentarian and largely Puritan Corporation. The execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649, and the dismantling of royal structures and eventual sale of royal estates (including the manor of Grantham) from 1650, formed the backdrop to Grantham at the time Isaac Newton started to attend the Grammar school.

The Corporation that governed the town comprised the Alderman, twelve Comburgesses (or First Twelve), the Second Twelve and the Commoners of the Alderman's Court (some 50 men in all). In addition to routine items of governance such as the presentation of annual

accounts and the appointments to offices, these men seized the opportunity to pursue together a more radical and Puritan agenda to promote things for the 'Common Weal' or 'Publique Good'. These actions included the appointment of, and support for, a Godly minister for the town, the re-introduction of weekly lectures in the church, the appointment of a new and Godly schoolmaster to promote the grammar school, attempts to set the poor at work through a manufactory, more effective regulation of tradesmen, support for the deserving poor, and a drive against idleness. At the heart of this Puritan group in charge of the town was William Clarke, the apothecary with whom schoolboy Isaac Newton lodged, and who served two terms as Alderman of Grantham.

The policies pursued were not always successful and they largely came to an end following the restoration of Charles II in 1660. A further purge, this time of Parliamentary supporters, took place in 1661 to facilitate the restoration of those who had been purged over a decade earlier.

However, it is not just the governance and politics of the period that are of interest in this volume. Family historians will be keen to discover the names of those men who were made free having served their apprenticeships or indeed having purchased their freedom. The names of leaseholders of the Corporation estates are detailed, as well as the list of those Comburgesses, Second Twelve and Commoners, sworn each year at the first Court after the Alderman for each year had been chosen. These

personal details are very welcome at the time during which Grantham's parish registers and the Lincoln Consistory courts dealing with wills are interrupted.

I should like to add my personal thanks not only to my wife Barbara for her support and encouragement but also to the team of eight U3A volunteers who have collectively transcribed and cross-checked the massive 310 pages of the Hall Book transcribed in this LRS volume.

John Manterfield



Detail from the statue of Sir Isaac Newton, St Peter's Hill, Grantham, unveiled in 1858

PETER EFFARD: THRICE MAYOR OF LINCOLN

Unwitting instigator of the Lincolnshire Rising?

See! Peter Efford, Public Notary, formerly Registrar for the Archdeacon of Lincoln, Chapter Clerk of Lincoln Cathedral, Born in the Island of Guernsey, and thrice Mayor of Lincoln, lies buried here, who died on January 10th, 1540, on whose soul may God have mercy. Though dead and food for worms I rot and turn to dust, Yet in my flesh again To see my God I trust. Praise God.

These words are inscribed on the tomb slab of Peter Effard (Efford) within the parish church of St. Peter in Eastgate. As a Public Notary, Effard was an important secular and ecclesiastical lawyer and administrator. He was Alderman in 1518, Mayor in 1520, 1531 and 1540 and was also Chapter Clerk from 1522 to 1540. He resided at Deancourte Hall on Northgate; a sizable property rented from Lord Hussey. Effard married Jane, the daughter of Richard Laveroke, Principle Watchman and Constable of Lincoln Cathedral and had three daughters, Mary,

Elizabeth and Helen: a son predeceased him. In his will of October 1533, Laveroke made his son-in-law co-adjutor to his wife Elizabeth, bequeathing him '...my secunde beste hoope of golde...'

It can be suggested, however, that Peter Effard was inadvertently a propagator of rumours that the king was planning to close and seize the wealth of some local parish churches. As Chapter Clerk, Effard must have had intimate knowledge of the political manoeuvrings of the higher clergy, but also via the king's confessor Bishop Longland, of the Royal Court itself. It was this rumour that became the primary catalyst during the first days of the Lincolnshire Rising of October 1536.

As a notary, he oversaw the routine activities of the Church's administration, generally acting as secretary to the Sub-dean, John Pryn (1535-58). These included the granting of probate, and in this capacity Effard travelled the county visiting the larger towns. In the last weeks of September 1536, both he and Pryn visited Caister



on Saturday 23rd, Louth on Tuesday 26th and Alford on Wednesday 27th. The following week these three towns, along with Horncastle, became major centres of the revolt which commenced in Louth on Monday 2nd October, ending a fortnight later.

When questioned after the uprising, some involved stated they initially rose to defend their parish church and the traditional liturgy, rather than opposing taxation and the closure of monasteries. During his interrogation, one deponent directly implicated Effard. When examined in York on 9th February 1537, William Moreland, a former monk of Louth Park Abbey who was closely involved in the revolt, stated that,

While at Kedyngton [Keddington], about three weeks before Michaelmas [Friday 29th September], a great rumour was spread (especially after the commissary's visitation kept at Louth church in St. Peter's choir there by one Mr. Peter then scribe to the commissary Dr. John Prynne, sub-dean of Lincoln), that the chalices of parish churches should be taken away and that there should be but one parish church within six or seven miles' compass...

It is however difficult to understand why Effard would divulge government policies that clearly would trigger concerns amongst an already wary population. An answer could be that during his travels Effard had overheard the rumours, which according to statements had been circulating for some time. During his examination in the Tower, Matthew Mackerall, Abbot of Barlings, suggested that,

The common fame went a month or six weeks before the insurrection that two or three parish churches should be put in one; and, further, that all chalices, crosses, and jewels of the churches should be taken away and tin ones put in place of them.

Also in the Tower, Thomas Retford (Ratford), the parson of Snelland, said he was informed 'that every three parishes in Lincolnshire should be made into one'. Robert Sotheby, a draper and churchwarden from Horncastle similarly 'heard rumoured a month before the insurrection that three parish churches should be put in one, and that the jewels of the Church should be taken away'.



Peter Effard's tomb slab, St Peter in Eastgate church, Lincoln

These rumours had probably not emanated from official sources attached to the Court or the cathedral, but from public gatherings such as markets and fairs. It was therefore not a deliberate act of rumour-mongering on the part of Effard, but just repeating hearsay. Nevertheless, people were perhaps more likely to believe a former mayor and Church official than gossip in the marketplace. Therefore Effard's words must have given credence to rumours, true and false, concerning both Church and state, circulating within the county and further afield.

Following many years of stability during the early decades of the Tudor period, the year 1536 especially witnessed growing uncertainty. The king's succession crisis, increasing inflation, suppression of the monasteries and changes to Church liturgy following the Ten Articles unsettled the social, economic and religious structures. Rumours abounded, creating further instability and suspicions regarding legislation emerging from the Henrician government. Therefore rumours of church closures issuing from eminent individuals such as Peter Effard, 'thrice mayor of Lincoln', added to the uncertainty and ultimately led to the ill-fated Lincolnshire Rising, followed closely by the Pilgrimage of Grace. However, unlike some who incurred the wrath of the state and paid with their lives, Effard died in his bed on the 10th January 1540/1, a wealthy and prominent citizen of the City of Lincoln.

Brian Hodgkinson