The Richmond Review

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of the

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Civic Society 2010



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Chairman's Report

Fred Wood

As I write this report to cover the year from last June, we are all aware of the problems that will affect our daily lives for some time to come. In April 2009 The Civic Trust ceased its activities, as you know, and in April 2010 its replacement, Civic Voice, was finally launched. The committee felt that we had not the funds to support being members, though we did join our regional group of civic societies, the Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies. It would cost us several hundred pounds to join the national body, but the fee for the regional organization is only £40. Undoubtedly, spending on heritage projects will assume a lower level of priority, with limited resources across all income sources for such activities; so, we must keep control of our finances in view of rising costs and falling membership.

We are sorry that the venue for our lectures was confusing in the early part of the 2010 season. We were already coping with a much higher charge in 2009, and those of you who were at our AGM learned that we faced a large rise for 2010. This meant that it took some time to resolve the situation with the Zetland to our mutual benefit, and so we were able to continue there. However, this entailed a change to Thursday nights.

Regrettably, we also found the cost of continuing to use Castle Print to produce our Review was significantly much higher than elsewhere. Accordingly, the 2009 issue was produced in East Anglia. We encountered some teething problems but these should not be repeated in future years.

On a positive note, we are delighted that many members have joined our Gift Aid scheme which has yielded a significant increase to our income since the first claim included contributions backdated to earlier years. We estimate that this source of income will yield up to £150 per year, so it is a useful exercise and we would hope that all members will consider this option.

We were delighted that John McDonald took on the organisation of a programme of visits to buildings and guided walks to celebrate Heritage Open Days in early September. This was well supported and appreciated by all who took advantage of the events on offer. However, because of the heavy workload, the committee decided not to participate this year, hoping to make the event a biennial one.

Ongoing throughout the year is the work of our planning sub-committee, chaired by John Clarke, which works closely with the District Council's planning department in the conservation areas throughout Richmondshire, for which they are responsible. As you know, John is also involved with the Richmond Heritage Partnership Scheme, the excellent results of which can be seen by all in the refurbishment of the Market Place.

September 2011 is still the date when primary school pupils start their secondary school education on the Darlington Road site. At the time of writing, there has been a preliminary meeting to attempt to assess the various options for the Lower School site, bearing in mind the listed building issues involved. There is as yet no obvious front-runner but a variety of ideas has been suggested. Eventually, the County Council hopes to arrange a public meeting once these current ideas have been fully developed.

Bev Joicey and his sub-committee have once again produced a lecture series of a high standard. We had to postpone the January lecture because of severe weather and we have had some alterations to the programme, all making Bev's work more complicated. We have been very pleased with the numbers attending these lectures since they form the major contact between members during the year. We will continue to advertise the lectures with our banner outside the TIC and in the local press such as the D&S Times. Bev also arranged a very enjoyable trip to Saltaire in June; however, we were slightly disappointed that numbers did not reach our usual figure of over forty. Again, our thanks go to Bev for all this work, particularly for the lecture series which depends so much on his network of personal contacts.

We have been selling copies of Graham Merlane's two comprehensive indexes of the first thirty issues of The Review and we are most grateful to



Members and guide at Saltaire.

him for this work. We hope that members who have not yet bought their copies, will do so in the future.

We were delighted to hear that Richmondshire Museum has been awarded national accreditation; this ranks the museum, small and run by volunteers, alongside the country's major museums. We hope that they will be successful in obtaining financial support through this achievement.

We wish to record our thanks to Tom Walter who relinquished the position of Secretary at our 2009 AGM. Carol Hillyard has taken over the role. I want to say how much I appreciate the work of our Treasurer, Graham Barber, who combines this work with the much more stringent pressures of the business world today.

Finally, on behalf of the committee and myself, may I thank all the contributors to this issue of The Review and, also all our members for their support in these rather difficult times. We look forward to your continued support in the future.

Collectanea[1]

Shortly after going to print last year, just as Richmond had been named the winner in 2009's Great Towns Awards, The Richmond & Swale Valley Community Initiative (RSVCI) launched a fifty-point scheme to continue the improvements to Richmond, begun in 2002. Much has been achieved already, as acknowledged in previous Reviews, and we are pleased to report in more detail about RSVCI matters later in this edition of The Review.

Items on the RSVCI agenda also include climate change and sustainability, issues which are already being addressed by TRY (Transition Richmond Yorkshire). Richmond has been officially designated a 'transition town' as a result of starting to prepare for a world in which cheap oil, gas and coal are no longer available. Readers can learn more from the information window in Finkle Street, and from a series of public talks.

Given the current economic climate and severe financial cut-backs, funding fears are not unreasonable. One casualty already is Arts in Richmond (AIR), which sadly had to make its only paid employee redundant in December 2009. It has to be said that the current government's notion of a 'Big Society' is not new to Richmond, where cohorts of willing volunteers work tirelessly to maintain many of the town's best-loved organizations and events. In spite of the loss of a substantial Arts Council grant, the Walking and Book Festival will still go ahead. Thanks are due to Gillian Howells and Philip Wicks, who have recently stood down, and we wish the remaining and new committee members all success in their determined efforts to keep this popular event in the Richmond calendar.

Meanwhile The Station remains a popular venue for major art exhibitions, including The Wall to Wall silent auction in February, which received donations from famous artists and photographers, including Mackenzie Thorpe, Simon Palmer and Joe Cornish, and raised an impressive £40,000. The Spot on the Wall Exhibition in August focused more on giving

[1] Collectanea: collected writings; also literary items forming a collection (1791)

northern artists an opportunity to display their talents and sell their work. Initial soundings suggest that attendance and sales have been healthy.

Five painted panels in the Market Hall provide a colourful and informative view of life in Richmond at different stages in the town's 900 year history. The work was commissioned and researched by the RSVCI and Richmond Town Council, with the help of Jane Hatcher, and is a further stage in the Market Hall's improvement plan.

Emma Wesley, a former pupil of Richmond School, saw her portrait of Jack Straw, at that time Minister of Justice and Lord Chancellor, unveiled at the Inner Temple, in London. As a member of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, she has twice won the De Laszlo Silver Medal for Portraiture.

Other Richmond school pupils received national accolades this year; Richmond School sent a team of four girl skiers to the British Schoolgirls' Championships, in Flaine, in France, where they finished in 11th place out of 39 schools taking part in the Giant Slalom. There was extra success for Honour Clissold who represented Great Britain at the Children's World Championship in Italy.

Richmond's older citizens were not without their own success: earlier this year, John Blenkiron was awarded the Freedom of the Town. Readers can learn more about John later in The Review.

And of course, in May, William Hague, Richmond's MP since 1989, increased his majority by almost 6000 votes, polling 62.7% of the total votes. For an interesting parallel of 125 years ago, see Jane Hatcher's article on page 20.

The Georgian Theatre awaits a new manager at the time of writing, meanwhile mourning the loss of Chairwoman Lady Crathorne, whose contribution to the continuity, modernization and success of the theatre was immense.

In spite of some setbacks, then, the arts in Richmondshire are still well-supported. The Swaledale Music Festival, celebrating its thirtieth year, had its most successful year ever. Ticket sales set a new record and this is

hardly surprising, given the standing of some of the performers: Emma Kirkby, Peter Donohoe and The Fitzwilliam Quartet, to name but a few. Richmond's Jacob Heringman, lutenist of international repute, also featured. At the time of writing, we are also looking forward to the popular Film Festival in September.

Gardeners in Richmond continue to delight, the Open Gardens Day attracting visitors from many other areas in spite of poor weather. The Town Council's Garden Competition also attracted more entries this year. At Temple Grounds, funding secured from Natural England will be used to restore parts of the route known as the Green Walk. Initially, restoration work will concentrate on managing the trees and restoring the worst-affected drystone walls. This is very good news. We look forward to seeing what will be achieved in the long-term and hope that this important restoration will not be compromised by austerity measures.

Work continues on Lile Close, which when completed will provide 39 two bedroomed apartments plus communal facilities. Developed by Housing 21 in partnership with Richmondshire District Coucil and North Yorkshire County Council, the scheme will eventually provide residents the opportunity to live independently, but have access to 24-hour care and support when necessary. Original misgivings by residents who have had to move to temporary accommodation while re-building takes place, will hopefully be assuaged by the improvements in living standards that the new scheme will offer.

The opening of the new Sixth Form Centre in March this year marked another stage in the school's ongoing development. It is housed in the acclaimed Denis Clark-Hall building and planners from North Yorkshire County Council have worked with English Heritage to preserve important features, such as the blue ceramic tiled corridor, known as the River of Life, and the curved staircase.

In his article on the Planning Committee, John Clarke writes of the importance of still welcoming modern architecture in a place where, understandably, greater emphasis is given to the conservation and preservation of the old. A new conservatory in Frenchgate is an excellent

example of such a principle. Readers can learn more in the article, ***Minimalism Comes to Frenchgate*** on page 17.

So much has been improved in the Market Place that remaining inappropriate signage and shop fronts look particularly incongruous. The strident Heron Food sign still strikes a garish note, and it is a pity that the Bishop Blaize has lost its historical reference to the famous fourth century patron saint of wool-combers.



Successful restoration work in Rosemary Lane, using traditional materials

Concern about Cradock Hall was first mentioned in The Review in1984; built round about 1660 by Sir Joseph Cradock, first Commissary of the Archdeaconry of Richmond and as such, one of Richmond's important residences, it is shocking to see its continuing decline. However, work has begun at last, on number 7 Cornforth Hill, a long time eyesore on this delightful terrace. The development of the garage site on Dundas Street has provided Richmond with an attractive building and a family friendly place to eat.

It has been salutary this last year, if somewhat inconvenient, to be reminded of what a "proper" winter can be like. The freezing weather over the Christmas and New Year period was so sustained that calendar events, including the Civic Society's own lecture, had to be cancelled. In spite of the discomfort, however, Richmond and the Dales looked stunning under its blanket of snow. A record of the winter was made by Ian Short, some of whose photographs appear in this edition.

It was good news to hear from John Culpan that St Aubin, our twinned town in Brittany, has named one of their streets Rue Richmond. In similar vein, it is widely known that Richmond is a much copied place-name with at least fifty five namesakes scattered all over the world. An exhibition at the Station at the end of last year gave residents the opportunity to find out more about some of these other Richmonds, from across four continents, before the exhibition moved on to some of its many namesakes. As the 'mother' of all Richmonds, we all take pride in that position and are reminded of David Brooks, late Town Clerk and author of 'The Story of Richmond', who wrote: 'Richmond, dear Richmond! There is none to compare with you… the town of grey grandeur gloriously defying time.'

Finally, the editors would like to thank the many contributors to this Review and would like to remind all members that we welcome contributions on a wide range of topics of local, historical and architectural interest.

The Work of the Civic Society Planning Committee

John Clarke

Each year the work of the Society's Planning Committee is interesting and always demanding because of the variation of schemes, the specialist skill required and short time scales. We are consulted by Richmondshire District Council on planning and developments within the council's administrative area and, indeed, we welcome the opportunity to be involved in this process. Exactly the same information is submitted, to both the planning committee and the council, of all proposed developments within the conservation areas for all listed buildings and any proposals in areas of outstanding natural beauty. Consequently, we receive over 300 applications each year and it is necessary to deal with these within the strict time scale of three weeks; this timescale establishes the number of meetings we have each year, being approximately seventeen. The Society's planning committee therefore meets every three weeks, to consider the applications in order to express their opinion in writing to the council.

The applications vary from simple schemes such as new or replacement doors or windows, to multi-million pound projects like Richmond School. This is a wide scope of work which stretches our skills and expertise but is never the less enjoyable for us all. Our guidance is national advice, issued by the government together with local special policies, prepared and developed by the local authority. These are the basic ground rules which encompass our work.

The process begins with preparation by the chairman who inspects the drawings a few days before the meeting, in order to gain an understanding of the scheme. At the same time any queries or problems which may need to be discussed with the local authority planning officers can be identified. These three to four hours of work are most helpful when the meeting is held; plans arrive in all shapes and sizes, with, unfortunately, varying degrees of clarity and draughtsmanship.

Easily the most controversial proposal of this past year has been the log cabin development at Easby which divided the community. The

application was refused by the District Council in October 2009 but subsequently the appeal by the applicant was allowed, permission being granted subject to conditions. The main issues were the visual impact of the proposed development, its effect on the character and appearance of the Easby Conservation area, and its implications for road safety. The Society's main concern was related to road safety and representations were made on this aspect to the Planning Inspector. The Planning Inspector found the visual impact of the proposed development would not be sufficient to justify the refusal of the permission on the Area of Great Landscape Value and would have no effect on the Conservation Area. However, strict conditions were laid down regarding road safety and significant improvements will be required to the junction of Easby Road and the B2671. Your Society and the Planning Inspector had the same view of the scheme.



The Board Inn, Bargate: a good scheme for conversion to four houses



The Board Inn (rear) showing proposed courtyard and five houses



Lombards Wynd: proposed site for two new houses

When schemes are controversial we often find that applicants withdraw the application to submit an amended scheme for approval after having had discussions with the Council's planning officers. We are never quite sure whether the Civic Society's Planning Committee has influenced the process, but we do notice that schemes which have been withdrawn are often those which have received criticism or adverse comments from the committee. Occasionally we offer recommendations for the improvement of the scheme to justify our comments.

Recent applications where there has been wide discussion with an element of controversy include:

- the housing development on the Arriva Garage adjacent to the station;
- residential development at Green Howards Road;
- two new houses on Lombards Wynd which required several submissions;
- two separate new houses at either side of Maison Dieu, both of which are significant on this important thoroughfare; (one of these is now under construction and the other is processing through the planning procedure after two submissions);
- seven apartments in Victoria Road following demolition of a two storey building;
- apartments and maisonettes at Queens Road following the demolition of an auction room.

The committee tries not to be negative and occasionally comments on the care and thoughtfulness of the design and the informative presentation of the drawings. The conversion of the Board Inn, Bargate, is an admirable proposed development where we expressed appreciation.

Time and time again we recognise that applicants do not appreciate that when one has a property in a conservation area, or lives in a listed building there is a responsibility to continue to manage the heritage which exists in Richmond. The Civic Society does not want to cover Richmond and its villages in aspic or create museums out of the area. Time cannot



Maison Dieu (south side): site of proposed new house

stand still; architecture and countryside cannot remain unchanged. After all, some of the variations of the past have created the very heritage we wish to protect today. But property owners need to acknowledge that there is a cost to living in a conservation area or a listed building; there is rarely a cheap option for maintenance of these treasured buildings be they large or small. Many of us feel that it is a privilege to live in a conservation area or listed building, but all too frequently others do not appreciate this; rather, they complain about planning laws and policies which help retain the very heritage most of us seek to preserve.

During the last few years I have represented the Society as a member of the very successful Richmond Heritage Partnership. It is as a result of this initiative that the Market Place has received so many improved shop fronts and offices/living accommodation above shop. This has brought national awards to the town of Richmond. I have also been involved with the Council's senior officers in the recognition of developable land to meet the government targets for housing in the district.

However, these are uncertain times to be planning our future. The new government intends to abolish the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS); power will be given to each council to decide how their area will develop. The Richmondshire District Council used the RSS in preparation of their Local Development Framework (LDF), which reflects our rural character, seeking to protect our environment. Your society has been a major contributor to the preparation of the LDF and we know that the district council is keen to move forward to create a plan which meets our needs. I expect that we shall continue to have a major influence.

The Planning Committee expertise is covered by members with architectural, archaeological and local history experience and my gratitude is extended to Audrey Place, Shirley Thubron, John Harland and Tony Dykes. Unfortunately, this year Valerie Hepworth retired from the committee, resulting in the loss of her expertise on gardens, landscape and of course her vast knowledge of our local heritage.

I hope that in the Richmond district the Civic Society and its Planning Committee help to contribute to the balance of heritage and respect for the modern world. So often it is the small detail and recognition of historic detail that is crucial and irreplaceable and this must not be lost.

Minimalism comes to Frenchgate

John Lee

Conservatories have frequently raised eyebrows and planning objections in Richmondshire. They are, so the argument runs, inappropriate to both Dales vernacular buildings and Richmond Georgian townhouses. They were, after all, buildings designed and fashionable in later, Victorian and Edwardian periods and, indeed, maintain their popularity today. In almost all examples, the design keeps close to those Victorian and Edwardian forebears, but is pared down in scale and detail.

This was the case in Richmond where Robert Powell and John Lee, new owners of a Georgian townhouse, inherited a conservatory that had been built on the garden elevation, partly across a tall, staircase window, and close to a bow window, two of the house's important features. The owners felt that, working with the conservation and planning officers, their architect could find a design solution. The key issues were:

- to create a structure better centered on the rear of the building;
- to create a lower roof line that would remove the visual obstruction to the tall stairwell window;
- to rationalise the five different levels of the terrace;
- to heighten the hand rails, thus protecting people from a four metre drop to the garden.

The final solution, designed by Jeff Kahane and Associates, would be essentially a 'box' using 'structural glass'rather than the more usual timber structure. The strength of this 'structural glass' would allow the building to have the minimum steel structure. This in turn would allow the Georgian architecture to be fully visible behind the conservatory, a solution that satisfied the concerns of the conservation officer. Each glass wall was to be made in several panels which, when open, would concertina into the front corners of the structure. This front elevation was to be supported by a simple steel structure shaped very much like goal posts. When installed these would be coated so as to reflect light and therefore 'disappear' as much as possible. Finally, the stone terracing on which the conservatory would sit would extend from inside to outside the building and thus emphasise the sense of continuity and harmony.

Technically such a design presented many challenges: doors had to open through 180 degrees; glass had to be computer- cut to follow the contours of the exterior brickwork and the steel goal post frame had to be clad in polished stainless steel.



The near-invisible conservatory sited on its traditional terracing

One of the critical junctures in the project was when upper Frenchgate was partially closed for the glass panels to be lifted over the roof. The crane driver had a shock when he arrived, parked up, jumped out of his cab, and the crane began sliding back down Frenchgate. Such is the incline that the handbrake would not hold. He had never moved so fast! Three sections of the new conservatory's roof together with a four-metre double laminated balustrade, each several hundred kilograms, were painstakingly attached with a suction device, painted with bonding agent for the 'kissing' points, winched, rotated and coaxed to rest.

The remainder of the project proved trickier than expected with a number of hiccoughs. At the time of writing this article, completion is in sight and lighting with other final touches are nearly done. The finished building is not only a tribute to modern glass technology but demonstrates how close contemporary minimalism is to the Georgian principles of balance and simplicity.



The first glass wall panel is lifted by crane over the rooftops of Frenchgate



The building frames rather than obscures the views across the Swale valley

A Parallel with 125 Years Ago

Jane Hatcher

In 2010 we have all had to get used to a new Coalition style of government. As the year 1885 drew to a close, Richmond voters were similarly faced with an unfamiliar parliamentary situation. Not only was it the first election for the new constituency then known as the Richmondshire Division of the North Riding, but also it was the first time that many residents of Swaledale were entitled to vote.

Richmond had been a parliamentary borough since Queen Elizabeth I granted the town a new charter in 1577. This gave Richmond two Members in Parliament, a situation which continued until the Reform Bill of 1867 reduced the Borough's representation to one seat, as well as extending the franchise generally to a greater number of men residing in boroughs.

Further changes were to follow in quick succession during Gladstone's long ministry. The Ballot Act of 1872 replaced the old tradition of open voting with a secret ballot, and in 1884 the Third Reform Bill increased the national electorate from 2,600,000 to 4,400,000 by giving country residents the privileges afforded to borough-dwellers in 1867. The Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885 changed the boundaries of constituencies, and Richmond ceased to be a Borough seat, becoming part of the new Richmondshire Division of the North Riding.

After a long period of Liberal government, Gladstone resigned as Prime Minister when his budget was defeated, and Lord Salisbury became the Tory Prime Minister in June 1885. His position was, however, precarious, and a general election was called for December of that year. This was the first election held in the new much larger Richmondshire Division constituency, where there were a great many newly-enfranchised rural electors who had never been able to vote before, as well as the first with a secret ballot.

As far as Richmond was concerned, for the first time it was just part of the constituency (as it is now). For the surrounding rural area, it was the first time that the candidates had had to visit them to address meetings in small

country villages like Hudswell in their attempt to woo the voters. Doubtless intrigued by this new experience, some anonymous person kept a scrap album of newspaper cuttings reporting the pre-election and post-election experience. From the selection of press cuttings kept, as more favour the Liberals than the Tories, it would seem that the compiler was a Richmond resident who supported the town's Liberal tradition.

There were two candidates, one from each of the main parties of the time. Neither could be regarded as a sitting member. John Charles Dundas, the last of many of his family who had been Whig MPs for Richmond since the 18th century, had been the last MP for the Borough of Richmond, and he chose to retire at this new-style election of December 1885. The contest was instead between two men who had already represented nearby areas.

The Tory candidate was George William Elliot, originally from Penshaw in County Durham. He had entered Parliament in 1874 as the member for Northallerton, and he had taken up residence in Langton Hall. However, the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885 did away with the Northallerton constituency, so he had lost that seat. The Liberal candidate was Sir Frederick Acclom Milbank of Thorp Perrow near Bedale. He was an older man, who had been a North Riding MP for 20 years. He had first stood unsuccessfully for the North Riding in 1862, but had been elected in 1865. That seat too had just been abolished.

Each candidate held separate 'hustings' in Richmond itself and also in several villages round about. The pattern was for a prominent local supporter of the candidate to chair the meeting. The candidate made a speech, frequently heckled, justifying why he deserved votes, often referring to controversial national political issues. Then the meeting voted, by show of hands, on a motion of confidence in the candidate. As nowadays, there were lots of arguments about which policies the candidate had previously supported in parliamentary votes.

Both candidates knew that much depended on how the newly-enfranchised agriculturally-based rural electors would vote. The Liberals made much of having extended the franchise to the working classes, and among the policies they cited to gain the rural vote was for landlords to

pay the whole of the rates for their tenant farmers and also their labourers, for compulsory registration of land, for property to be inherited by entail and primogeniture, for a Sunday Closing Bill and against the Disestablishment of the Church. The slogan for Milbank was "The Old Cause, the Old Man, and their Old member".

The Tories were frequently heckled for having opposed the franchise extension, for being against Fair Trade, and for various national (eg free education) and international policies (eg Ireland, India). If this selection of cuttings is to be believed, they offered few positive policy arguments. During this election campaign a "Habitation" of the Primrose League, No. 718, for the new parliamentary division, was formed at Richmond with Mr. M. D'Arcy Wyvill, who briefly lived in Richmond but was contesting a County Durham seat, as its ruling councillor, and local solicitor Wensley Hunton its honorary secretary. The Primrose League had been established only two years earlier to spread the cause of Disraeli's policies.

At the start of the campaign, many meetings were held outdoors, but as time went on they seem to have resorted to indoor venues. In Richmond, some Tory meetings were held around the Market Cross, but the Liberals held meetings in the Town Hall and also the King's Head Assembly Rooms. In the villages, the outdoor meetings took place outside public houses – eg opposite the Red Lion Inn in Cotherstone, and opposite the Rose and Crown Inn in Mickleton. The Tory meeting at Reeth was held in front of his supporter G. W. Robinson's house, with Francis Garth presiding, and much debate on the state of the lead-mining industry.

Then schoolrooms seem to have offered the only suitable indoor spaces, such as the National School at Croft (a Liberal meeting), the National School at Hawes (Tory), the Wesleyan School at Melsonby (Liberal) and "Mr. Skellon's playroom" at Catterick (Liberal). In Masham the Liberals used the Oddfellows' Hall. Two Miss Milbanks often accompanied their father in his carriage to meetings, and in some villages, so strong was local support that the horses were unyoked and the carriage was hauled by villagers. This happened when Milbank was attending a meeting in the schoolroom at Gilling West, "despite its proximity to Tory landowners Lord Zetland, Mr. Gilpin-Brown and Mr. C. Cradock". At Mickleton the brass band led the carriage procession into the village.

Not all the meetings passed without incident. A Tory meeting at North Cowton was chaired by Admiral Carpenter of Kiplin Hall, but William Stobart of Pepper Arden took over the meeting for the Liberals, and the Tories were forced to withdraw. At a meeting at Cotherstone, where the Tory candidate was supported by Lord Glamis, eldest son of Lord Strathmore, there was a great deal of heckling. In the remoter districts such as Muker, supporters of the candidates sent carriages to take electors to the polling station, for so much depended on the agricultural labourers.

Polling took place on a Friday (the day of Reeth annual fair), and the votes were counted on the Saturday (market day) in Richmond, with Mr. G. Newby-Watson of Darlington as the returning officer. There were 11,237 people eligible to vote (1,608 in Northallerton, 1,034 in Richmond, 852 in Bedale, 619 in Leyburn, and 523 in Masham). The last box from an outlying district reached the Town Hall at 11am, and the count began – and proceeded with great speed. By 12.50pm, the returning officer declared the result: Milbank – 4,869; Elliot – 4,320, majority 549, with 43 spoiled votes. So 9,232 had gone to the poll, despite rain and snow falling during the day, and it had been a close contest.

Milbank addressed the large crowd which had assembled in front of the Town Hall, and proposed a vote of thanks to the returning officer, which was seconded by Elliot. He declared that people had voted for Mr. Gladstone, and against Lord Salisbury. Elliot had stayed the previous night at The Grove with banker George Roper. Milbank had driven in his carriage from Thorp Perrow, but after the declaration his party went to celebrate his victory at the home of his agent, Christopher George Croft, at Bailey House in the Market Place.

Nationally the Liberals obtained a majority of 86 over the Tories, but these were still turbulent times, and Gladstone's government was soon brought down over the issue of Home Rule for Ireland. Milbank chose not to fight the next election due to his suffering badly from gout, and retired from public political life. Elliot was successful at the general election of 1886, which the Tories won by a huge majority. Let's hope our 2010 coalition government does not have such a short ineffectual reign.

The Window Splays at St. Agatha's Church, Easby

Richard Almond

The painted splays[1] of the chancel windows of St. Agatha's parish church at Easby reveal clearly two widely held notions of our medieval ancestors. Firstly, that successful agricultural practice was cyclical and firmly founded on the seasons; secondly, that society was divided into those who laboured and soiled their hands and those who ruled, a social framework later labelled as the feudal system.

The images of the window splays form a separate and secular part of a comprehensive ecclesiastical decorative programme which was probably originally painted in the mid-thirteenth century. This was subsequently re-painted and touched-up many times; covered in layers of lime-wash after the Reformation and by later iconoclasts; and rediscovered when the church was restored by Sir Gilbert Scott in the 1860s. Further renovations in the late 20th century revealed more painted decoration.[2] The purpose of these late medieval paintings was twofold: as devotional aids and to assist with worship; as teaching aids to the congregation which was largely illiterate and had little understanding of the Latin service so needed help. Such illustrated schemes became known as the *Biblia Pauperum,* the Poor Man's Bible, and were found in many parish churches.

On the north wall are scenes from the Garden of Eden, Creation, Temptation and Expulsion, culminating in the well-known Curse of Labour scene of Adam digging and Eve spinning, the subject of which was used as a political mantra by the Lollard priest John Ball during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.[3] On the south wall are New Testament scenes of

[1] Splay: an oblique angle or bevel given to the sides of an opening in a wall, typically the inner side of a window, so that the opening is wider on one side of the wall than on the other. In ecclesiastical interior settings, such surfaces were often painted.

[2] For details of conservation record, see: Reports on Easby, St. Agatha, North Yorkshire, 12/10/1992, 26/06/1993 and 29/10/1993, Perry Lithgow Partnership, Chipping Norton, Oxon..

[3] Part of an inflammatory speech by John Ball in 1381: "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?"

the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Shepherds, the Wise Men, and the Passion.

The four surviving scenes of the Labours of the Months are depicted in the upper splays of two of the north wall's windows. These activities comprise in order from the west: a peasant sowing seed followed by a crow symbolising the ever-present threat of famine and death; a peasant pruning trees; a peasant digging the soil; and a noble on horseback hawking, his cupped left hand raised to embrace heaven in the future, with a falcon on his right hand looking backwards symbolising the noble's past hedonistic life. This cyclical scheme would undoubtedly have continued on the splays of all six windows on both sides of the chancel, depicting an occupational image for each month. Although only a third of the cycle remains, we can fairly confidently predict the subjects of the missing eight paintings as the Labours of the Months theme is replicated in other contemporary art media.

Such a cyclical theme is most clearly understood by reference to the Calendars of high quality personal prayer books, particularly Books of Hours and Psalters. These manuscripts were often illustrated with illuminated coloured miniatures showing the signs of the zodiac and the traditional occupations, labours and pastimes pursued during the months of the medieval year. Such illustrations added richness and interest to the decorative programme of the Calendar.[4] However, the occupational cycle was not exclusive to personal prayer books, and calendar pages in a wide range of books were often ornamented with miniatures portraying the signs of the zodiac and characteristic occupations of the months.[5] Neither is the subject of the Labours of the Months theme confined to manuscripts. It is a motif which occurs in many forms of medieval art and in various interior and exterior locations, including the sculptured doorways of some churches and cathedrals. For example, there are such carvings of *les travaux des mois* at Reims, the façade of Chartres, Amiens, and famously displaying city trades as well as peasants' labours on the central west door of San Marco, Venice. An early thirteenth-century

[4] Arnould, Alain, and Massing, Jean Michel, Splendours of Flanders (Cambridge, 1993), p.66.
[5] Backhouse, Janet, Books of Hours (London, 1985, repr. 1988), p. 11.

window at Chartres is completely given over to a series of labours of the months, twinned with the zodiac signs. Indeed, J. C. Webster traces the theme of seasonal occupations to the pre-Christian façade of the church of Hagios Eleutherios in Athens.[6] Thus, although there are older examples of occupational cycles depicted in or on stone in Europe, the Easby examples, if not unique as regards to subject and date, can be regarded as extremely unusual and early in original rendition.

This long tradition of choice of subject matter is hardly surprising; the vast majority of the European population was rural in residence and occupation, and continued to be so until the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Thus, a secular theme which everybody would recognise and identify with became a traditional choice for illustration, whether on church window splay, in painted and stained glass, as a misericord or illustrating a missal.

The agricultural work of the changing seasons became and remained the basic source of inspiration for miniaturists and illuminators working on illustrating manuscripts, especially during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with a strong and understandable emphasis on the provision of food, drink and warmth, often together with other contemporary activities such as Maying, hunting and hawking.[7]

In the early 1930s, J. F. Willard observed that as regards medieval manuscripts: "it was customary from the thirteenth century, at least," to show the months and occupations as a particular and stereotyped cycle.[8] He produced such a traditional cycle which was based upon the collection of medieval manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, at that time. More recently, John Harthan provided a more simplified standard sequence, making the point that his illustrated occupations were taken

[6] Webster, J. C., The Labors of the Months in Antique and Mediaeval Art (Evanston and Chicago, 1938, repr. New York, 1970), pp. 1, 5-13.
[7] Backhouse, Janet, Books of Hours (London, 1985, repr. 1988), p. 11.
[8] Willard, J. F., 'Occupations of the Month in Mediaeval Calendars', *Bodleian Quarterly Record,* Vol.VII, (1932), p. 35.



March: a peasant sowing seed *copyright: Ian Short*



April: a peasant pruning trees *copyright: Ian Short*



May: a peasant digging the soil *copyright: Ian Short*



June: a noble on horseback hawking *copyright: Ian Short*

from the seasonal labours of the peasants and the pastimes of their feudal lords, thus adding a social dimension to such miniatures.[9] The rural commonalty worked with their hands and had little time for leisure; public and private leisure was the prerogative of the nobles. The scheme Harthan suggested as being most representative is as follows:-

January: feasting;
February: sitting by the fire; [also outside tasks]
March: pruning;
April: a garden scene; [also farm tasks]
May: hawking or boating;
June: the hay harvest;
July: reaping corn;
August: threshing corn;
September: treading grapes;
October: ploughing and sowing;
November: gathering acorns for the pigs;
December: killing the pig or baking bread.[10] [Also boar hunting]

If we compare such a 'typical', although chronologically later, schematic cycle with what remains at St. Agatha's, it is probable that the images in the upper halves of the four splays depict March (sowing); April (pruning); May (digging); and June (hawking). The January, February, July, August, September, October, November and December labours and pastimes are missing, presumably destroyed by the iconoclasts or in renovations and alterations to the windows and fabric. The fact that the sequence at Easby varies from the 'standard cycle' perhaps indicates that agricultural activities in the north of England were later than in the warmer south.

Such occupational images, on a variety of surfaces and in different media, provide us with contemporary information on the lives of the peasants, including their agricultural tools and implements, methods of pruning, sowing, reaping and harvesting, wine making, shearing sheep,

[9] Harthan, John, Books of Hours and Their Owners (London, 1977, repr. 1988), p. 24.
[10] *Ibid.,* p.24.

slaughtering and dressing beasts, baking and other everyday and seasonal practices.[11] The nobles may be seen Maying, hawking, boating, dallying and flirting in enclosed gardens, and hunting, all in their proper seasons. Almost invariably, the two main classes of society can be separated and recognised by their dress. Seasonal changes are often shown, particularly in the richer manuscript illustrations, such as snow in winter, broken trees and pruning in spring, lush grass and crops in summer, harvesting and brown leaves in autumn.[12] The Easby occupational panels are not only earlier than such 'golden age' manuscript pictures; they are also simpler and so closer to the older tradition of showing single figures engaged in one activity without supplementary detail. In addition, their depiction is dictated by the verticality of the splay surface and an upright figure efficiently and effectively fills such a space. Notice how the noble on horseback appears cramped, one feels it; it is an instinctive aesthetic reaction to the misuse of artistic space by the original artist.

The obvious question is why were these scenes of monthly activities included in an ecclesiastical decorative and didactic painted programme? They appear out of place, merely slotted into the gaps between the Old and New Testament narratives, anonymous secular figures mixed in with the universally known divine characters of the Bible stories. For an explanation we return to another form of illustrative medium. In late medieval manuscripts each page has a main text or illustration surrounded by the four margins. These spaces may be blank but quite often they are filled with *marginalia*, small pictures of less importance and usually divorced in subject matter from the main text or illustration. The painted programme at St. Agatha's exhibits the same iconographic schemata. The main illustrations are large, on vertical surfaces and face the audience so they cannot be ignored. In contrast, the occupational paintings are small, on angled sloping surfaces and are easily overlooked. The message is clear: how insignificant are Man's feeble activities on earth compared to the enduring stories of the Holy Testaments. However, the paintings were

[11] *The Luttrell Psalter* written and illustrated between 1320 and 1340 (British Library, Add. MS 42130) provides similar information on agricultural implements, vehicles, dress and practices. See: Backhouse, Janet, *The Luttrell Psalter* (London, 1989).

[12] Harthan, John, Books of Hours and Their Owners (London, 1977, repr. 1988), p. 26.

also a message of comfort and hope to the congregation. Although inferior in some ways, at least the secular figures of peasant and noble are represented. They are clearly separated from the divine and Bible characters but recognisable and acknowledged in the dignity of their labour. St. Benedict famously preached: “Laborare est orare” (to work is to pray), encouraging the peasants to regard their life of unremitting toil as a way of achieving the Kingdom of Heaven. They had their place in God’s grand plan and the audience, both lords and labourers, would have identified with the painted metaphor of heaven and earth on the walls of St. Agatha’s parish church at Easby.



Photographs by kind permission of Rev. Lesley Cheetham, St Agatha’s Church

The Upper Dales Family History Group

Glenys Marriott

The Upper Dales Family History Group covers Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and Wensleydale and their tributary valleys.

Like many groups, this one started after a chance discussion. Dr. Ann Hartley of Thoralby asked me at a chance meeting if I had researched my family history. As I had never given it any consideration I started to look for a group to join. Although there was no local genealogy group there were many experienced researchers. After a year of planning, meeting key researchers, and assessing the viability of starting a new group, I invited people to a meeting in the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes to consider the options. Over 60 people turned out and the proposal to start a new group had overwhelming support.

I approached the South Durham, Cleveland and North Yorkshire Family History Society – known locally as 'the Cleveland', and our new group was accepted as a branch operating under the Society's umbrella. The Friends of the Dales Countryside Museum also accepted us as an affiliated group, giving us access to their support and the museum's excellent facilities.

The group began in November 2000, holding monthly meetings with speakers in Hawes, Middleham or Fremington, to enable members to access the group across these scattered, fell-side communities. The early computerisation of many of our members led to us starting a computer club. This attracted many new members, and over the course of ten years the club has reduced from a monthly event to three workshops per year, as more members have become accustomed to using computers in their research. One of the key successes has been our email discussion group which has grown steadily over the ten years. Today it is a huge part of our activity, with over 500 members worldwide, all researching their ancestors from the Upper Dales.

Marion Moverley, the well known local and family historian and tutor, gave her support, and members were encouraged to attend Marion's lessons. She also ran transcribing workshops, encouraging high quality research in the group. Early in the life of the group she undertook to manage our programme of events and this has contributed much to the success of the group.

Ann Hartley undertook to co-ordinate our research, resulting in further publications of the Bishopdale Booklets. These were published initially by Jean Kington, and passed over to the group to manage, on her retirement when she left the area. Ann also led the group's contribution to burial transcribing for the National Burial Index.

We have a group website at www.upperdalesfhg.org.uk and this acts as an international focus for new members.

In October 2001 the group held its first exhibition at the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes. This was a grand affair, with 52 exhibitors displaying their research. Well over 600 visitors came and this resulted in new members for the group.

In November 2002 we met to consider how we could support the Dales Countryside Museum with a new initiative – an open access room for the public to use the research facilities. A small group worked steadily to collate and record a range of research papers, adding to the already sizeable collection of the museum. Our members still support this and offer a weekly advice session to the public.

The 10th Anniversary Exhibition and Book – *"Those Who Left the Dales."*

Our 10th Anniversary offered us the opportunity to develop a new initiative – an exhibition titled "Those Who Left the Dales". For the last year our members world-wide have been preparing exhibits for our exhibition at Tennants from 2nd to 16th October at Tennants Auction House in Leyburn.

This is a collection of over 100 stories of families who left the dales, sometimes travelling a short distance, but more often migrating across the world. In recent times the vast wealth of information held by individual families has been recognised as a valuable source for understanding our economic and demographic history and we have built on this. Each move was the result of serious deliberation, and at a cost. The reasons were many, and whilst some went away to study at school or college, others left to be apprenticed, some to marry and some to take the king's shilling. The majority moved however for economic reasons. As traditional forms of employment such as lead mining went into decline people looked to transfer their skills to new areas of employment, or were bold enough to cross the seas and take their chances.

The result is that traditional dales names have spread around the world, and through hundreds of letters and cards, communication was maintained. In large families some sons and daughters would move, but they still maintained contact with siblings and parents in the dales. Some of these precious letters and cards are gathered together in this study, never having brought together before.

Each side of the family was enriched by contact with the other culture, whether it was Manchester or Manitoba, and many exiled dales folk were proud of their Yorkshire heritage. Migration was linked to age, and it was young people in their teens and twenties who were most likely to move, leaving behind an aging population. Between 1801 and 1821 the population reached a height of around 15,000 before dropping to around 8,500 in 1911. Those who were left in the dales concentrated on agriculture as the basis of their income, and as the population fell even the traditional crafts that serviced the local needs fell into decline. People emigrated to destinations all over the world, but predominantly to Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and America.

This important study draws together for the first time the invaluable research done by family historians across the world and illustrates just a few examples of the many who left the dales. As the stories developed it became apparent that they were too precious merely to be returned to their owners after the exhibition. We decided to publish a summary of each story, and this book now forms the basis of a new Dales Migration Archive.

One such story belongs to the Horns who lived in Burtersett in 1863. They sailed from Gravesend on the Ship 'Queen of Beauty' arriving in Auckland, New Zealand on the 9th August, 1863.

The American Civil War was in progress during the journey of this ship and about five weeks after leaving the UK, 50 miles off the coast of Brazil, she was intercepted and challenged by the famous Confederate Cruiser 'Alabama' a celebrated raider of the civil war. She fired three shots at 'The Queen of Beauty'. The captain decided he had better heave to and allow the raiders to come on board. They proved to be a rough lot armed with revolvers and cutlasses so no doubt caused fear among the passengers. However, the boarding party found the captain's papers to be in order, so after partaking of some of the ship's liquor supplies they departed leaving all hands very relieved. The fact that 'The Queen of

Beauty' was an American ship may have caused the Confederates to assume she was a 'Northerner'.
The 'Queen of Beauty' dropped anchor in Auckland, New Zealand and the first item of news conveyed to the passengers was that war had broken out with the Maori people and fighting was going on within twenty miles of the town. Small boats came alongside and thus ended their long journey of three months. The families moved north to Whangarei and because of their mining experience took up land and put down two shafts hoping to find gold but struck a coal seam instead. This was the first coal found in this area at that time. Jeremiah and Daniel must have had good reputations as the newspaper said ..." though not prophets like their biblical namesakes of old, they were exceedingly wise and well read men who could talk and debate on many scientific and social reform subjects, in all of which they were keenly interested..."[1]

Our aspiration is for this new Dales Migration Archive to be seen as the basis for further research by a generation of new historians. The book has an enormous index of over 3,000 names of people and places, contributed by one of our members who is a professional indexer.

What has emerged from these stories is that dalesmen and women were involved in adventures across the world. Several were entrepreneurs and became extremely successful. They started major business empires such as Fenwicks in Newcastle and Christopher Pratts of Bradford, whilst others became saddle makers to royalty. They took up glamorous lifestyles as horse trainers in Paris, or became prize winning band masters in the north east of England.

Their descendants have inherited a passion for the dales, and feel that, wherever they live in the world, they are part of the environment which shaped their ancestors – at heart they are dalesmen and women.

[1] Ashley Clements: *Those who left the Dales. Ashley Clements is a descendant of the Horn family*



G W HORN, son of Jeremiah, standing bottom right corner and his son, Charles, kneeling top R. They are in a mine in North Island, New Zealand.
Photo courtesy of Ashley Clements

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With grateful thanks to Grassroots Grants, the Office of the Third Sector, the Community Development Foundation, The Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, York & North Yorkshire Community Fund together with Cllr. John Blackie for supporting the exhibition and book and to Tennants for hosting the event.

We have for some time felt that The Review could usefully build up a 'memories archive' of life in Richmond and the Dales: memoirs of traditions and events that have now disappeared and could so easily be forgotten. Sybil Reed has agreed to start us off and John Blenkiron has submitted himself to being interviewed (see page 44). Together they have started us off well and we hope you enjoy their stories.

If you also would like to contribute to this 'project' or know people with interesting memories to narrate, please contact us through the Society so that we can use the material in future editions.

Editors

Childhood Memories of an Arkengarthdale Christmas

Sybil Reed

Christmas is coming
The goose is getting fat
Please to put a penny
In the old man's hat.
If you haven't got a penny
A ha'penny will do.
If you haven't got a ha'penny
Then God bless you.

No, we didn't have a goose (fat or not)!
We did, however, chant the old rhyme but without any great expectation other than a surreptitious peek on the top of the parents' wardrobe in the week before the event. In our home, Christmas truly began on Christmas Eve, when Father finished work at midday and took his two wellington booted and warmly wrapped children, with his saw and axe, up the moor to Tottergill Wood. Don't worry! It wasn't to be a re-enactment of Babes in the Wood but the first Christmas thrill – the choosing of the tree.

After much discussion about best shape, branches and size, the decision was made, the tree duly cut and proudly carried home to be set upright in a sturdy, red crepe-paper wrapped tub, in the hall. While it was still daylight, my brother John and I performed our yearly duty, doing the rounds of our neighbours to deliver Father's usual Christmas offering from his sawmill. Rat-a-tat-tat on each door and we thrust forward a chunky log of wood for burning on the open Christmas fire.
"We wish you a Merry Christmas and please will you have your Yule Log?"
I don't think anyone ever said. "No".

After an early tea we gathered round the table to sort the traditional tree decorations: three or four fragile glass birds with feathered tails, a little colourful glass cottage, a few baubles, a string or so of tinsel, clip-on candle holders and small wax candles leaning drunkenly on the slender branches and a certain fire hazard if ever lit. We painted the beech nut cases we had gathered in the autumn and twisted silver foil and coloured toffee wrappers into wine glass shapes. So the pine-scented tree was dressed.

An hour or so before bedtime we popped two doors around the corner to visit Grandma, the guardian of Christmas Past and even older customs, for the traditional bowl of Christmas Eve frumenty. It was a thickish porridge of "creed barley" (Grandma's own words, which I always interpreted as "soaked before cooking") with plump raisins, spicy seasoning of nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon and a good dash of rum for the adults, despite strong adherence to Methodism and its teetotal beliefs. I always thought it horrible!

The kissing bough, made from two interlocking wooden hoops, decorated with looped ribbons of coloured paper and a desiccated twig of mistletoe dangling at the base, hung from a bacon hook in her living room ceiling. Sprigs of holly were strategically placed over each framed picture and the mirror above the mantelpiece. There was no tree and few cards, for such Victorian novelties seemed to have bypassed the remote Dale for my grandparents' generation.

Then it was home to hang one of Daddy's long, hand-knitted stockings at the foot of the bed and the mounting concern that Father Christmas would appear. No mince pie, carrot or glass of "O be Joyful" tempted him and his reindeer. Would we ever get to sleep and would he come? Of course!

Morning light brought the first reassuring sight and squeeze of that lumpy, bumpy stocking which we opened in our parents' room where our main presents were. We loved the traditional orange in the toe, bag of toffees, bar of chocolate, silver threepenny bit, small gifts, a hand knitted jumper, one of daddy's hand-crafted toys.

I still proudly remember my first doll and a wooden bed for her with Mother's handmade sheets and covers, a child's wooden rocking chair, a tank and a castle for John. Joy of joys was a book of traditional stories from around the world, from an elderly, "honorary" aunt. I met Thumbelina, Rumpelstiltskin, Rapunzel of the long golden hair and a horrifying story where a tongue was cut for telling tales.

"Tom Tale Tit,
Your tongue shall be slit
And every little dickey bird
Shall have a little bit".

I still shiver! The scents and sounds of Christmas filled the house: pine drifting up the stairs from the tree in the hall, home-reared chicken spluttering in the oven, freshly chopped sage and onions for the stuffing; nutmeg and rum sauce stirred for the spicy Christmas pudding; the News and Christmas music played on the radio.

We ate at noon because the Methodist Sunday School held its Christmas party that afternoon and by three o'clock we were in the Institute building in Langthwaite, ready to parade behind the Sunday School banner from High Green, over the bridge now beloved of James Herriot fans, into the square before The Red Lion, to sing a traditional hymn. We marched back for the usual tea of Tom Peacock's potted meat sandwiches, jelly and cakes.

Older members of the community joined us in the evening, sitting around the pot-bellied, glowing iron stove, suitably guarded by a metal railing on which the damp tea towels gently steamed. As the old folk chatted and no doubt reminisced of Christmas Past, we youngsters enjoyed our games – *A Hunting we will go, Here we come gathering nuts in May* (yes, at Christmas*), Push the business on, Musical Chairs, Trencher, Winking, Lucy Lockett.* All no doubt unheard of by a 'computerised' generation.
A red-suited, white-bearded Father Christmas gave out the Sunday School prizes – one for everyone who had ever put in an appearance. "It's only Uncle William Hutchinson," whispered my mother as I hid behind her skirts and refused to go up to receive my prize. Did I believe her? Indeed, I did not and shamed her by weeping and never plucking up enough courage to step forward.

The days of Christmas continued with friends and family visits for sociable teas and suppers: home cooked ham (even in wartime, for most families kept a pig), salads, home-baked scones, pies, biscuits and cakes. The dried fruit ration was carefully garnered to produce a Christmas cake, although the icing was a sore point as ground almond was unavailable. Some folk attempted a sorry soya substitute but the experiment was not repeated!

Any casual visitor was always invited to a slice of Christmas cake with an accompaniment of Wensleydale or, even better, home-made Swaledale cheese and a glass of something. The then postman, Ted Harker, had to stagger his Christmas box treats over some weeks or he would have been only too ready to stagger home.

In "good Methodist Homes" the drink was ginger wine. I well remember the small brown bottle with a black etched castle on a bright yellow wrapper, labelled Castles Ginger Wine Essence, bought at the chemists in Richmond or Barney (Barnard Castle for the uninitiated). Boiling water and sugar were added to the essence to produce a deliciously warming drink with quite a kick to it... I felt very grown up as I drank it from the small delicate wine glasses with a Greek key pattern around the rim.

“Sixpence in Woolworth’s in the good old days ,” said my mother-in- law when, newly married, I proudly showed her the ones we had bought at considerably more expense from an antique shop in Yarm, because they spoke so powerfully to me of my happy Dales childhood.
On those Christmas evenings we walked from house to house by moon, star or torch light (for street lights did not exist) to visit our friends or carol sing around the farms.
The velvety dark wheeled with stars and constellations as we recognised The Plough, the Pole Star, Cassiopeia, Orion and his hunter’s belt and greatest excitement of all, a shower of shooting stars.

The Arkengarthdale Brass Band toured the village each year when I did manage, shyly, to drop a coin in their collecting bucket and watch with amazement as my small of stature great-uncle, Tom Carter, carried and beat the big bass drum.

Looking back it all seems so uncommercial, ungrasping, simple and innocent. Yet times were not ideal and the Dale knew its fair share of sorrow, anxiety and hardship.
Nor, happily, does time stand still.
Yet how glad I am that my Dales childhood gave me such delight and excitement at Christmas, such warmth and joy and that first wondering catch of breath at the awe and mystery of the birth of a child offering a vision of hope to the world.

On gaining the Freedom of Richmond

Tina McDonald

*In April this year, **John Blenkiron** was awarded the Freedom of the Town in recognition of his work in the community; the editorial team was able to meet with John and hear something of his history and the many events and achievements which led him to this honour.*



John was born in Reeth in 1929 , a time when communities cared about each other, doors were left not just unlocked, but were always open to friends and neighbours, and children would roam and play with impunity. Reeth was a busy community in those days with six grocers, two butchers, two drapers and three pubs (reputably thirteen at one time). John was educated at Reeth Friends' School, where members of the Rowntree family sat on the Board of Governors and took real interest in pupil welfare.

John aged 13

John left the school at 14 with a love and talent for working with wood. With a grandfather already in business as a joiner and undertaker, and a father working in the same business, it wasn't, perhaps, surprising that John should look to that area as a suitable trade too, and in 1943 he began a seven year apprenticeship with Percy Calvert at Gunnerside. John describes his working life as hard but fair; Percy Calvert was a good employer but a stickler for timing, and as a local Methodist preacher he insisted on good behaviour at all times. John's indentures contained many strictures current at the time; not to frequent public houses or play with gambling cards. Hours were not unduly long, 8:00am till 5:00pm with one

hour for lunch, but there were no mid-morning or afternoon breaks and clearing up and putting away tools could start only after 5:00pm. John at first cycled the seven miles to Gunnerside with the journey often taking as much as an hour, battling against the prevailing winds. Coming back was quicker, of course, and in bad weather John was able to take advantage of the mail van. At sixteen he bought a little autocycle. This made life considerably easier until after a year, when John encountered the swollen River Swale at Rowlath Bottoms. The autocycle broke down for good: it was back to the pedal cycle.

During the war John's father was Chief Air Raid Warden for Reeth, and used a hand rattle to warn of air raids and a policeman's whistle for the 'all clear'. An especially worrying time was when enemy planes circled overhead every night for weeks as they followed the Swale, to guide them to Liverpool. John recalled a particularly curious story: Bagshaw's Joiners in Reeth anticipated the war and the inevitable shortages that would ensue. They stocked up with petrol, wood and other goods to ensure lasting supplies for several years. In 1941 an electrical fault caused a devastating fire in their premises which destroyed the stock and burnt for several hours. Fortunately for Reeth, this was the one night after many nights of enemy attention that the aircraft failed to fly over the village! The consequences for Reeth had they done so would have been devastation on a major scale. Interestingly, the Chief Fire Officer at that time was Cuthbert Croft, who was to become John's father-in-law. Cuthbert later was to re-lead the roof of Richmond Castle, incorporating in the lead the Croft family crest.



At Spittall with the West Yorks

Like his father, John was in a reserved trade, and as such, his employer would have had to apply for exemption on his behalf until John was twenty one. At twenty one, however, John was called up for National Service and trained with the Green Howards at Strensall before being transferred to Spittal in Austria for three months' intensive training with the West Yorks, returning on embarkation leave for Korea. He spent five weeks and five days on HMT Devonshire before arriving at a transit camp in Japan. He was then transferred to Kure near Hiroshima, where he spent a further sixteen months. John bravely went back there in 1991 to see how the city had been rebuilt. Though these were difficult days and though John only narrowly missed being sent to the front line, his own view that the comradeship and friendships made did much to ameliorate the inevitable tension and fear, says much about his own character.



1951: John photographed in the centre of the bomb blast area in Hiroshima

In a 'labour office' run by the army, John had the opportunity to work with Japanese tradesmen and was intrigued by some of their working practices; the Japanese, for instance, pull a saw or plane whereas we push, and the saw's teeth are set backwards not forwards.

In 1952 John was demobbed and went back to work in Gunnerside. His desire to participate fully in community activities was already much in evidence; he sang in the choir at St Andrews and was an enthusiastic bell-ringer. After eighteen months he found another post working for Bertie Harrison in Richmond. Bertie Harrison was a very successful business man employing twelve joiners, as well as running another workshop in Pottergate. The winter of 1958 was harsh, however, and work was hard to

come by. When lay-offs were discussed John, as an unmarried man with fewer commitments than most of the rest of the workforce, and a large measure of altruism, volunteered to be the one to leave. Skilled and talented as he was, he was soon working again, this time for George Shaw. George Shaw was quick to appreciate John's special ability and used him for work at Marske Hall, his own home, or other jobs which required more specialized skills.

John's father, having left Blenkiron's at Reeth, was at this time, working for the MOD at Catterick Camp. He was in charge of a workshop which repaired army furniture. Charlie Dowse discovered that there was a contract about to be awarded for doing the same job and asked John's father if he was prepared to work with him if they could secure it. His father wasn't interested but John was, and was soon working with Charlie Dowse and Peter Olivier restoring and renovating army furniture, and managing a workforce of ten men. Sadly, the contract lasted for six months only and on renewal was lost to a rival who undercut their offer, and unfortunately, eight men had to go. Sid Thorpe's property, a joinery shop in Parkinson's Yard was up for sale and so Charlie Dowse bought it and the group continued working together, doing joinery and upholstery work and, having managed to retain the MOD upholstery contract, the business seemed assured of success. John worked there for seven years but in1967 bought the property and equipment in Parkinson's Yard and started in business on his own. The original Parkinson, after whom the yard is named, was a cabinet maker of some distinction. His furniture, almost always labelled, can still be found in homes in Richmond and the Dales and, indeed, the Blenkirons themselves own one of his elegant sidetables.

But business had not been John's only passion, for in 1960 he married Christine Croft. Born in Reeth, John had known Christine as a child and the two families had enjoyed friendship and neighbourliness for a good many years. At ten years old, delivering his milk round to the Crofts one day, John was met by Mr. Croft. "Do you know what we've got upstairs, John?" "No." "A baby girl," came the answer. That baby was Christine. John pays endless tributes to his wife, asserting time and again that without her he could not have done 'any of it'.

And certainly, when they built their first house in Hudswell with only one stonemason to supervise the work, John and Christine worked tirelessly together, reusing reclaimed materials, knocking mortar off old bricks, sourcing and reusing timbers from the 'spider' blocks at the camp, and building together a home of which they could be justifiably proud.

In 1963 the Blenkiron dynasty began to grow with the birth of their first son Michael; the twins John and James followed in 1966 and in 1967 Richard was born; the four boys were followed by their only sister Sarah in 1969.

1967 was a momentous year for another reason, for it was then that the Blenkirons bought Westfield House, which is still their home today. Westfield House had belonged to Miss Hunton who had spent her latter years in a home, as a consequence the house was rather dilapidated and the garden completely overgrown. The house had been left to an American who is reputed to have arrived in England to view it, but was so appalled by the English weather, that he returned at once to America and ordered its immediate sale! His loss was very much the Blenkirons' gain: they were quick to appreciate its position, architectural qualities and its obvious potential as a fine family home. Given that the same year John had bought his new business, Christine had given birth to their fourth son, moving into a derelict house might have seemed a move too far. Clearly, however, the Blenkirons are made of sterner stuff and with customary determination set about restoring two rooms as temporary accommodation until further restoration could be carried out. To add further to their discomfort, all the boys had measles when they moved in and they had no curtains, improvising instead with a nice line in newspaper.

1968 saw the death of John's father and he felt the double loss of a much loved parent and wise business mentor. For many years, whenever faced with a problem, he tried to imagine what his father might have said and was thus able to recreate the same sage and sound solutions which had stood him in such good stead for so many years.

In 1969 Tom Anderson approached John with another business proposition, to buy flats and shops in Ryder's Wynd. After some tricky financial negotiations John found himself responsible for letting properties

which not only fell short of modern requirements but, because of controlled rents, were not quite as financially advantageous as he had first imagined. Undeterred and with what we now recognize as characteristic Blenkiron determination John decided to restore the properties to a high specification, satisfying paying tenants as well as his own high standards. These properties became known as 9, 10, 11 and 12 Parkinson's Yard and the two shops, 19 and 21 Frenchgate. Number 19 was already famous as the birthplace of Clarkson, the historian. The studio of William Sanderson, photographer and artist of some repute had been in what is now 12 Parkinson's Yard. During renovations John discovered the original studio's glass roof under a later covering of blue slate. The Blenkirons are fortunate to own a picture by Sanderson of Crofts' plumbing workshop, in which can be seen the small figure of Christine's grandfather as a young boy.

It was during this period that John had made the decision to develop the funeral side of the business, and with family who had been involved for generations, he was well placed to enter yet another successful phase of his life. Sadly, the existing properties in Parkinson's Yard offered no opportunity to construct a chapel of rest and this was built instead, on the trading estate just outside the town. A measure of John's success is aptly demonstrated by the growing number of families who turned to him for funeral services, from three or four in the first year, to over ten by the second year and now, over four hundred a year. As the business grew, it was clear that better office space was necessary; until then office work had been conducted from the Blenkirons' own home, and it was clear too, that the business would only expand. John's next move was to buy further property in Victoria Road where he could develop a mortuary and offer the service of embalmimg. After six years John moved again, and in 2000 bought the old hospital building on Queen's Road after the Zetland Estate agreed to relinquish the lease. Converted in 1899, the Victoria Hospital as it was known, had over the years been subjected to much alteration, with inappropriate architectural extensions much diminishing its original 18th century Gothick charm. John now added architectural conservation to his long list of achievements, restoring this building to its present iconic status.

At the Trading Estate the joinery business expanded, doubling in size in a relatively short period of time and there are many properties in Richmond and the surrounding areas which have benefited from Blenkiron expertise in making traditional sashes. For many years John made all the coffins the business required but these are now bought in with only the linings and the handles attached locally.

The acquisition of other local businesses, as their proprietors retired or died, like Ernest Wilkinson & Son at Copley and Thomas Lee & Son at Barnard Castle has meant that the Blenkiron business has continued to grow and necessitated the purchase of property at Bishop Auckland, where an office and further Chapel of Rest has been established to cope with demands of the County Durham area.

Given the enormous amount of hard work and endeavour John had already expended on his business life, as well as raising a large family, it seems extraordinary that he had any time left for civic and community commitments but in fact, his contributions have been major. He was Church Warden at Hudswell for seven years and after moving to Richmond, served as Church Warden for sixteen years at St. Mary's where, even when he retired from that role, he remained on the Parochial Church Council. As church warden he oversaw some difficult and demanding times, not least the difficulty of the inevitable fund raising, the installation of the nave altar and the re-roofing of the church. The latter requiring a move to the accommodating Catholic church for six months so that worship could continue. He was Chairman of the Worship Committee for two years and was one of a group of founding members of the Friends of St. Mary's, acting as its first chairman when Dr. Bull was president.

Joining Rotary in 1973, he was president in 1985 and chaired all their committees at various times, and still remains a member after thirty seven years. In 2009 the Club recognized John's work by giving him the honour of a Paul Harris Fellowship. Membership of the Green Howards Association led to a proposal by Colonel Forbes, of the sixth battalion of the Green Howards, that John should become a magistrate and in 1982 he joined the Richmond and Gilling West bench. He served as a magistrate for 18 years until compulsory retirement at seventy and enjoyed

particularly his time as a member of the Family Court, where he always felt his input could be restorative rather than punitive.

When Ralph Waggett recovered the Fellmongers' Minute book in 1981 John joined the group formed to refound the Guild. He became the first Charity Steward, and in 1985 became Master and again in 2002. In the mid eighties John became a Freemason and eventually became Master of Lennox Lodge in 1998 as well as being a founder member of the Dales Lodge and Master in 1999. John dismisses the mystery that often surrounds the organization and emphasizes instead the remarkable contribution the organization makes to various charities; only the National Lottery, he avers, provides greater charitable contributions.

He joined the Mercers, Grocers and Haberdashers Guild in the mid nineties and in 2003 became their Warden. It seems difficult to find an organization in the area which has not benefited from John's energy, commitment and expertise; he was a founding member of the Swaledale British Legion, serving as chairman for twenty five years as well as serving on two almshouses committees and being a very active member of The Friends of the Friary Hospital.

When David Waldie suggested that John might like to serve on the Town Council John was initially uncertain, but, perhaps not surprisingly, he topped the polls and served for twelve years in all, being Deputy Mayor in 1991 and Mayor in 1992 and 1993. He recalls with pleasure many achievements and memorable occasions from that time, not least, meeting the Queen at Catterick and initiating the town's close connection with HMS Richmond. He chaired the committee responsible for Christmas lights and floral decorations, and was instrumental in bringing an improved electrical supply to the Friary Gardens and the obelisk.

John affirms, with a considerable degree of understatement, that he has always been interested in the concept of charity, that he considers giving time, labour and expertise more important than simply donating money. Moreover, he has always derived great pleasure and satisfaction from his involvement and holds dear the memory of his father as a model. To see his sons follow in the same worthy footsteps is a source of even greater pleasure. Given his enormous contribution to so many organizations over

such a long period of time it is not surprising that in April this year, John was approached by David Gilson, the then mayor, and received the letter offering him the Freedom of the Town. With characteristic modesty his first thoughts were that there must be more deserving cases, but to all who know him these are difficult to imagine. And it's difficult also to imagine a more fitting tribute for this remarkable man who, through his business, has touched the lives of so many with such kindly and empathetic professionalism and who, through his endless charitable activity has enhanced so many organizations and people alike, giving so freely of his time, his experience and the extraordinary human kindness he possesses in such abundance. This year has been memorable for John in other ways, for as well as the honour bestowed by the town, John and Christine celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary enjoying the company of friends and family, some of whom had travelled from as far away as Australia. A 'golden year' indeed for a man who has achieved so much, helped so many, but who has always insisted, 'Without my wife, I could not have done any of it. The award of the Freedom of Richmond belongs as much to Christine as to me.'



John and Christine as Mayor and Mayoress

What is the RSVCI ?...

An outsider's view

We live in a world of acronyms: to those who understand, they confer knowledge and a certain exclusivity while the rest of us feel uncertain and excluded. So it is with the RSVCI: hardly anyone living in Richmond can fail to hear about it but how many really know what it is and what it does. The full title is helpful but only in part: The Richmond and Swale Valley Community Initiative tells us its geographical range: Swaledale and Richmond. It also hints at new thinking and decisive action: an 'initiative' is nothing if not positive.

However, to understand better this 'initiative' we need to go back to its formation, for behind the acronym is, indeed, a clear focus and programme. Ten years ago Richmond was something of a backwater; its economic performance had been declining for several decades and then in 2001, the serious outbreak of 'foot and mouth' exacerbated the situation devastating both the Dale and its market town. A sense of desperation was felt by many.

It was out of this gloomy situation that a group of practical but visionary individuals, mostly volunteers, formed The Richmond and Swale Valley Initiative (no C yet). With funding from The Countryside Agency they commissioned Chris Blandford Associates to research ways in which Richmond and Swaledale could revitalise themselves. The resulting report would prove to be a national pilot scheme demonstrating the benefits of heritage-led regeneration.

After one year the 'strategic framework' was published with its vision of how the area could become more prosperous, sustainable, lively and accessible. The renaissance would be built on the inherent strengths of the Swale valley – its unique architectural, historical, natural and cultural heritage assets and the commitment of its communities. High quality visitor experience, shops, services and heritage conservation management would underpin Richmond's reputation as a leading historic market town. This sounds more vision than practicality but to achieve the change, the

strategy identified three 'Themes' and subdivided each one into strategic goals and individual projects. The 'Themes' were:

- Realising the potential of the heritage assets;
- Enhancing access for all;
- Maximising economic, cultural and community development opportunities.

The whole of this report is available at Richmond Online.

One of the strengths of RSVI as a group was that it recognized the need to bring together the various separate community groups already flourishing in the town. It was this process that saw RSVCI formed as a merger between the Richmond Partnership and the Richmond Town Centre Forum. From that stage it emerged in 2005 in its final form as a charitable company, working in partnership with other groups to deliver the range of projects contained in the Strategic Framework.

From that point onwards, the story is one of accelerating success as the funding bodies recognized the solid foundation of the group within the community and the practical far-sightedness of its original strategy. Early milestones on the journey include:

2002: £100k received from Yorkshire Forward, the funding agency, under the Market Towns Initiative;
2003: Richmond selected as a Beacon Town for regeneration through heritage and access;
2003: Yorkshire Forward selected Richmond and Catterick Garrison as joint members of the Renaissance Market Towns Programme.

The most visible signs of the RSVCI's effect on Richmond have been in those projects which have regenerated the townscape: the buildings in the Market Place, the town's lighting scheme, the upgrading of Castle Walk and the plethora of new signage are all examples and stand as evidence of the work of the Town Manager, the key deliverer of the RSVCI's ideas. Equally, however, it has played an invisible role by working with community groups. The triumph of The Station and the renovation of the Georgian Theatre Royal are the two outstanding examples but others

abound. The RSVCI's contribution has been in networking funding, being the link agency between the town and regional bodies, contributing to feasibility studies and offering a delivery service through its key manager. It is not surprising, therefore, that much of their work has gone unsung: residents see the improvements but do not realize how they have come about.

Recognition has, however, come and in 2009 Richmond was awarded the Great Town of the Year award by the Academy of Urbanism, a leading think-tank of planners, architects, consultants and regeneration experts. It is not in the nature of RSVCI to take credit, working as it does through other agencies. However, the Strategic Framework and its projects have clearly been a structural underpinning to that award and, indeed, to the town's status in the country. We are delighted to give praise and credit to the whole team.

Winter 2009 - 10



Ian Short has recorded the winter freeze in a sequence of photographs of Richmond and Swaledale. They show the transformation of the landscape and that mixture of beauty and danger that we all remember.

Ian is currently working on a major study of the seasons in Swaledale and has for several years specialised in photographs of Scottish landscape.









More examples of Ian's work can be seen on his website:
www.ianshortphotography.co.uk

Richmondshire in the Later Middle Ages

A. J. Pollard

The word 'Richmondshire' has been used in the English language since at least the fourteenth century to describe the geographical area of north-west Yorkshire comprising the five wapentakes of Gillings East and West, Hangs East and West, and Halikeld. It was not of course a 'shire' in the legal and administrative sense. The area was first and foremost a feudal liberty within Yorkshire, created for the first Norman earl of Richmond in the late eleventh century. Yet it was more than just a liberty. This piece traces the use of the name in surviving sources and explores the extent to which the late-medieval district was additionally a community forged by the lordship.

It is possible that historic Richmondshire had once formed an administrative unit in Anglo-Saxon England before the creation of Yorkshire. The principal manor, and possible ancient centre, was West Gilling. But after the Norman Conquest, and the grant of the five wapentakes to Count Alain, the centre shifted to the new castle of Richmond and the town which grew in the shadow of its walls. Any remnant of an Anglo-Saxon administrative unit was subsumed in the newly created feudal liberty which was the possession of Alain and his descendants as earls of Richmond. Thereafter, in Latin or French, the phrases 'comitatus Richmondiae', or 'comté de Richemont' strictly speaking applied to and were used to refer to the liberty as a 'county' in the sense of the possession of an earl, or count. Yet it was later believed, even if it was only fictional, that there had been an Anglo-Saxon precursor to the Norman lordship. In the frontispiece to the *Registrum Honoris de Richmond*, compiled in the early fifteenth century, Count Alain is represented kneeling in homage before William I to receive, as the caption says, 'all the towns and lands which formerly were the county of Edwin'.[1]

[1] British Library, Cotton Faustina B vii, fos 72-132,'Registrum Honoris de Richmond', fo 72v; M. J. Devine, 'Richmondshire, 1372-1425', University of Teesside PhD thesis, (2006) pp 28, 265. I would like to acknowledge my debt to

The district was also perceived to be a geographical entity by the fourteenth century. Writing of the Scottish incursions into northern England in the early fourteenth century, the author of the Lanercost Chronicle referred to the comitatus, or county, which they invaded in 1314. This might just have meant the liberty. In 1316, however, according to him, the nobles of the district, who defended the castle, bought the Scots off for a great sum of money so that they would not ravage the town or district any more than they had already done. The ransom was negotiated by the 'nobles' in the name of the 'community of Richmond', by which one should probably understand the community of the county not the town. And six years later, it was 'the people of the county', who had this time been left defenceless, who compounded with the invaders. There would thus seem already to have been a sense that Richmond was a county not only in the sense of a liberty but also as a distinct community, in the name of which collective action could be taken.[2]

The word Richmondshire itself, in a Latinised form, is found in a 1322 Papal evaluation of the Church's possessions in the deanery of Richmond described as 'in Richmondescira'. But the English form was used in the inquisition taken at Richmond in 1342 of the possessions of the deceased duke of Brittany. The commissioners reported fully on what he had held in 'demesne as of fee', that is of the crown, of the castle and honour of Richmond 'infra Richmondshire ', including specifically the wapentakes of Gilling, Hang and Halikeld. Recognition of 'Richmondshire' as a distinct district is later found in its specific exclusion from a monopoly of northern wool purchases granted to Newcastle upon Tyne in 1397. The idea that the liberty lay in the district is sustained in 1444, in a royal grant to Richard Neville, earl of Salisbury, of the privileges and income of the liberty of Richmond which were 'in the lordship and in the whole precinct of Richmondshire'. A further grant in 1449 once more identified the five

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Dr Devine's research and express my gratitude to her for allowing me to draw upon it extensively for this piece.

[2]*The Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346*, trans Sir Herbert Maxwell (Glasgow, 1913), pp. 210, 216, 230; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, *1317-1321*, p.482; Colm Mcnamee, *The Wars of the Bruces; Scotland England and Ireland, 1306-1328* (East Linton,1997), pp.72, 82, 96, 139.

wapentakes, as well as the estates of the lordship, as lying 'in Richemondshire'. By 1473, however, this distinction had gone, for the two were then conflated by chancery clerks as 'the liberty, honour and lordship of Richmondshire'.[3]

Thereafter the term Richmondshire is used increasingly in chronicles and correspondence to describe the area. In 1470, for instance, a near contemporary recalled there was a rebellion, or as he put it, 'commocion in meoving people in Richemondshire'. By the sixteenth century it was commonplace. John Leland in his travels in the 1530s treated the district as a distinct entity, specifically noting 'Richmondshire's castles, churches, rivers and natural resources as well as the boundaries separating it from Durham (the Tees), from Cleveland (the Wiske), and from Craven (unspecified). Its strong communal identity was revealed in the rising of its commons during the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536. Thus the topographical identification of Richmondshire came to supplant the notion of the county of Richmond as a feudal lordship. But until the later fifteenth century the liberty is more visible in the sources than the 'precinct' in which it lay.[4]

The earl of Richmond enjoyed considerable independent legal authority under the king within his liberty. The most important privilege was the right of 'return of writ', which meant the sheriff of Yorkshire's was excluded. The earl was hereditary sheriff in his lordship; the powers of the office were exercised by his bailiffs in the five wapentakes (and profits collected by them for him). There were other legal privileges and the right to levy tolls on trade through the liberty at bars at Bowes, Dishforth, Leeming and Smeaton. In return for his independence the earl was to supply troops to the crown. This was focused on castleguard and the

[3] T. D. Whitaker, *An History of Richmondshire*, 2 vols (1823), vol. 1, pp.43, 54-5; *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, *1396-99*, p.165; *1441-6*, p.429; *1446-52*, p.281; *1466-77*, 342-3.

[4];'The Chronicle of the Rebellion in Lincolnshire, 1470', Camden Miscellany, I (Camden Society, 1847), p. 12; *John Leland's Itinerary*, ed. John Chandler (Stroud, 1993) pp.563-8; Devine, 'Richmondshire', 265-70; M. L. Bush, 'The Richmondshire Uprising of October 1536', *Northern History*, 20 (1993) and *The Pilgrimage of Grace* (Manchester, 1996), pp. 136-48; R. W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford, 2001), pp.212-20.

raising of the feudal levy from those who owed homage to the earl. We happen to know quite a lot about this because of the survival of two remarkable documents. One was the *Livre de Domaines des Ducs de Bretagne en Angleterre* compiled for John, duke of Brittany in 1398; the other the *Registrum Honoris de Richmond* compiled for a person unknown shortly after 1412. The *Livre* was a survey of all the estates of the duke in England after his restoration to the earldom of Richmond in 1397, which provides valuable information about his interests in the lordship of Richmond itself, of his expected income and his feudal rights. The *Registrum* is a selection of documents concerning the privileges and rights of the earl in the lordship, possibly put together to reinforce a claim to those rights. From these we can piece together the feudal infrastructure. [5]

At the heart of the system were the knight's fees. Originally there were grants to 62 knights, later increased to 68 and a half fees, who held land in return for providing men to garrison the castle at Richmond and to campaign under the earl's command. The fees were heritable and quickly the personal link disappeared. In time those holding the fees provided men in their place, on a two monthly rota at the castle, and eventually made a simple cash payment each year in lieu – called 'wards'. In a similar manner scutage was paid in lieu of campaigning. By the fourteenth century feudal military obligations had evolved into a complex system of landholding and financial payments. The last time that the defence of the castle was organised along traditional lines may well have been the reported defence against the Scots in 1316.[6]

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[5] An edition of the Registrum was published by Roger Gale of Scruton in 1722. The 1398 survey is to be found in the Archives Loire-Atlantique, E114-E205. For both documents see Devine, 'Richmondshire', pp. 26-9. The feudal rights, as granted to Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland in 1399, were spelt out in the inquest into his possessions on his death in 1425 as 'return of all writs and royal commands, sheriff's tourns within the lordship, infangthief, waifs and strays, assizes of bread and ale, bloodshed and hue, chattels of felons and fugitives, the king's share of lead and a court baron at Richmond' (*Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, vol. xxii, 1 to 5 Henry VI*, ed K. Parkin (Woodbridge, 2004), p.581).

[6] For this and the following two paragraphs see Devine, 'Richmondshire', 18-48; M. J. Devine, 'The Lordship of Richmond in the Later Middle Ages', in Michael Prestwich, ed. *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles* (Woodbridge,

Originally, in 1070, Count Alain was granted and held 90% of the land in the five wapentakes. But very quickly he began to reward his knights and other servants with grants of land: a process known as subinfeudination. The subtenants themselves granted land to their own subtenants in return for fractions of their feudal obligations; and some of these in their turn did the same. And so it would have gone on, making it almost impossible to call out the host, if Edward I had not called a halt. The dispersal of land, and the lavish endowment of religious houses from the twelfth century, meant that by the fourteenth century the earl actually held in person only approximately 15% of the original grant (in Richmond town and 7 other places - Bainbridge, including the forest of Wensleydale, Arkengarthdale, including The New Forest, Aldbrough St John, Bowes, Catterick, Gilling and Moulton). A further 25% had ended up, either by direct grant of the earl or by grants from his tenants, in the hands of at least twenty ecclesiastical institutions scattered throughout the district. The rest of the land was held by free tenants, who, by 1400, ranged from the very rich indeed to the virtually landless.

At the same time, by the process of inheritance and the operation of the land market, the original knight's fees had become concentrated in the hands of just twenty eight men. By 1400 twenty four of the fees were held by four principal fee-holders. One, the Marmion fee, with five subordinate knight's fees, which had originally been part of the Steward's fee, was held by Elizabeth Marmion and her husband, Henry, Lord FitzHugh and after their deaths in 1425 and 1427 descended down the FitzHugh line. The Marmion fee was centred on West Tanfield. The Middleham fee, held by Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland, descended through the heirs of Alain le Roux's brother, the FitzRalphs, to Mary who married Robert de Neville in 1270. This had six knight's fees shared between forty three subtenants. The largest was the Constable's fee, of

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2008), pp. 98-110; A.J. Pollard, 'Late Feudalism in England: the case of Richmondshire' in *Courtiers and Warriors: Comparative Historical Perspectives on Ruling Authority and Civilization* (Kyoto, 2004), pp. 469-82. For the early history of the liberty see Hugh M. Thomas, 'Subinfeudination and Alienation of Land, Economic Development and the Wealth of Nobles in the Honour of Richmond', *Albion*, 26 (1994), pp.397-417and H Dalton, *Conquest, Anarchy and Lordship: Yorkshire 1066-1154* (Cambridge, 1994).

thirteen knight's fees, which was itself divided into two, one half held by Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton, the other by his cousin, Henry of Masham. This had been purchased, with the estates, by Sir Geoffrey Scrope in 1321-2.

The remaining knight's fees were distributed between twenty four men and institutions including Jervaulx and Egglestone abbeys, absentee nobles such as the duke of Norfolk, and gentry such as John Clervaux for East Cowton and Sir Thomas Markenfield for Eryholme. They dealt directly with the earl. The holders of the knight's fees and their fractions were also 'homagiers', that is, they swore fealty to the earl and paid an annual nominal rent in cash or kind (a barbed arrow, a set of horseshoes, a pound of cumin, or pepper, a rose at midsummer and so on) and aids and other payments as on the earl's eldest son coming of age, or his eldest daughter's marriage. If a fee holder died without heirs the land escheated to the earl; if he died leaving a child under age, the earl took custody of the land and the wardship and marriage of the child. The same process happened with the subtenants and principal fee holders. In 1391, for instance, Richard Lord Scrope sold the wardship, marriage and custody of the lands of Margaret, the child heiress of Thomas St Quintin of Hornby, to John Conyers for 200 marks (£133.3.4). He, John, paid homage to Scrope for Margaret's lands and give fealty when she came of age. He married her and established a lineage, raised to the peerage four generations later. On a more modest scale in 1417-18, Elizabeth Marmion sold the marriages of two underage subtenants, John Laton and Marmaduke Exelby, for £49. [7]

Holders of knight's fees were not the only 'homagiers', for all the free tenants of the lordship, both those directly tenants of the earl and sub-tenants of the knight's fee holders, were obliged in the same way. Thus the free tenant John Jackson of West Tanfield, a subtenant of the Marmion fee, held four cottages for military service. John Laton held three carucates, for which he paid 21d for his share of the wards, in addition to

[7] Devine, 'Lordship', pp. 105-6; A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1990), p.98.

owing military service. All free tenants, great and small, had an obligation to turn out to fight. This way a feudal host was assembled. The last time it happened in the lordship of Richmond was when Richard II invaded Scotland in 1385. It is significant that when in 1398 servants of John, duke of Brittany, newly restored to the earldom, toured the lordship identifying his tenants and assessing its value, all the tenants, while prepared to pay rent, refused (under instruction from the crown) to give homage to him, for that would have entailed an obligation to render military service to a great prince of France. The problem resolved itself, since the duke died in the following year and the earldom reverted to the crown.

The district was dominated, for over a century, by the families and heirs of the principal fee holders, also resident peerage families: especially the Nevilles, the Scropes of Bolton and the FitzHughs. Their landed incomes locally were approximately £500 each in the mid-fifteenth century, higher than the local income of the absentee earl (approximately £400). Between 1380 and 1410 the heads of these three families, who had prospered in war and royal service, built or modernised as great residential houses in the latest fashion, the three castles of Middleham, Bolton and Ravenswort to outshine that at Richmond.[8] With the earldom after 1372 in the hands of Brittany or the crown, the exercise of local authority fell to one or more of these resident lords. Until 1399 it was Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton and his eldest son, William, who dominated. After 1399 it was Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland (d.1425) followed by his son, Richard, earl of Salisbury d.1460), his grandson, Richard Neville, earl of Warwick (d.1471) and then Richard, duke of Gloucester by gift of Edward IV. In 1399 Ralph Neville was granted the lordship for life by his grateful brother-in -law, Henry IV, and in 1449 Richard Neville received a grant in-tail male, which Richard of Gloucester eventually realised. But Henry Tudor, whose father had been created earl of Richmond by Henry VI,

[8] See the entries in Anthony Emery, *The Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, I, Northern England* (Cambridge, 1996). Ravensworth, now the least impressive, was probably in its heyday the most spectacular. More a palace than a castle, it was, like Kenilworth its inspiration, set in a lake and extensive gardens and parkland. By Leland's time the lake had been reduced to 'marshy ground' (Leland, *Itinerary*, p.565).

seized both kingdom and earldom in 1485. His determination, as Henry VII, to impose his own authority, finally brought to an end the era of quasi-independent lordly power.[9]

The most prominent 'homagiers' beneath the peerage, were some sixty gentry families, with landed income of £20 p.a. or more, usually enjoying lordship of a manor and bearing a coat of arms. Landholding in late-medieval Richmondshire formed a complex pattern. In any one place there might be many different landholders, not just the lord of the manor. Croft in 1450 was typical. The lord of the manor was Scrope of Bolton, with significant holdings, but the largest resident landowner (50%) was Richard Clervaux, who was himself lord of the manor of nearby East Cowton and a holder of a knight's fee there. Within Croft, St Mary's York held a significant property called Monk End and smaller parcels were held by the Franks of Kneeton and five other lesser freeholders. Additionally there was the parish church, with its glebe, in the patronage of St Peter's York. Clervaux himself held property in several other places. A fellow member of the gentry, Christopher Wandesford of Kirklington, received an income of £185 from no fewer than twenty three separate properties throughout the district and beyond. [10]

This was a dynamic society. Land was in fact constantly changing hands. Old families died out in the male line; heiresses took land into a new lineage. The wealthy merchant, Richard de Richmond, married the heiress of Brough in Catterick in the mid-fourteenth century, changed his name and established a line of Burghs there. Marriage to the St Quintin heiress was the making of the Conyers of Hornby, who multiplied in the fifteenth century on the astute marriage of younger sons to heiresses. New wealth bought old land: the Scropes themselves in the fourteenth century;

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[9] A.J. Pollard, *Warwick the Kingmaker: Politics, Power and Fame* (London: Continuum, 2007), pp. 113-14; idem, 'Richard III, Henry VII and Richmond', *Richmond Review*, 15 (1992), 13-18, reprinted in *The Worlds of Richard III* (Stroud, 2001), pp.117-22.

[10] A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses', in Charles Ross, ed., *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979), pp. 37-59'; idem, 'Richard Clervaux of Croft', *Yorkshire Archaeological Society*, L (1978), pp. 15-68, both reprinted in *Worlds of Richard III*, pp.51-65, 97-116;

the Metcalfes at a more humble level in the fifteenth. Land was also bought to provide daughters with marriage jointures, to create settlements for younger sons, and to endow chantries and other religious benefactions. Yet while there was a change in composition of the families forming this landed society over the years, the social structure remained the same. The gentry formed a tight-knit network of their own, linked together by inter-marriage and by frequent recourse to each other's services in legal matters – witnessing title deeds, serving as executors in each other's wills, and acting as trustees in the management of their inheritances. [11]

Above all they came together in the service, especially military service, of the great lords of the county. The system of raising armies had changed since the creation of the lordship: men were now contracted and paid. The key figure in sustaining a late-medieval military culture was John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who had been earl from 1342 (when he was two) until 1372. He recruited the men of Richmondshire into his huge military retinue. Scrope, Neville, Marmion, FitzHugh and lesser men were retained by him for life and fought with him in most of his seven campaigns in France and Spain between 1355-6 and 1386-9. It is likely, too, that Richmondshire men were to be found among the twenty men-at-arms and twenty archers whom John, Lord Neville contracted to provide from 1370, or Richard, Lord Scrope's similar band. Several won fame in his greatest military triumph at Najera in Spain in 1367. Under Neville they defended Henry IV's throne; in the wars of Henry V and VI their sons and grandsons fought in France in the companies of Neville, Scrope and FitzHugh. As the fifteenth century progressed, however, Scropes and FitzHughs, as well as the leading gentry, became clients of the all powerful Nevilles, fighting for them in civil conflicts as well as wars against the Scots. Over a century and a half, lords and gentry were thus drawn together as companions in arms, forming a close-knit military fellowship. [12]

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[11] Devine, 'Richmondshire', pp. 158-79; Pollard, '*North-Eastern England'*, pp. 81-12.

[12] Anthony Goodman, *John of Gaunt* (Harlow 1992) pp212-23, 288-90; Devine, 'Richmondshire', pp.148-57; N. B. Lewis, 'Indentures of Retinue with John of Gaunt', *Camden Miscellany* 22 (Camden 4th series, 1, 1964), pp. 88-9; A. J.

Underpinning the recruitment of these 'homagiers' of Richmond into the retinues of Gaunt or a Scrope or Neville were the traditions and obligations of service that were attached to their feudal tenancies. In addition, the surviving financial burdens and related social rituals of lordship bound the feudal tenants together. As we have seen, wardships and escheats were still exacted. The rituals, such as the delivery of free rents in cash and kind, paid at Easter, or Christmas, or a saint's day, the Earl's birthday or at Richmond Fair, renewed in a regular cycle the social ties between lords and men and reinforced the hierarchical structure of society.[13]

The view of Richmond Castle (see Plate 2), commissioned to illustrate the list of knight's fees in the *Registrum*, shows the coats of arms of the principal fee holders above the sections of the walls which by tradition they had had to defend. The image reveals that there was a sense of the history of belonging to the lordship with which the nobility and gentry identified and a pride in the military service they still rendered. The illustration was made many years after anyone had actually done their stint of two months' duty pacing the walls – probably not since 1316. The illustrator set out to represent, with two notable exceptions, the coats of arms of the first fee holders, three centuries earlier, which are to some extent fictional. What is important is the celebration of an imagined shared past which underpinned a sense of identity in the early-fifteenth century. The castle, as depicted, can be seen to represent a military circle, a chivalric fellowship not unlike King Arthur's round table. Furthermore, the visualisation of feudal service by lovingly depicted coats of arms suggests that the obligation to pay wards was a badge of honour marking the superior status of those who owed them. [14] The rendering of wards and fines was not restricted to the fee holders themselves. All the free tenants of the lordship were homagiers who made a contribution,

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Pollard, 'The Northern Retainers of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury', *Northern History*, 11(1976), 52-69; idem, *North-Eastern England*, 123-39; idem, *Warwick the Kingmaker: Politics, Power and Fame* (London: Continuum, 2007), 107-25; idem 'The Middleham Connection', in *Worlds of Richard III*, 65-75.

[13] Devine, 'Richmondshire', p. 31; Pollard, 'Late Feudalism', pp. 476-7.

[14] British Library, Faustina B vii, fo 85v. See also 'Plate 2' below.

however modest, and were thus stakeholders in the defence of the castle, and by extension the county itself, with which they identified. The image



Plate 1 *Copyright: The British Library Board*

thus carries a sense of the county of Richmond being not just a feudal lordship but also a community, a community which was known in the vernacular as Richmondshire.



Plate 2 *Copyright: The British Library Board*

Plate 1: Count Alain receives the lordship from William I

The text of the placard, in the form of a title deed, is invented. Title deeds did not exist in the late eleventh century. It is to be noted that it is the lordship of Richmond with which Alain is being invested, not the whole honour or earldom of Richmond. The armour worn by the king, the earl and the men at arms standing behind the king, as well as the weapons shown, are clearly of fourteenth-century style. It has been suggested that the king and earl are in fact portraits of Edward III and John of Gaunt, both bearded as in contemporary and near-contemporary likenesses, and

that the image thus represents the investiture of the lordship of John of Gaunt in 1342 (notwithstanding he was two at the time). The image is characteristic of other fourteenth-century book illuminations of the investitures of princes, especially that of the grant of Aquitaine to the Black Prince by Edward III.

If it is a representation of John of Gaunt receiving the lordship, the image may have some bearing on the composition of the *Registrum*. It has been suggested that it was done for John, duke of Bedford, the brother of Henry V either after he was granted the reversion of the lordship in 1414 or when he entered it in 1425. Alternatively, Dr Devine has proposed, on the evidence that the book contains a transcript of a document pertaining to Middleham, that it was commissioned by Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland, in about 1414 as a document to support a petition to Henry V for the lordship, and indeed the earldom, to be granted after his death to his eldest son by Joan Beaufort, Richard, who would then have been about 14. Bedford was Gaunt's grandson in the senior male line; Richard Neville, his grandson through the female side in the junior line. Both, as Lancastrians, would have had good reason to stress the grant of the lordship to Gaunt. (See Devine, 'Lordship of Richmond' pp.108-10.)

Plate 2: Richmond castle in the early-fifteenth century

The view of the castle is from the north and east and is recognisably the castle as it stands today, although it seems that the river is shown on the town side. There are various other inaccuracies. The chapel against the south wall, near the corner tower, is misplaced: it should be the other side of the tower, against the west wall. The Gold Hole Tower is shown as circular, whereas the surviving structure is rectangular. The painting may have been done from memory rather than direct observation. Note, however, a tower on the south wall and another building, which looks like the representation of a kitchen with louvred roof, both of which have subsequently collapsed with that stretch of wall.

The list of placements set out below the image does not follow a logical order around the battlements. It reads:

> Ranolph, son of Robert (later rendered FitzRobert), in the castle of Richmond at the chapel of St Nicholas. The chapel was on the ground

floor of the Robin Hood tower; the nearest banner to it is represented above the east wall between that tower and the Fallen Tower.

The Constable in the 'claustro turris' (enclosure of the tower) - the barbican and one of the banners there.

Brian, son of Alain, in the great hall of 'Scoulande' (Scolland), shown above the hall.

Torphin, son of Robert of Manfeld, between the kitchen and brew house. This banner, above the two small buildings inside the south wall, bears the Marmion coat of arms.

Ranulph, son of Henry, on the west side of Scolland Hall. The banner stands between the tower and the building that resembles a kitchen. This banner bears the FitzHugh coat of arms. FitzHugh was descended from FitzHenry.

Conan, son of Helie (Elias), next to the 'clausum turris' (the barbican again?) on the east side outside the walls; the other shield placed in front of the Keep, alongside the Constable's shield, sharing the guard of the barbican.

The Chamberlain on the east side of Scolland Hall, next to the 'furnum' (bake oven), the shield by the round tower, known today as Gold Hole Tower. There is no other building shown in the view, though the Great Chamber stood here.

Thomas de Burgo on the west side of the great chapel 'ad canonicos in muris' (of the canons on the walls?). Placed above the west wall close to the southwest corner tower, near where the chapel in fact stood. The name suggests that it was a chapel served by the canons of St Agatha's Easby, the founder of which was Roald, the constable of the castle in 1155.

The FitzHugh and Marmion coats of arms are contemporary and accurately represented, not the ancient (and imagined?) arms of Ranulph FitzHenry or Torphin FitzRobert. They are the arms of Henry, Lord FitzHugh (d. 1427) and his wife Elizabeth Marmion (d.1425). They are the only two contemporary arms included; there is no Neville banner or shield. Does this suggest that Henry and Elizabeth were involved in the compilation of the book?

See also Sir Charles Peers, *Richmond Castle, Yorkshire* (HMSO, 1953), pp10-11. I am grateful to Linda Drury for her comments.

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Obituary

Tom Haskins

All who knew Tom learnt of his death with sadness. Tom had been a member of The Society for over twenty years. However, he was very much a contributor and for several years took upon himself the task of reviewing the lectures for the local press. In this way he helped to keep the activities of the Civic Society in the public eye, very much to the benefit of all. He will be much missed by his friends and contemporaries.

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank all of this year's contributors. Without their interest and industry there would be no Review. We are particularly grateful to Ian Short for his help in photographing the splays at Easby Abbey and for allowing us to use his work as illustrations on the cover.

All other photographs have been acknowledged wherever possible

Subscriptions are due after the A.GM. please.

New members joining after the summer recess are required to pay half the current subscription, with a full subscription for the following year, due after the A.G.M.

Copies of Back Numbers and the Index Vols 1 – 30 are available from the Hon. Secretary.

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Civic Society Programme for 2011

Thursday January 13th	John Heselgrave **Some Adventures with Stone**
Thursday February 10th	Peter Holman **Tales of Eighteenth Century English Music**
Thursday March 10th	Geoff Milburn **The Dog Men of Gilling West**
Thursday 14th April	Glenys Marriott **Those Who Left the Dales**
Thursday 12th May	William Feaver **The Pitman Painters**
Thursday 9th June	Mike Bishop **Touching the Old Stones Tenderly: On, Above, By and Along Hadrian's Wall**
Thursday 14th July	**Visit to Beamish**
Thursday 29th September	Craig Hornby; film and discussion **A Century in Stone: the Rise of Eston and Middlesbrough**
Thursday 13th October	Prof. Jane Moody **The History of Pantomime**
Thursday 10th November	Chris Wood **And Now, a Choice of Viewing...**
Friday 9th December	**AGM & Christmas Event**

All lectures will be held in the Zetland Christian Community Centre, starting at 7.30pm; the Annual General Meeting will be held in the Town Hall, also starting at 7.30pm.