

North Thoresby Village History Trail

SECOND EDITION



Part 1

A circular walk from the Village Square, down Church Lane, past the Football Field, round to the High Street, and back to The Square.



Aerial Photograph c.1965

1. 'The Thatch' - had not been thatched for at least 70 years. It had a serious fire when the roof was removed as the thatch beneath the roof had been smouldering - perhaps for years. Farmland stretched back towards the Church.
2. Shop and out-buildings, bakery at back.
3. 'The Cottage' - once two dwellings - now rendered.
4. Ivy Dene House - farmhouse partly dating to circa 1800
5. Cottages built for labourers on farm based at Ivy Dene House;
6. Row of houses built circa 1850 - mainly as shops for an expanding village - still in use as shops at the time of the photograph.
7. Now the site of the Memorial Garden.

Foreword: North Thoresby Village History Trail and a History of the Village

This is a general history of North Thoresby (and the wider contexts in which it has developed) and describes a circular walk in the northern part of the village from the Square, down Church Lane, past (or across) the football ground, to the Halfway House, down the High Street, and back to the starting point. When we do the guided walks, we split this into two separate walks, each taking around 2 hours, as there's a great deal to tell, and show. The Square to the Church area of the village is one section and the Square up to the Halfway House is another.

Page
| 1

Stuart Sizer, the respected Head of the village school (1981-91) had written a small pamphlet for a guided walk around the village and my original idea was to do an update on this – instead it grew into a much bigger enterprise. A first edition was published in August 2021, A much expanded second edition in February 2022, was first published in February 2022 and editions with new forewords in 2024 and 2026. I've used the new printing to update information and make some minor corrections.

All-in-all, the booklet brings together more information about the village than has ever been done before in one place. It has gone through numerous printings and has sold over 200 copies. I've taken the opportunity of this new printing to update the introduction and correct a handful of spellings or text adjustments. The booklet is designed to be dipped into, and hopefully, to stimulate you to further reading. The booklet is designed to be dipped into, and hopefully, to stimulate you to further reading (and joining the History Group!).

This booklet should help you see the village in its historical context. I have aimed to make this a resource so readers can look more closely at the village through a variety of documents, including many maps, and with wider discussions aimed at putting the village in a historical context. A magnifying glass will come in handy! The history of this remarkable settlement is a microcosm of our nation's evolution. At numerous points in the text, I refer the reader to page references which allow the reader follow up further information on the same, or related subject – as and when the reader wishes.

This booklet would not have been possible without the enthusiasm, curiosity, persistence and skill of many generations of amateur (and professional) historians. The village owes a great debt to the tutors and students of the W.E.A.; to the late William Toyne for his research and writing in the 1950s through to his death in 1971 and to the late Rex Russell for his study of the Enclosure (1836-1846) process which radically altered the geography of the village. Stuart Sizer continues to undertake new research and writing. Elizabeth Kershaw's unrelenting efforts to collect evidence about the village's history, including a wonderful collection of postcards has been of enormous importance. In editing this collection, I've benefited greatly from Bob Kershaw's deep knowledge of local history, his gentle critique and extensive notes and suggestions. My facts and analysis are much the stronger for it. Thanks also to my wife Kitty for her careful proof reading. Any errors in fact, analysis or presentation, remain mine.

It's important to say that, while we have a much better understanding of our history (for example of the Domesday Book) because of the scholarship of the last half century, there's still much that remains a matter of conjecture, because the picture we have is based on fragmentary – in many cases, non-existent, evidence. For example, it's impossible to know whether the settlement recorded in the Domesday Book (1086) had become a nucleated village by that time or was a more dispersed settlement. (see page 5)

The booklet is a direct consequence of the revival of interest in the history of the village and the formation of a History Group, in 2018, which holds well-attended meetings with a rich mix of presentations.

Since this booklet was first published, we have gone on to produce three more, 'North Thoresby in Old Photographs and Postcards' (2022), 'A Lancaster and a Village' (2023) the story of the Lancaster and its crew which crashed in the village centre in October 1943) and 'North Thoresby: Aspects of Life and Work in the Nineteenth Century' (2024). We have also established a Village History Archive in the Wesley Centre which has brought together a wealth of records and photographs of the village and we have put important documents, like the Parish records going back to the sixteenth century, into booklet form and pdf digital format. Archaeology excavations in Bondcroft field in 2023 and 2025 have produced a wealth of information about medieval and early modern North Thoresby and the results will be published in due course.

History is the study of the past, pieced together from traces of evidence which remain in the present; a jigsaw puzzle where the picture is never quite complete and where the pieces have a habit of changing. Local history – and especially village history - has a particular importance in helping to create a sense of place, identity, and community

Ian Wright, Editor, North Thoresby History Group, June 2026

Introduction: Continuity and Change

This is not the place for a comprehensive history of the village, but a broad sweep is essential if you are to understand what you are looking at as you walk our history trails, and are able to conceive of the ancient, and more recent, history of the settlement.

Page
| 2

The village has a long history. There is firm evidence that areas of the parish have had human occupation for millennia – worked neolithic flints dating from at least 3,500 years ago were found on our property at The Thatch during archaeological work in 2006, together with Roman pottery and medieval pits and ditches dated at 850-1000. Evidence of a Romano-British settlement of the 3rd century AD, was found in the most recent archaeology (see page 79) and it's possible that there was an early 5th-6th century Anglo-Saxon settlement too. Historians have come to the opinion that the general pattern of rural occupation in England has pre-historic roots and that there was a good deal of continuity between the different phases of the evolution of Britain – for example, from the farming estates of the Romano-British period to that of the Anglo-Saxon incursion from the fifth century. The village name does originate – like many others in the area – from a Danish settler and the Old Norse language. There are 7 villages in Lincolnshire whose name originates from personal names based on Thor – including Thorganby (Thorgrimr) and Thurlby (Thorilf). Peter Sawyer (in 'Anglo-Saxon Lincolnshire') suggests that the '-by' endings date from the earliest period of Viking settlement, around 900. However, while the village was once seen by historians (like the formidable W.G.Hoskins, see page 35) as being of Danish *origin*, this is not the case.

The village has survived where many ancient villages have not - a quarter of Domesday villages disappeared between 1300-1600 (and for much more complex reasons than plague). It was settled in the late ninth and early tenth century by Norsemen, most probably at first from the dispersal of the 'Great Heathen Army' (so-called by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) which had invaded East Anglia in 865 and conducted a campaign to defeat the four Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. This was not a raid, but a 'land grab' and it led to two centuries of intermittent warfare.

In 878, Alfred the Great defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington, and a treaty was agreed whereby the Danes were able to remain in control of much of northern and eastern England. Lincolnshire was part of the area now referred to as the 'Five Boroughs' (Lincoln, Derby, Nottingham, Stamford and Leicester). This would have led to further migration of Danes into England – and Lincolnshire offered great rewards for Danish farmers and traders – an open gate to some of the richest farmland in England. Having been invited to visit Denmark, in 2019, to see our 'Viking' heritage, I can attest to the similarity of the landscape.

Evidence suggests that there were three streams of entry for these settlers – through the Grimsby area of the Humber (Tetney Haven was, by tradition, a favourite landing place); from the River Trent around Burton Stather, pushing east to settle around Caistor and Glandford Brigg and from the havens and inlets between Theddlethorpe and Skegness, such as Grainthorpe and Saltfleet. The area from Alford, across the Wolds to Horncastle, appears to have been one of the most heavily settled Danish parts of England (see maps, page 73).

The period from 865 to the middle of the tenth century was dominated by the struggle between the Danes and Anglo-Saxons, (who themselves were Germanic invaders from the fifth century) for control of eastern and northern England. When the next major Danish attack came in 892, King Alfred's policy of building fortresses (burghs) paid dividends and in 896, the Danish army withdrew. Alfred's son Edward, daughter Aethelflaed, grandsons Aethelstan, Edmund and Eadred stuck the task of securing the submission of the north and by 955, Eadred was king over all of England. By this time, three generations of Danes (see life expectancy figures below) had settled and integrated here. They did so in violent times; the tenth and eleventh centuries was a period of great turmoil and struggles for control – culminating in the Norman conquest in 1066 (See page 95).

Archaeological evidence – particularly from Flixborough, West Ravendale, Riby and Great Carlton – indicates a thriving Anglo Saxon community in north Lincolnshire from the seventh century onwards. An island settlement at Little Carlton near Louth was discovered after a local metal detectorist found a silver writing tool. University of Sheffield archaeologists have since unearthed 300 dress pins and a large number of coins. The island was once home to a Middle Saxon settlement and was particularly unusual because of the items found there - trade weights and other objects suggest the settlement was a high-status trading site. Far from being very isolated in the early medieval period, Lincolnshire was connected in a much wider network, with trade spanning the whole of the North Sea.

The remains of an Anglo-Saxon rural community at Flixborough, near Scunthorpe, provided remarkable evidence of a site occupied for 1500 years, including a large Anglo-Saxon settlement from the seventh to early tenth century. The 1989-91 excavation revealed many crafts like woodworking, weaving, blacksmithing, lead working and textile manufacturing. Wild geese, duck, cranes, roe deer, pine marten and hare were part of the diet of villagers,

suggesting falconry and hunting were contributing to the menu. North Thoresby has its own Anglo-Saxon relic in the form of part of a grave marker, an elaborately carved stone, which can be seen in St Helen's Church. Analysis of burials suggest that lifespan was, by 21st century expectations, exceptionally short – with only around 12% of the population surviving after 35 years of age.

Anglo-Saxon society of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries had a hierarchical social political, economic and legal structure, displaying many features of what was much later (in the eighteenth century) labelled 'feudalism' and which was more fully developed after the Norman conquest. It was a society organised for war - constructed around military obligations of the major landowners (no more than 5,000 people in a population of 2.5 million) to the King on one hand, and the obligations landowners had to protect the populations living in their manors, in return for which they received the 'servile' obligations due from the peasantry, which was divided into various ranks. This structure survived until the plagues and natural disasters of the fourteenth century devastated the population.

At the end of the ninth century, an influx of Danes, looking for land and settlement, came into this established society and population. Lincolnshire was heavily settled by the Danes, as the number of villages in the area ending in 'by', 'thorpe', 'toft', 'holme' and 'beck' indicate, but the extent of the settlement was uneven across the area. It is likely that an Anglo-Saxon settlement already existed here in our village parish; the elevated site on the spring line, providing security from the tidal Humber waters. Whether it was as developed a community as those described above is impossible to say. See pages 92-96 for background on Anglo-Saxon and Viking England.

Questions arising from the Danish influx are fascinating and divide historians. Broadly, it's possible to conclude that there would have inevitably been some expulsion of the existing population from their land, especially in our area where the land was so fertile, and no doubt, there was some bloodshed. But, looking at the Scandinavian settlements in England as whole, it is clear that they often settled in areas where there were few existing settlements. In the long term, the Danish settlement was not one of extinction, but of amalgamation, and once the initial traumas passed, the two populations, mingled and merged (see page 71). The Domesday survey (1086) indicates that the largest landowners in Lindsey had Danish names and Danish laws and customs dominated. The Danish settlement was of great economic benefit as the land under cultivation increased, trading centres thrived (Lincoln was revived) and the population grew. By 1066, England had a thriving economy, an efficient system of administration and the most advanced currency system in Europe.

The map on page 75 indicates the areas where the Danes had greatest concentration and in our own area, there are numerous place names derived from Old Norse (for example, Grainsby, Irby, Beesby, Hawerby, the Ravendales) mixed with Old English (for example, Cuxwold, Waithe, Waltham, Tetney, Fulstow, Ludborough). Some villages have hybrid names, mixing Old Norse with Old or Middle English, for example, Utterby. The cause of this 'absorption' of the invaders is to be found in the common features of the two populations – both springing from the same roots; their language, farming methods and social customs were similar and the Danes had, by this time, widely adopted Christianity.

The origins of the village name Thoresby (the 'north' came very much later), lay in the late ninth and early tenth centuries. The village gets its name from a Danish settler. In the Domesday survey of 1086, the vill is named as Toresbi - derived from the Old Scandinavian Thorir-by, meaning 'farmstead' of a man (probably) called Thorir. Toresbi is linked with the vill of Alwoldbi – later to become Thoresby and Autby. Autby was deserted by the early fifteenth century (see page 13)– it was located sited in the area now occupied by the re-cycling centre, across the A16 and left off White Lane. White Lane possibly gets its name from the quarrying that went on at the top of the hill at Beesby, straight across the Barton Street, but it may go back further, referring to an ancient salt road.

At the time Thorir had established his farmstead, the landscape would not have featured a 'village' as we now know it - but a 'dispersed settlement' (see box page 5). The Domesday survey of 1086 records a population in Toresbi and Alwoldbi approaching 400 (in 1801 it was remarkably similar), possibly already using the Open Field system (which developed in many parts of Europe from around 850 onwards) and in an early stage of becoming (or already being) a nucleated village (see diagram and text page 4). Thorir's farm had developed into a village community over the previous century and a half.

Despite all the momentous changes in English society over the next 800 years, rural life over this time would have had a great deal of continuity – a villager of 1200 would not have found the fundamental rhythm of life unfamiliar with the pattern of life in the village in 1840 – nor the village geographical layout. Indeed, much of this continuity would have lasted beyond 1945. Of course, the village would have been affected by wider economic, political, social and technological developments in the wider world, such as the remarkable growth in population up to 1300 when the population may have doubled since 1086 and reached 5 million.

The demand for wool in the later Middle Ages had shifted the emphasis of farming in many areas (more so in the Wolds than the marsh), demanding less labour. Potatoes had arrived in the seventeenth century (and turnips in

the 18th). Horses replaced oxen as the 'engine' of agriculture (very gradually in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in Lincolnshire); mud and stud houses (by 1500) and then brick houses (in the 19th century) appeared. The agricultural revolution of the early 18th century brought new methods, like selective breeding, the seed drill and soon the harnessing of steam power. The enclosure of the Open Field system was late in North Thoresby, completed in the 1840s, and this would have brought a revolutionary change in both the nature of farming, the village geography and the way villagers interacted – the communal nature of farming came to an end.

But for all this, villagers like my grandfather, born at Rothwell in 1886, would, as a young man, have recognised more of the features of a typical village of 1500, than he would of 21st century existence.

Continuities

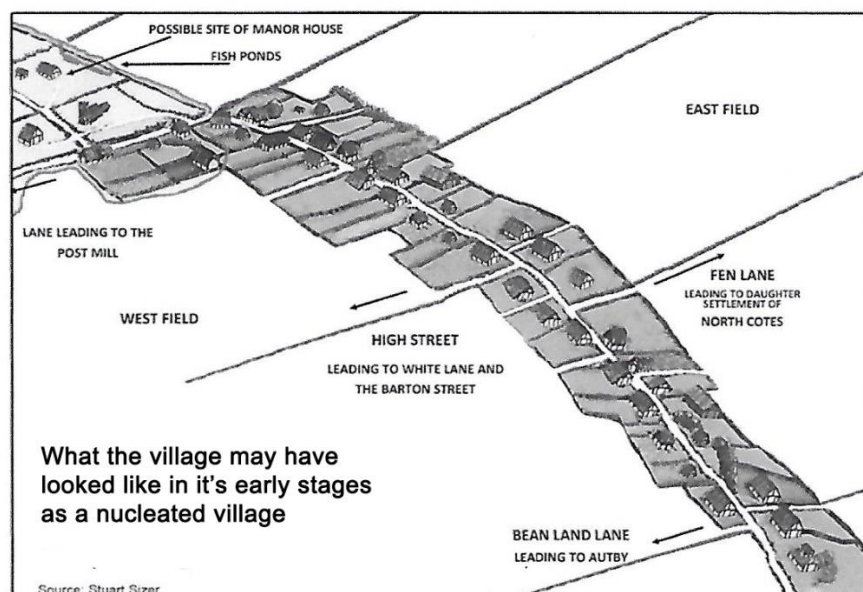
The first, and most important factor to enable the reader to understand the village of 2021, is the physical layout and development of the village from its earliest days. By the time of the Domesday book, the village would have been around two hundred years old. In his booklet, 'Torsbi: Thoughts on the Early History of a Lincolnshire Marsh Village', Stuart Sizer, explains what the evidence from numerous villages suggests our village would have looked like a thousand years ago:

'A cluster of wattle and daub huts which eventually became the traditional Lincolnshire Mud and Stud variety. Initially, in the late Saxon period, they would have clustered around the church and as the settlement grew, over time, spread in a linear way. This type of village growth became known as a 'Street Village'. Eventually, it went from the church down what is now Church Lane, and on to Ludborough Road. Spread along the road were villagers' 'tofts' and 'crofts'. Gaps between some of the crofts were tracks to the west or east fields.

Stuart goes on to explain, these terms:

'There can be a degree of confusion between the names croft and toft. A toft is the land that fronted on the road. Typically enclosed by ditch, wall, fence, or hedge, it was the land on which the dwelling was located. Behind the dwelling was the croft, a separate enclosed piece of land, used as pasture or to grow crops. While the farming of the larger fields surrounding the villages was well-organised and carefully controlled, the holder of a toft and croft could do what he or she wished on that land.'

The drawings, maps, and aerial photograph on pages 6-10 illustrate crofts and tofts in a typical 'Open Field' medieval village. The crofts and tofts of the medieval period are the origin of the, often substantial, plots of land found around the houses in the village centre in the eighteenth century and well into the twentieth century. There would have been many more green spaces between the houses and the 'infill' we see today is a product of relatively recent development, since 1945 and, especially since the 1970s. In 1970, there were still 7 working farms in the village. See the aerial photograph now dated 1961, page 15 and enlarged sections pages 99-100, and the map of property and land sales in 1918 (pages 24-25)



Beginning as a dispersed 'vill' (see below), a linear, nucleated village emerged at some point, working an Open Field system – possibly before or in the aftermath of the Norman conquest – most probably sometime between 1000-1200. Tracks would have developed to enable villagers to reach the Open Fields and its possible that ancient east-west trackways associated with the transport of salt passed through the village. By 1400, it is likely more of a grid pattern (see page 9) would have developed from an original single 'street'. The tofts and crofts seen here survived as typical plots around the dwellings in the village centre and can be seen in the maps of the lots on offer at the sale of Parkinson's property in 1918, (see pages 24-25) and in the 1888 OS map (page 8). The village changed dramatically in the nineteenth century – a time of significant population increase, the Enclosure of the Open Fields and a great deal of building in brick. Page
| 5

The farms in the village centre and the other blocks of land were the result of hundreds of years of buying and selling of land, as the more enterprising villagers (or wealthy outsiders) expanded their holdings. Stuart's diagram (page 4) depicting what the village layout was like by 1200, explains the 'spine' of the village as it exists today – although much modified by Enclosure and developments since 1945, more especially since the 1970s.

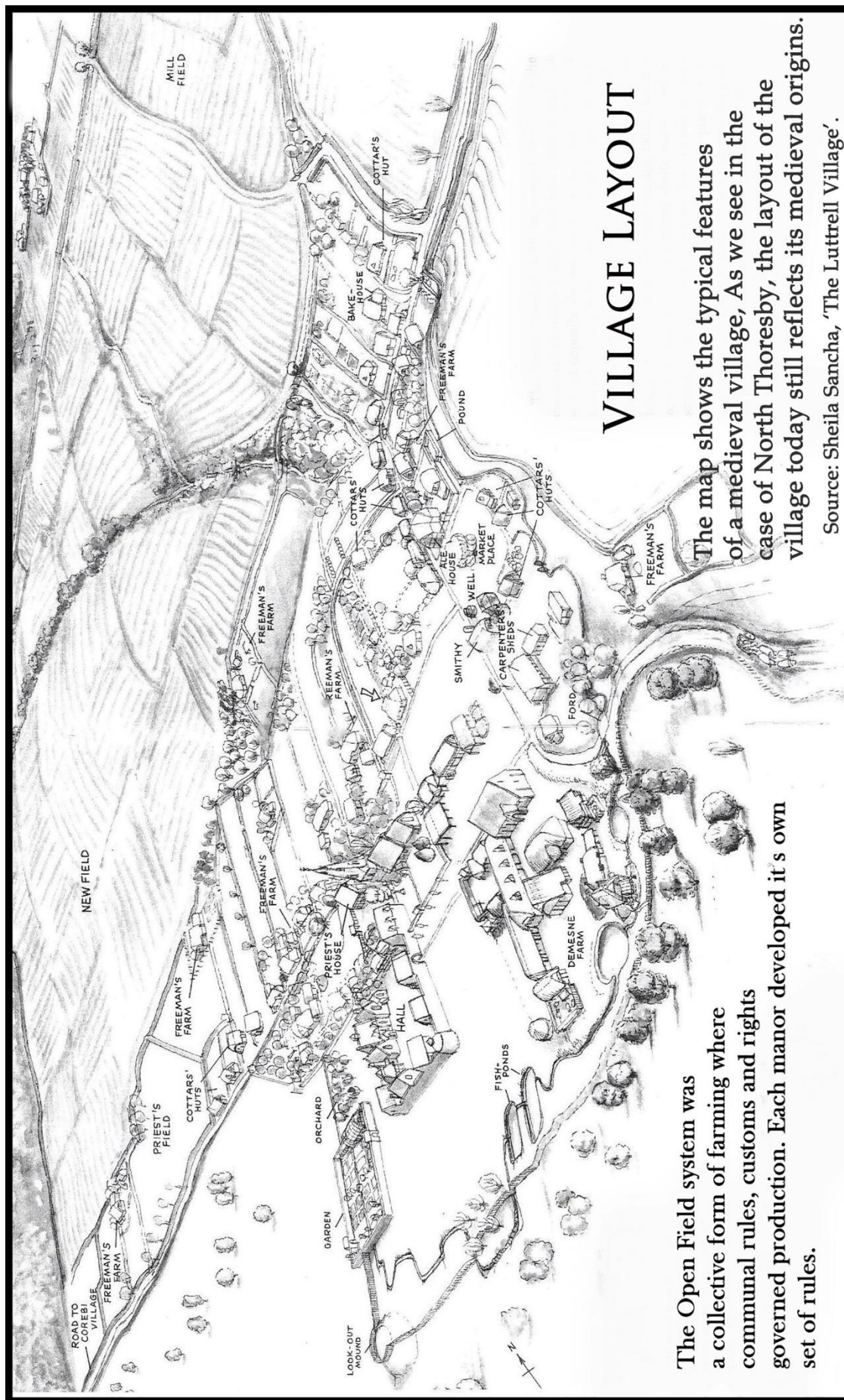
Evidence from aerial photographs of deserted villages – like that on page 9, suggests that Stuart's diagram is perhaps more appropriate to an earlier phase of development, and that by 1400 a grid-like pattern – as indicated at Gainthorpe (page 9) – would have developed, especially as the population of the settlement would have inevitably risen, mirroring the growth of population throughout the country. The section of the 1906 map, on page 9, with land boundaries inked over for emphasis, is probably a vestige of the village layout by 1400. See also page 89, an artist's impression of medieval Goltho; and page 94 for a drawing depicting a typical medieval landscape.

A second continuity was the social world of the village. The 19th century was a period of revolutionary change on a national and global scale. At the time of the first census in 1801, three-quarters of the population of England lived outside towns. By 1900 this had fallen to a quarter. In 2021, 85% of the British people live in urban or suburban areas. The 19th century witnessed astonishing population growth, the full-blown impact of the revolution in industrial production, the application of steam power, the coming of the railways and dramatic steps in what we now call globalisation as, for example, foodstuffs from America and elsewhere could be imported here on a massive scale (reducing the cost of staple foods but damaging the prosperity of domestic farming). The widespread adoption of the bicycle in the 1890s had a significant impact on the mobility of the general population at the local level. In retrospect, the Enclosure of the 1840s, was a major turning point in the nature of village and rural life – but the impact of these changes took time to have obvious impact on the everyday lives of rural communities.

Despite the revolutionary changes of the nineteenth century and the changing place of agriculture in Britain, in 1918, we can still say that many of the *fundamental* characteristics of village life in North Thoresby had remained constant for hundreds of years. Daily life for the inhabitants centred around farming and the crafts, trades and services needed to support the villagers' basic and utilitarian needs – butchers, bakers, blacksmiths, grocers, shoemakers, saddlers, cabinet and furniture makers, tailors, dressmakers, coffin-making and under-takers. Local and regional dialects would still have been distinct in those of my grandfather's generation (see page 13). The 'Rawson Map' (pages 10,18-19) indicates over 20 local shops and craft workshops in the village in the 1920s – as does Kelly's directory of 1937 (page 67). Should we slip into nostalgia, in the early twentieth century, 60% of people died before their 60th birthday – it's now less than 10% and electricity and mains water did not reach the village until after 1945.

North Thoresby, as an agricultural community, was an intimate, face-to-face community. The Open Field system required co-operation, was characterised by communal rights and had strict regulation by the Manor Court (see page 98). This system shaped the village's landscape, working practices and social structure for a thousand years. See the extract from 'The Lost Village: In Search of a Forgotten Rural England', page 17, which captures the nature of this continuity so effectively.

Dispersed and Nucleated Villages The debate about when Toresbi became a nucleated village, with the communal method of farming using the Open Field system is an on-going debate; and it's difficult to be certain either way. Before the buildings were gathered together around the Church and Manor, settlements would have been 'dispersed'. '[the] eleventh century landscape in which Waltham lay was certainly not one where people lived in what we would call a village, that is, a single settlement which held all the residents of an ecclesiastical parish and from which they walked out to tend the surrounding fields and graze their animals. Rather parishes were scattered about with places where people lived – some would have a single farm, some may have been small hamlets, some bigger hamlets, and possibly bigger groups of houses.... At some stage .. all the people came to live around the church.'



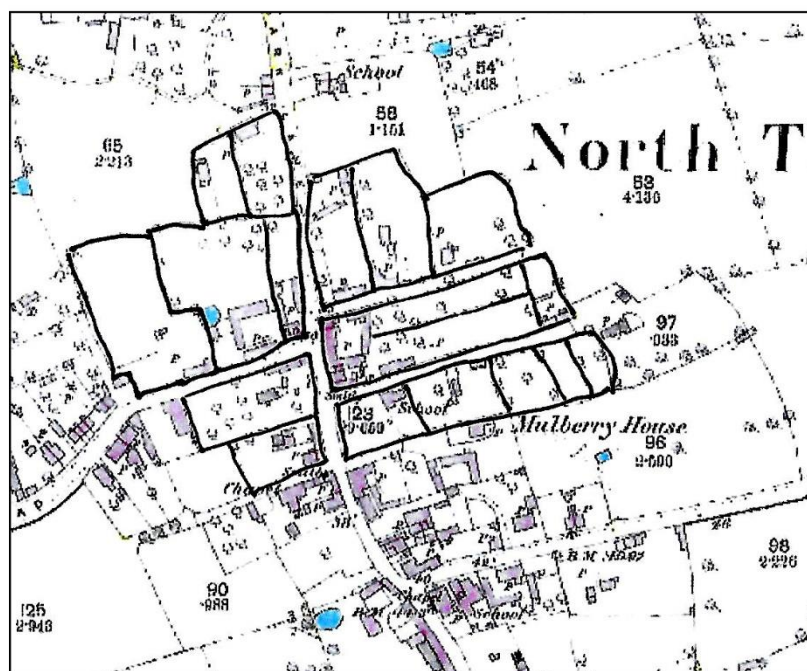
VILLAGE LAYOUT

The Open Field system was a collective form of farming where communal rules, customs and rights governed production. Each manor developed it's own set of rules.

The map shows the typical features of a medieval village. As we see in the case of North Thoresby, the layout of the village today still reflects its medieval origins.

Source: Sheila Sancha, 'The Luttrell Village'.

See page 96 for a drawing that places the village in a wider landscape



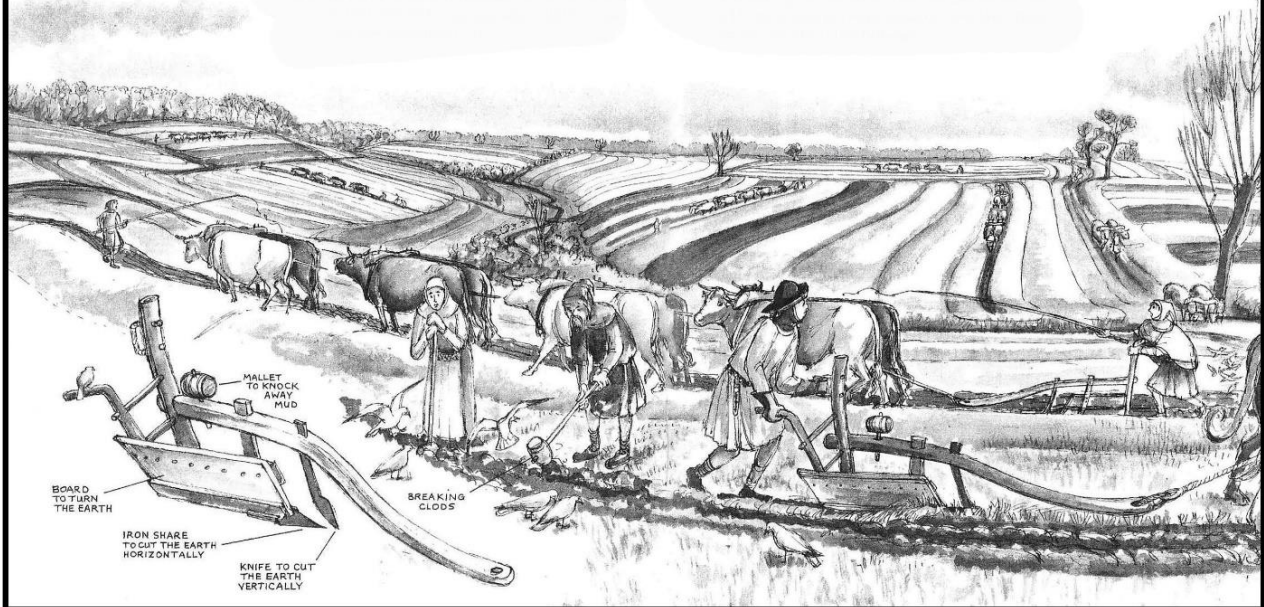
Section to indicate how the ancient medieval layout of plots remained as the basic structural element in the village landscape in the late 19th century
It is still essential today to understand the 21st century village.



The deserted village of Gainsthorpe. Courtesy of David Start.

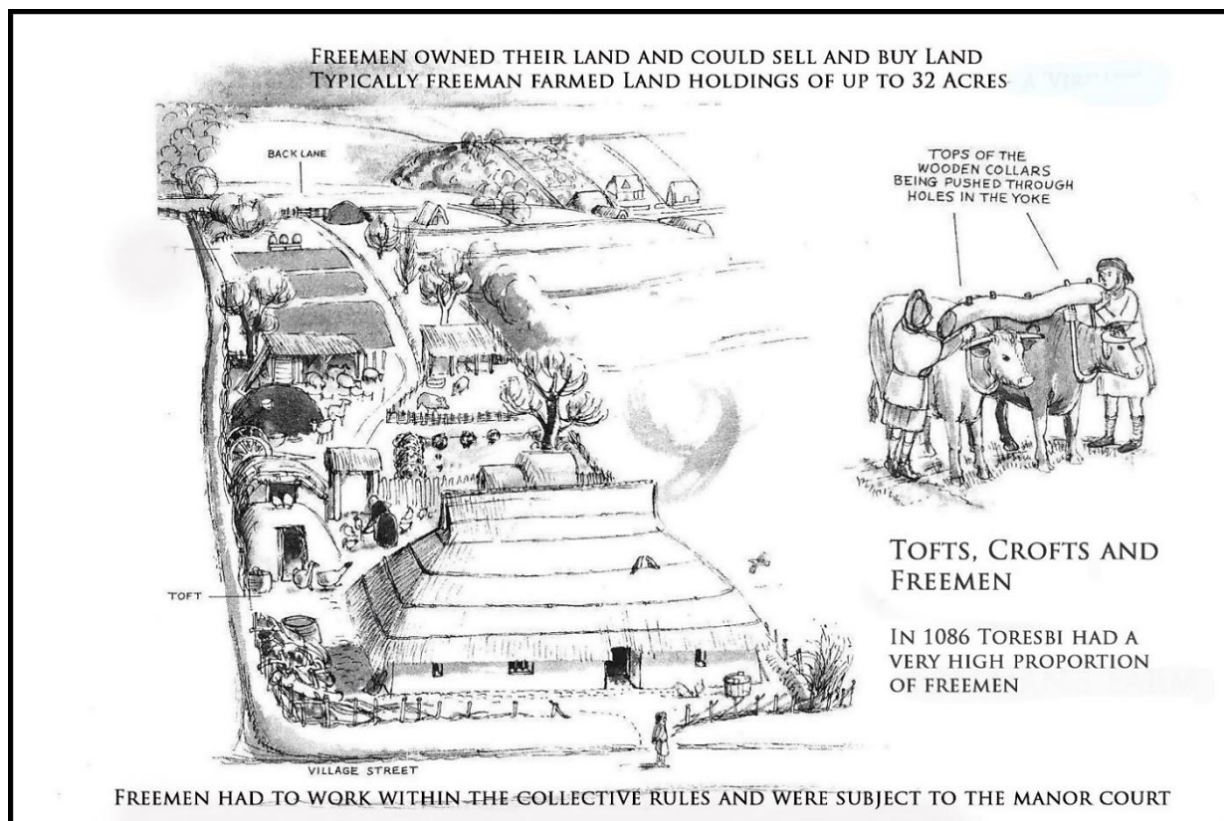
SHARED TEAMS OF OXEN : FURLONG STRIPS : RIDGE AND FURROW

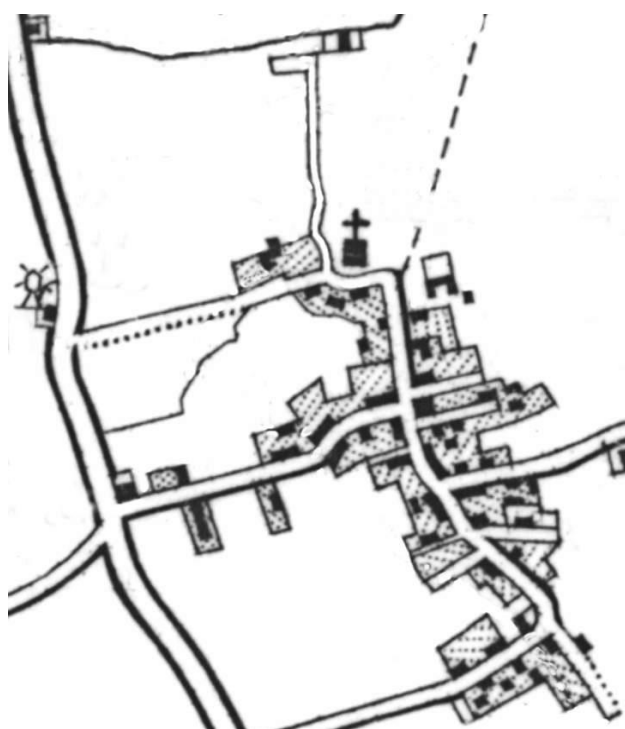
Hundreds of years of ploughing have left evidence in the ridge and furrow surfaces of surrounding fields. While deep modern ploughing has destroyed much of this, it can still be clearly seen - for example, in the village cricket field.



The crofts and tofts of the medieval period are the origin of the, often substantial, plots of land found around the houses in the village centre in the eighteenth century and well into the twentieth century.

Source of illustrations: Sheila Sancha, 'The Luttrell Village' with additional text.





Above: Stuart Sizer's interpretation of the development of the village between 1824, left, (the first OS Map) and the 1888 Map. Note how little building in the early twentieth century is on what is now High Street. Below: Harvesting 1946, from Memories of Lincolnshire Farming, Alan Stennett, 2009



Harvesting at North Thoresby in 1946 with a trailed combine and a new Lincolnshire-built Field Marshall tractor. (Author's collection)



Autby: A Lost Village Source: William Toyne

The official title of the parish 'living' of North Thoresby is 'North Thoresby-cum-Autby' and it is significant that the Domesday Book refers to North Thoresby and Autby as one parish, and not two separate parishes. Yet it is recorded that when the Bishop of Lincoln made his Pastoral Visitation to this area in 1416; Autby Church had vanished and Autby had become one of the 'lost villages' of Lincolnshire.

Aerial photographs confirm clearly that a settlement had once existed while a large rectangular area visible from the air suggested the possible site of the lost Autby Church. Investigations made in 1962 confirmed this. Diggings showed that there had originally been a wooden Church which was destroyed by fire - could this have been the work of a raiding party of Danes? Subsequently a much larger stone-built Church had been erected. Interments in the burial ground had been normal and orderly over a long period of time, culminating in a considerable mass burial, the corpses being deposited in several layers in a large pit.

Interesting evidence regarding the diet obtaining among these villagers of some 600 years ago can be seen from the condition of the teeth in the skulls. Firstly, there are very few cases of dental caries - decayed teeth - hence there was very little in the way of sweetening added to the food. Secondly, the teeth were worn down very considerably, in some cases almost to the gum-line, so that the enamel was eroded and the dentine fully exposed, but, even so, the dentine was not decayed - hence the teeth were very healthy indeed and the flour from which the bread had been made was very gritty, accounting for the wearing-away of the teeth.

The grain to make the flour would, of course, be stone-ground. Evidence of several pottery kilns were found and shards of pottery were discovered in patches over the area showing that a considerable number of dwelling places had existed.

It would appear that Autby 'died', as did numerous other Lincolnshire villagers, as a result of either the Black Death of 1349 or the series of plagues that occurred soon after the Black Death, perhaps combined with the series of very harsh winters and poor harvests. The mud-and-stud cottages would soon be destroyed by the elements while the stone fabric of the Church was removed by pilferers to be used for other building projects and the area was never re-occupied on its former scale.

North Lincolnshire Dialect

The Milestone taken from Punch, 7th November 1945.

Horncastle 10 and Lowerth 3
That's what the milestone saeys to me
For a thousand year it said the saeme
To ivery traveller as caeme I, Lowerth 3 Horncastle 10
To farmers of the Wold and fen
I took it bad when it were lifted
And yukked into a truck and shifted
The roerd looked lonely, somehow littler
And all because on that there 'itler
P'raps the stoene took it best
For God knoews it'd earned a rest
And when 'e's back and paiented white
So's you can see 'im in the night
And shan and clean.
It one day will saey to me grandsons on the hill
When mostly folks 'ave forgotten me.
Horncastle 10 and Lowerth 3

Source: Janet Draycott, Village Voices 2013

The Coming of Christianity and the Continuity of the Parish Boundary

The establishment of Christian churches and parishes had a profound effect on the character of the village. In the late seventh century (in or around 670 A.D) Saint Hgbald established a religious settlement in the North of Lincolnshire, near what is now Hibaldstow. From there, missionaries travelled to spread Christianity through the area and by 678 A.D. Lindsey had a Bishop of its own. Two hundred years later, King Edgar, initiated the definition of a Parish as being the area for which a Priest was spiritually responsible, and in this process the Parish boundary of North Thoresby became a recognised reality. For over a thousand years the parish boundary, established before the Norman conquest, has provided the geographical identity of the village.

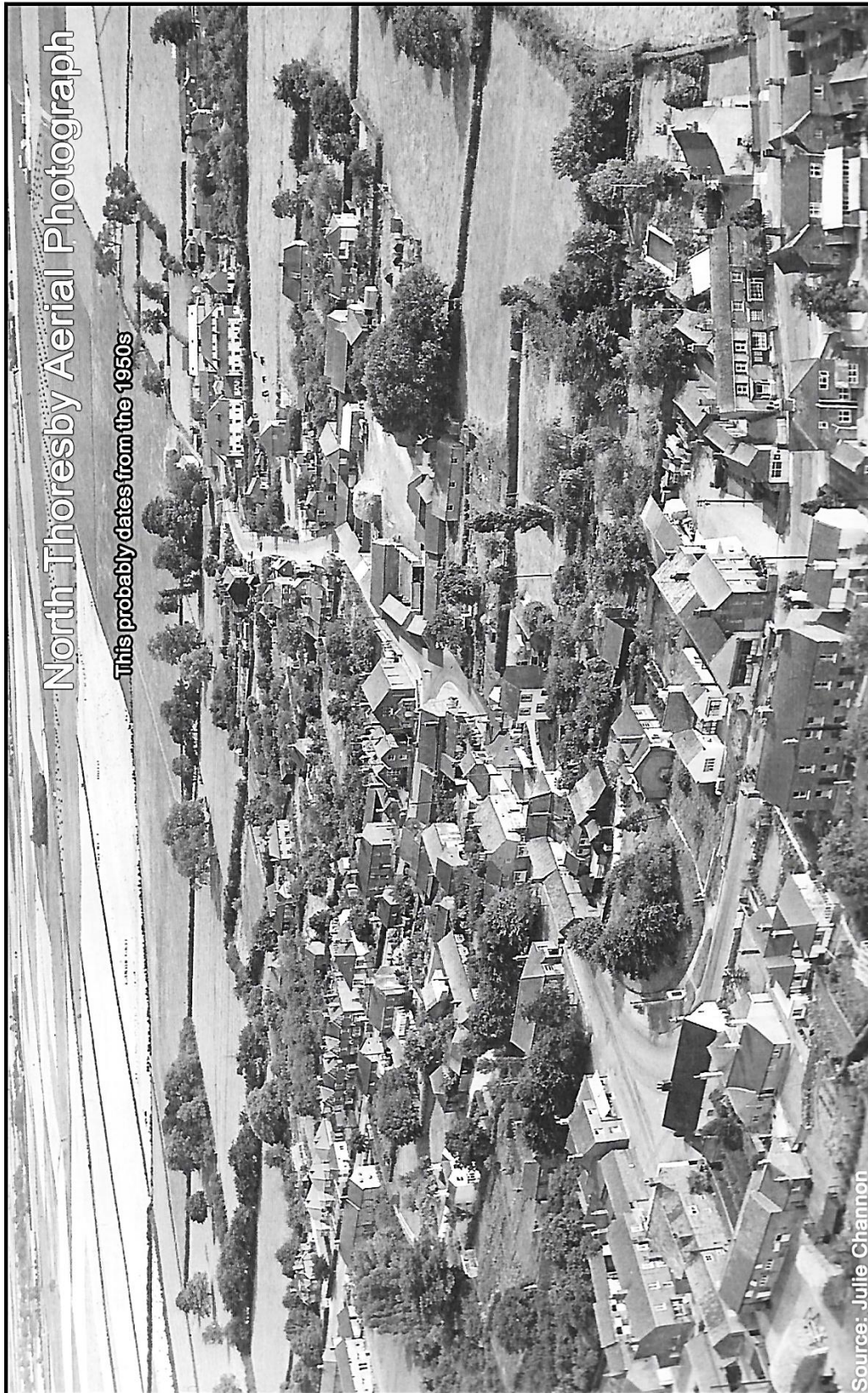
One might have thought that after the Norman Conquest, when William the Conqueror allotted lands to his followers, the estates would have been awarded with disregard to the pre-existing Parish boundaries - but this was. not so. The Normans were Christians and consequently regarded as sacrosanct these lines of demarcation that had been established as the Parish Priest's domain of spiritual responsibility. For instance, Earl Alan, Earl of Brittany and Richmond, son-in-law of William the Conqueror, was awarded land in both North Thoresby and Grainsby, two adjoining Parishes, yet, instead of this land being regarded as a certain total acreage in the Domesday Book, it is officially noted as being so much in the one Parish and so much in the other.

The permanence of the Parish boundary is quite remarkable. When the area of the Parish as recorded in the Domesday Book (in terms of Carucates and Bovates) is translated into modern acreage and then compared to the official Enclosures Award Survey in the mid-nineteenth century, the relative figures are essentially identical at 2,455 acres.

Source: William Toyne



Haith's Lane, 1964. Old brick built cottage to the right and the old St Helen's Schoolroom to the left - both demolished during development.



North Thoresby Aerial Photograph

This probably dates from the 1950s

Source: Julie Channon

The map has been dated as 1961.

North Thoresby Conservation Area

Designated 24 October 1991

Page
| 16

The map of 1991 to accompany the creation of a Conservation Area, illustrates the extent of building in the village in the last 30 years - along High Street, Church Lane and the village end of Station Road.



Old brick built cottage, Haith's Lane 1964, shortly before demolition.

The Lost Village: In Search of a Forgotten Rural England

This (slightly edited) extract from the wonderful book of the title above, by Richard Askwith, elegantly expresses the theme of continuity and change at the core of my overall narrative in gathering together this collection.

The villagers of the past were all, in social terms, members of the same species. All lived and died in an agricultural society, dependent for their survival and their sense of self on their village and the landscape around it. Yes, some had ploughed with horses, some with tractors; some had known electricity and telephones while others had been mud-caked peasants shivering and scratching in stinking huts; a few had been relatively well-off. But they all shared an organic relationship with the village, whereby it sustained them and they sustained it. And in certain crucial respects they shared a world-view. They saw, mostly, the same wildflowers, heard the same birds, winced at the same frosts and slipped in the same mud. They shared a distinct accent and a distinct body of largely local knowledge: about the properties of plants, the inclinations of animals, the idiosyncrasies of the soil, the rhythms of the seasons, the lore and myths of the locality, and the memories of the village families. Most crucially of all, they felt their lives bordered by much the same horizons.

The bulk of each life's drama was set on the same small stage: a few square miles of fields and woods, with this particular thatched village growing (complete with villagers) out of its centre and on its edges, a circle of neighbouring settlements. Normality - for most people, most of the time - was local. If a young man went off to seek his fortune, or to fight in some far-flung war, that adventure took place off-stage. If he returned, he would once again participate in the very particular shared experience of normal village life.

So it was, too, with temporal horizons. The life of the 1950s farm-hand was defined by the same boundaries as that of the feudal churl. And that, I reflected, is where a great gulf appears between their world and ours. Modern lives are lived on a stage without boundaries. Road, rail, air travel, telephone, television, internet, mass education and multinational marketing have stretched and homogenised our world-views to the point where most of us consider the whole planet to be the backdrop against which the drama of our lives is played.

Our horizons stretch deep into the past and future, too: popular science has shown us the empty aeons that preceded humanity's sojourn on the planet and the more troubling likelihood that further empty aeons will soon follow it. Do any of us seriously imagine that our grandchildren's lives will bear more than a passing resemblance to ours? Previous generations of those who lived in our village shared the comfort of a small context. Barring the collapse of Western civilisation, we shall never know such a context again.

We begin the Trail in the Village Square:

The Square and the Village in the 19th Century

Placing the buildings in The Square in their historical context, tells us a great deal about the village in the 19th century. A visitor would think that The Square in North Thoresby has always been like this. However, old photographs show that cottages continued down High Street opposite The Thatch to form a T-Junction. The old cottages were demolished between the wars, creating a sweeping curve we see today. The Square, of course is not a square, nor has it ever been as far as we can see, and is not named as such on the 1888 or 1906 OS maps. It has, however, been at the centre of the village historically and, no doubt, used for celebrations when traffic was not a consideration. (see the middle photo on page 26). The term almost certainly originates from the location of the *Market Square* which may date from many centuries ago.

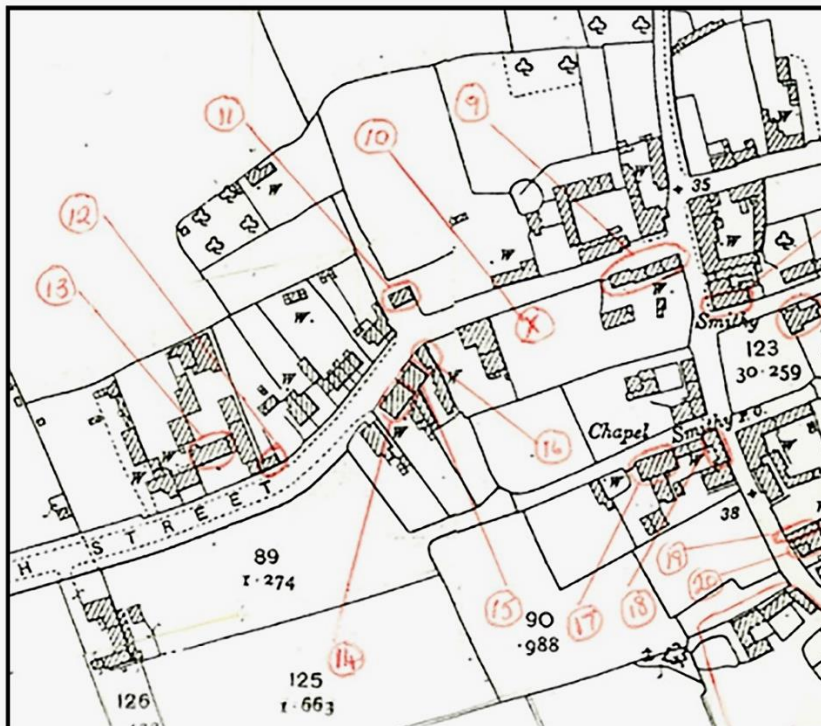
Page
| 18

The Square is at the heart of a designated conservation area (1991, see map, page 16), one of only 17 in East Lindsey. Conservation Areas are designated by the Council and cover those areas which possess special architectural or historic interest. Conservation Areas often represent a familiar and valued local scene, thus are granted greater protection against alterations to buildings and spaces, including trees.

Facing what in 2026 is a Morrison's store, the row of buildings to your right, was built by a local landowner – the Reverend Dr John Parkinson (of Ravendale Hall) who had bought up land in the Open Fields and properties in the village before the Enclosure process. W.H. Parkinson sold these in 1918 (see the accompanying map of the properties sold page 24-5).

Until the 1990s, this area was the village's 'shopping centre', and had been so since the 1840s or 50s. We don't know what was there originally or as time passed but, more recently, at one time or another, there had been a Spar Shop (and before that Bell's Bakers), a Butcher's shop and on the very end, a Blacksmith's. The Bakehouse was in the yard behind the gates between the two buildings. Storr's Cottage, once the family home of the village butcher, Mr. William Storr, and Silversides, once the butcher's shop with a small, attached abattoir, are on the left side of the gate. They are both now private dwellings.

The Blacksmith's shop on the right-hand corner of this row was long and narrow and ran back for some distance down Haiths Lane. It is still possible to see where its window was bricked up. The blacksmith was called Haith, hence Haith's Lane (the present bungalows were built in 1964, see page 14). The last 'smith' to work there, was Mr. Green (see page 61).

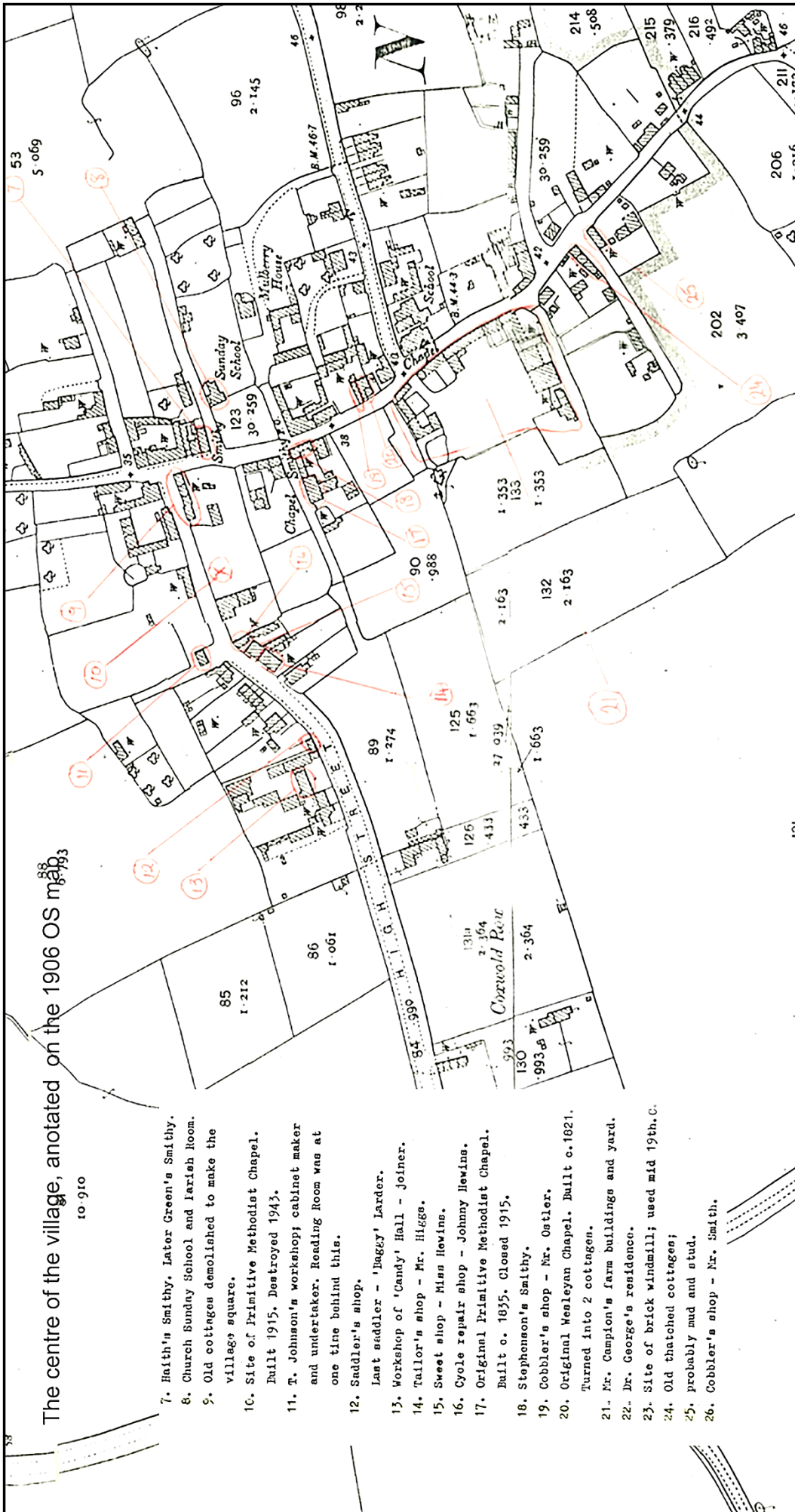


Village Centre in the early twentieth century.

7. Haith's Smithy. Later Green's Smithy.
8. Church Sunday School and Pariah Room.
9. Old cottages demolished to make the village square.
10. Site of Primitive Methodist Chapel. Built 1915. Destroyed 1943.
11. T. Johnson's workshop; cabinet maker and undertaker. Reading Room was at one time behind this.
12. Saddler's shop. Last saddler - 'Baggy' Larder.
13. Workshop of 'Candy' Hall - joiner.
14. Tailor's shop - Mr. Higgo.
15. Sweet shop - Miss Howins.
16. Cycle repair shop - Johnny Howins.
17. Original Primitive Methodist Chapel. Built c. 1835. Closed 1915.
18. Stephenson's Smithy.
19. Cobbler's shop - Mr. Outler.
20. Original Wesleyan Chapel. Built c. 1821.

The centre of the village, anotated on the 1906 OS map

to 910



7. Haith's Smithy. Later Green's Smithy.
8. Church Sunday School and Parish Room.
9. Old cottages demolished to make the village square.
10. Site of Primitive Methodist Chapel. Built 1915. Destroyed 1943.
11. T. Johnson's workshop; cabinet maker and undertaker. Reading Room was at one time behind this.
12. Saddler's shop.
13. Last saddler - 'Baggy' Larder.
14. Workshop of 'Candy' Hall - joiner.
15. Tailor's shop - Mr. Higgs.
16. Sweet shop - Miss Hewins.
17. Cycle repair shop - Johnny Hewins.
18. Original Primitive Methodist Chapel. Built c. 1855. Closed 1915.
19. Stephenson's Smithy.
20. Cobbler's shop - Mr. Ostler.
21. Original Wesleyan Chapel. Built c. 1821. Turned into 2 cottages.
22. Mr. Cumpson's farm buildings and yard.
23. Dr. George's residence.
24. Site of brick windmill; used mid 19th C.
25. Old thatched cottages;
26. Probably mud and stud.
27. Cobbler's shop - Mr. Smith.

Take a look at the brickwork. Like those in the former farm buildings behind McColls, and many other buildings in the village you will see on the trail, the bricks are handmade. There were probably brick clay pits on Fen Lane and local historian David Start believes that, if there were clay pits, then brick building would have taken place on site. Bob Kershaw's examination of the 1851 village census shows 4 men listed as 'brickmakers', or 'brick and tile maker' – two born in Fulstow. The making of bricks in this way can still be seen in countries like India and Nepal with clay placed in wooden moulds lined with sand, to harden in the sun, then baked at high temperatures in kilns with tall chimneys, using wood as a fuel source (sometimes mixed with dried dung). It's essential to use top clay as it's much easier to shape than material from lower strata.

A range of alternative colours can be achieved by adding sand to the mix. The resulting brick is entirely individual, showing subtle variations in texture and even shape. The extrusion (or wire-cut) method is the most popular method of modern brick production, involving a machine pushing the clay (and other materials) through a die that forms a consistent size and shape. The first successful brick-making machine dates from 1855.

It takes time for new techniques to replace the old, but we can be reasonably confident that the buildings date from the middle of the 19th century. As we shall see, there seems to have been a lot of building going on in the village in the mid-19th Century – and the enclosure of the village's Open Fields took place between 1836-46, when new roads and pathways were constructed. .

The clinching piece of evidence comes from Whites Directory of 1852: 'The village has been much enlarged and improved since the enclosure of the commons and open fields and has now some good shops and many new houses and farmsteads: and the produce of the Parish has increased four-fold.' (Source: Rex Russell). As you will see, many of the buildings were built in the 1840s and the Methodist Wesleyan Chapel was completed in 1846. In 1848, £600 was raised by public subscription to renovate St Helens. In addition, the railway station was opened on 1 March 1st, 1848, giving easy access, by public transport, to Grimsby and Louth, as well as commercial advantages.

One indicator is population – with increased population comes new buildings. The period from 1800 to 1880 saw both. In 1801, the time of the first census, the village had a population of 378 (remarkably similar to that of Domesday survey of 1086). By 1831, it was 544, and in 1841, 623 – with the majority involved in agriculture. In 1831, 91 heads of families were employed in agriculture, 10 in trade, manufacturing and crafts and 20 in other occupations. One factor encouraging this was that Enclosure was 'on the cards' from the beginning of the century and the value of enclosed land was much greater than in the old Open field system where strips of land were scattered. This led to speculation in land with a few wealthy landowners buying up land, investing in machinery and constructing dwellings for agricultural labourers. In turn, this created opportunities for trade and craftsmen. This trend continued, with the population reaching 745 in 1881, before dropping to 629 in 1901.

This reflected wider trends – the population of England doubled between 1850-1900 – from 18 to 36 million. Population had begun to increase in the 18th century and this continued; the result of the agricultural revolution, more and new foodstuffs, the increase in domestic hygiene, the increased comfort afforded by brick buildings, medical innovations such as smallpox vaccinations and social change with the lowering of the age when people married. Mortality rates fell. Life expectancy was still low – around 42 years, but this figure is skewed by the fact that an astonishing 25% of children died before the age of 5. For those who survived these early years, life expectancy rose to around 57.

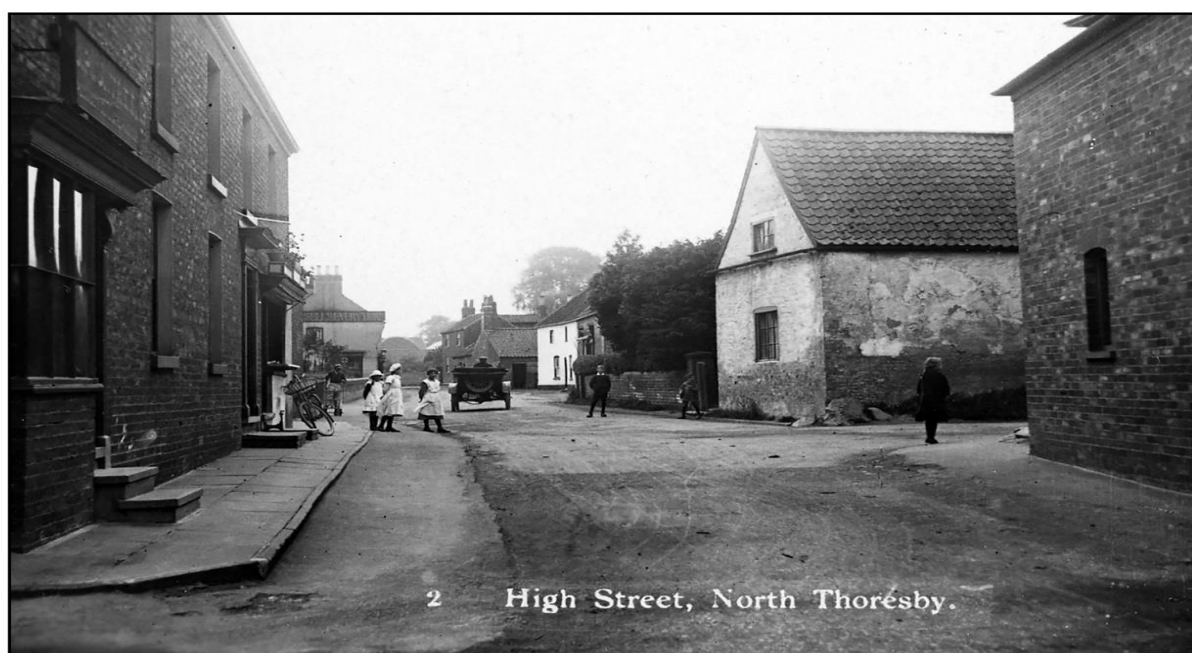
The prosperity of agriculture varied in the second half of the 19th century. The 1850s and early 1860s have been called the 'golden age' of British agriculture – good harvests, the American Civil War and Crimean War preventing imports to Britain, investment in machinery improved efficiency, drainage improved the land, a century of experimentation had improved cropping and breeding. Unfortunately, these advantages did not last long. The opening up of the American Prairies, cheaper transport costs with the massive development of railways in America, the steamship revolution and the invention of the reaper-binder meant American imports could undercut British farmers. A long period of agricultural depression followed lasting the best part of 20 years to the early 1890s. See page 99 for background to 19th century Lincolnshire.

The depression also accelerated Britain's rural depopulation. The 1881 census showed a decline of 92,250 agricultural labourers since 1871, with an increase of 53,496 urban labourers. Farm workers migrated to the cities to find employment. Between 1801 and 1901 the population of England and Wales increased by 43% but the proportion of male agricultural labourers decreased by over one-third.

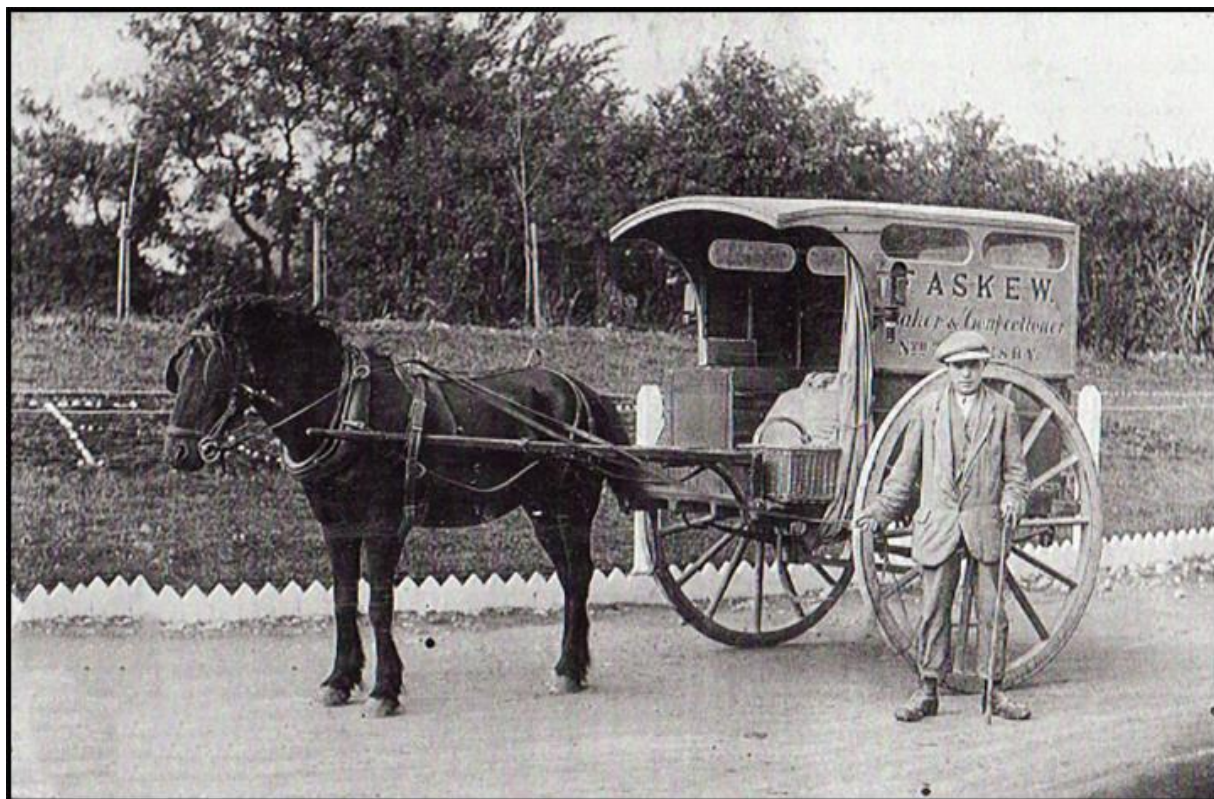
This was a pointer to the future. In the long run, the traditional English village was to be the victim of economic and technological forces it could do little about.



A view of the row of shops then in The Square - probably from the inter-war years



Looking from Church Lane - in 1918 referred to as Front Street - with the present McColls shop corner to the right (although the wall shown is not there now). The cottages on the far side of the T-Junction were demolished in the inter-war years and the road took on the curve it has today.



Bill Proctor as a young man. His daughters Edna and Hazell live in the village at the time of publication.



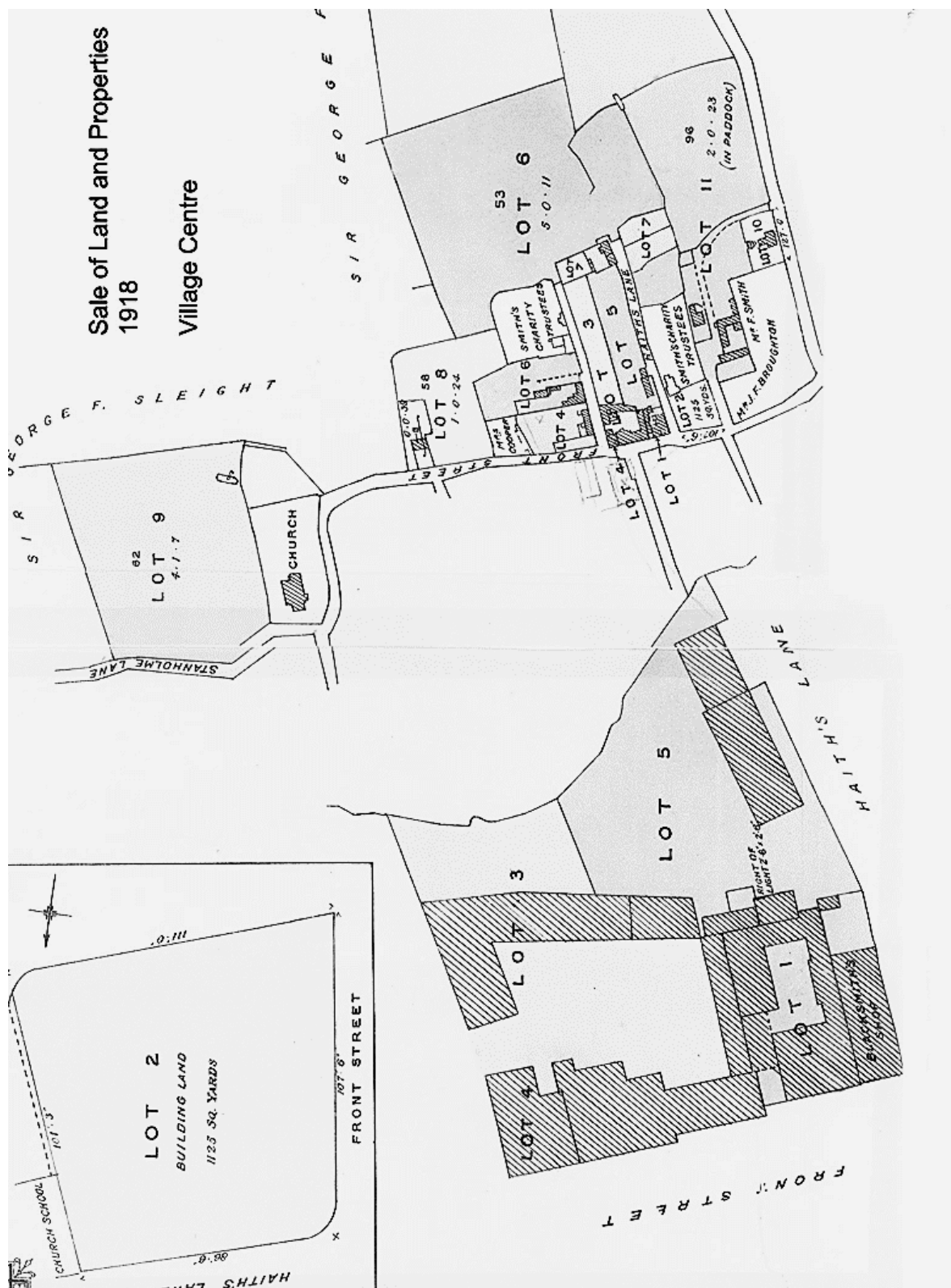
Another view down towards where the Post Office is today - at this time a store. The Village Hall is now behind where the boys are stood and opposite, the white house, is now occupied by Andrew and Linda Dickinson. The house to the back of the photograph on the right, is still there, and there's a wall which now has the allotments behind. Image is probably pre-World War One.



An early photograph of a shop in The Square.



Note the brick bonding scheme - three 'stretchers' between a header



The sale 'catalogue' is a most valuable source as it describes many of the building complexes, and the size of plots, at the centre of the village. See next page for plot descriptions. Also see the box on page 102 to put this sale in a historical context.

PARTICULARS.

LOT 1.

All that Brick and Slated DWELLINGHOUSE and SHOP, with Bake-Oven, Yard, Stable, Piggeries, and other Out-Offices.

Tenant: Mr. F. ASKEW.
Commuted Tithe: Nil.

LOT 2.

All that Plot of Valuable BUILDING LAND abutting on the Front Street, and containing 1,125 Square Yards.

Tenant: Mr. F. ASKEW.
Commuted Tithe: 1s. 3d.

This Lot has an extensive frontage to both the Front Street and Haith's Lane.

LOT 3.

All that Brick and Slated DWELLINGHOUSE and BUTCHER'S SHOP, with Slaughter-house, Stables, Piggeries, Granary, Large Yard and Garden, Cart-shed and other Out-buildings.

Tenant: Mr. W. STORR.
Commuted Tithe: 2s. 3d.

LOT 4.

All that Brick and Slated DWELLINGHOUSE, and Also all that WORKSHOP, Two-stall Stable, Coach-house, Paddock and Garden.

Tenant: Mr. J. PLUMTREE.
Commuted Tithe: 1s. 10d.

LOT 5.

All that Brick and Tiled DWELLINGHOUSE, with Garden, Blacksmith's Shop, Stabling, and other Out-buildings.

Tenant: Mr. E. HAITH.
Commuted Tithe: 2s. 3d.

This Lot is sold subject to the right of the Owner and Occupier for the time being of Lot 1 to a right of light and air as now enjoyed through the window in the stable, as marked on the Plan.

LOT 6.

All that Brick and Tiled DWELLINGHOUSE with Large Stackyard and Garden and Farm Buildings.

Also all that Close of RICH PASTURE LAND, No 53. on Ordnance Map, and containing 5a. 0r. 11p.

Tenant: Mr. W. TOWNEND.
Commuted Tithe: 7s. 4d.

LOT 7.

All those Two Brick and Tiled DWELLINGHOUSES with Gardens, situate on the North side of Haith's Lane.

Also the Two Large GARDENS on the South side of the Lane.

Tenants: Messrs. WRIGHT and PLUMTREE.
Commuted Tithe: 1s. 3d.

LOT 8.

All that MESSAGE or DWELLINGHOUSE, known as "Mapletoft House," situate in the Town Street, with the Out-buildings and Garden, containing 39p.

Also all that Close of Excellent PASTURE LAND adjoining, being No. 58 on the Ordnance Map, and containing 1a. 0r. 23p.

Tenants: Messrs. J. GLASSWELL and W. TOWNEND.
Commuted Tithe: 4s. 0d.

LOT 9.

All that Close of Rich FEEDING LAND, being No. 62 on the Ordnance Map, and containing 4a. 1r. 7p., abutting West on Stanholme Lane.

Tenant: Mr. W. STORR.
Commuted Tithe: 15s. 2d.

LOT 10.

All that pair of Brick and Slated COTTAGES, with Good Gardens, Piggeries, and Out-Offices, and abutting on Station Road.

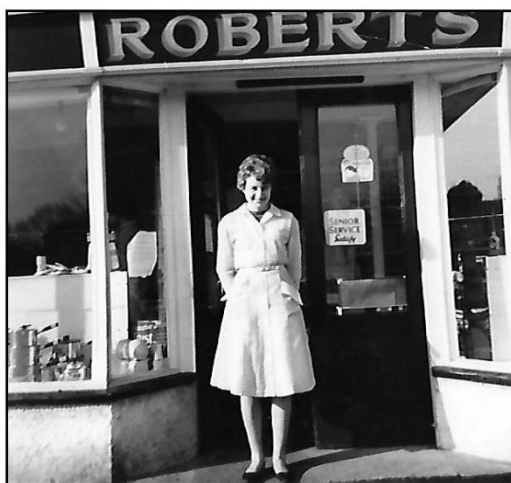
Commuted Tithe: 1s. 4d.
These Cottages have an extensive frontage to the Station Road.

LOT 11.

All that Excellent FARM-HOUSE known as "Mulberry House," with Farm Buildings, Orchard and Garden.

Also all that Close of PASTURE LAND adjoining, being No. 96 on the Ordnance Map, and containing 2a. 0r. 23p.

Tenant: Mr. S. L. PATCHETT.
Commuted Tithe on Farm-House, etc.: 4s. 7d. The Tithe on the Close of Pasture Land has been redeemed. The Boarded Implement Shed, the Lean-to Shed, the Board and Corrugated Iron Shed in Crewyard, and the Verandah to House belong to the Tenant.



Top: Billy Dickinson (1936-2013) Village Milkman; Coronation Day 1937 in the Square; Jean Plaskitt, shop assistant at Roberts Store, 1961.



Morrison's (as of 2026)

This building has been a village shop for a very long time, at least since the 1840's. The outbuildings associated with it can be seen round the corner in Church Lane and down the drive of The Thatch. The introduction to the 1841 census, which briefly describes the village, speaks of 'Mr Bond's shop' at a turn which takes you to the Grandby Inn. This ties in with other evidence described below.

Val Savage, who ran the shop with her mother for many years from 1967, has provided some documents which detail the purchase of the shop by John Henry Roberts in 1898 - bought from Charles Mason and Charles Watson Hill for £390 - together with 'the homestead yard, barn, stables, granary and other outbuildings, and gardens of 1 rood, 6 perches (just over a quarter of an acre). The same documents list owners of the property back to 1840. Bakery Cottage, down Church Lane, was once the bakehouse for the shop – this can be seen in the aerial map in the inside of the front cover. The land belonging to the Roberts family stretched back beyond the bungalow Highgate – which was built in the 1930s for the retirement of the John Henry Roberts and his wife mentioned above.

At one time the shop had a fire plaque fixed to the side wall. This plaque was the identifying mark of a fire-fighting company, whose job it would be to fight any fire which broke out on this site. In the event of the wrong company turning out to the blaze, the building would be left to burn. The front of the building is very recognisable, and a similar frontage can be seen in Keeling Street, North Somercotes. It has clearly been 'bolted on' to the front of the former farm buildings.

Until 1918, the majority of the buildings in the centre of the village and land stretching down Station Road, were owned by Mr W.H. Parkinson of Ravendale Hall (or his descendants) – with tenants in the properties. In 1918, there was a major sale of these properties. See page 104 for the historical context of agricultural decline in which the sale occurred. Thanks to local resident, Sue Ash, whose grandfather was the John Henry Roberts mentioned above, we have a copy of the 1918 sale catalogue, and this provides a wealth of evidence about the village at the time – who the tenants were, how the land was parcelled up (pages 24-25).

In the 1918 sale the Roberts family had bought Lot 4 – 'a brick and slated dwelling house, workshop, two-stall stable, coach-house, paddock and garden', situated across from the shop and stretching along what is now Church Lane, (then called Front Street) and back along what is now Old Plumtree Lane. The tenant before the sale had been Mr J. Plumtree – a good citizen involved in many village activities including the cricket club and Village Show (see page 60). The land was registered under the name of Doris Mary Roberts, then a young girl of 11 – Sue's mother.

Take a good look at the brickwork behind the shop front, best seen on the driveway of The Thatch. It's clear that the front section of the building was constructed at a different time – there's a clear line where the buildings were joined. Also, the walls have different bonding patterns. Its age is indicated by substantial weathering and the bricks may well have come from the local brickyards.

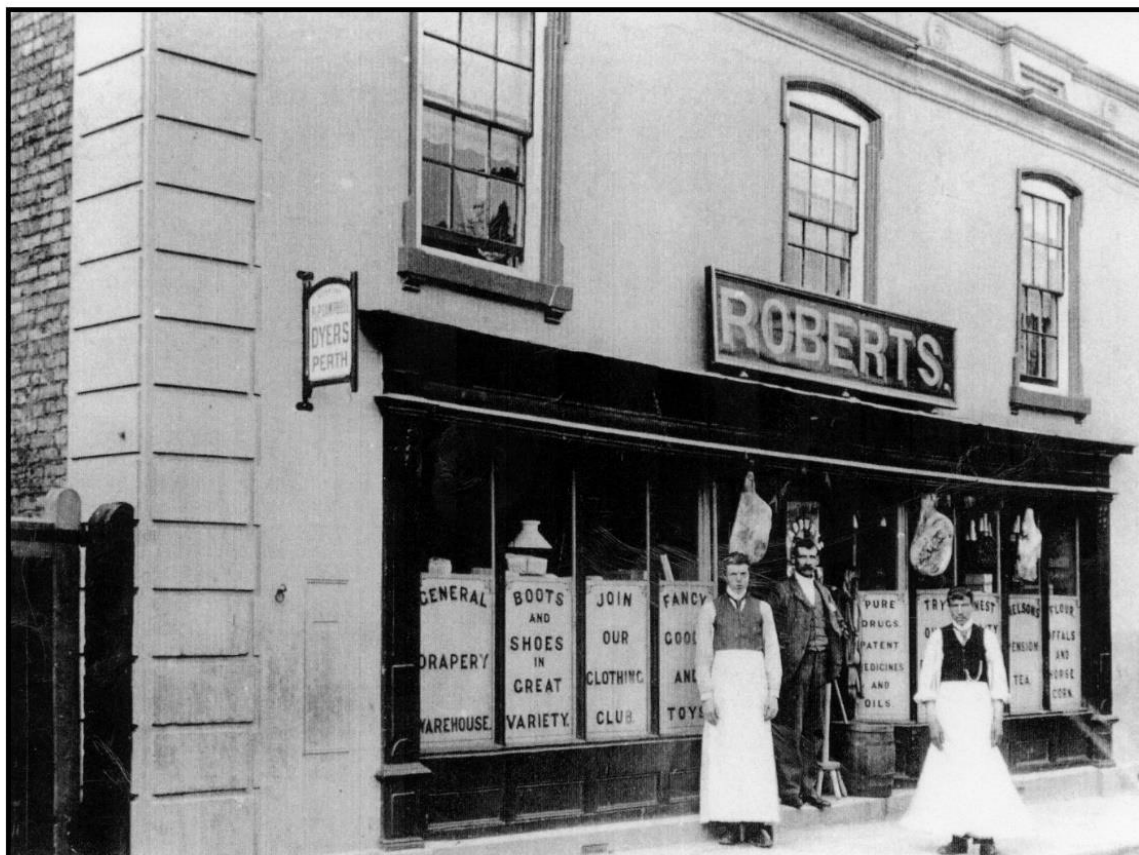
On the long stretch down the drive, the bonding is known as 'Long Sussex' with five 'stretchers' (longways) alternating with one 'header' (laid crossways) – and a rarity in the village. The bond's horizontally extended proportion suits long stretch of masonry such as garden walls, or barns. The relatively infrequent use of headers serves to make Sussex bond one of the less expensive bonds in which to build a wall, as it allows for the bricklayer to proceed rapidly with run after run of five stretchers at a time.

Page
| 28

It's something of a myth that brickwork can be used to accurately date a building, but it is one of the clues. English Bond is the oldest form of brick bonding, popular until the late 17th century, consisting of alternate rows of headers and stretchers. There's little or none of this in the village (but see Louth marketplace).

Contrast the bonding on the front section with the back section and with the brick work of the barn of the Thatch opposite – this is generally called Sussex bonding or Flemish Garden bonding, and is rarely seen outside the north, is most frequent in the east, and first appeared in the late eighteenth century. A roundel on the rear wall of the barn gives a date of 1848. We see the same bonding on the building now known as 'Sadlers' – once two separate cottages.

For the shop, it's difficult to know which came first, or when – there were probably three phases of building. On the back of the building, now covered by ivy, were the initials FB. From the sales documents of 1898, mentioned above, the vendors were relatives of Francis Bond. His wife Jane is listed as a Grocer in Whites Directory of 1842. On the sales documents, she had been admitted as 'tenant for life' under the will of Francis Bond, in 1840 (he died in 1839 and there is a memorial in the Church). So, it is possible that the shop and some of the outbuildings had been in place for some time before 1840 or circumstantial evidence might suggest that the shop – or at least the present front of the shop, was part of the mid-19th century building boom.



John Henry Roberts bought the shop in 1898, for £390 - together with 'the homestead yard, barn, stables, granary and other outbuildings, and gardens of 1 rood, 6 perches (just over a quarter of an acre).



The Thatch (1683) in 2018, with barn (1848) in the background.

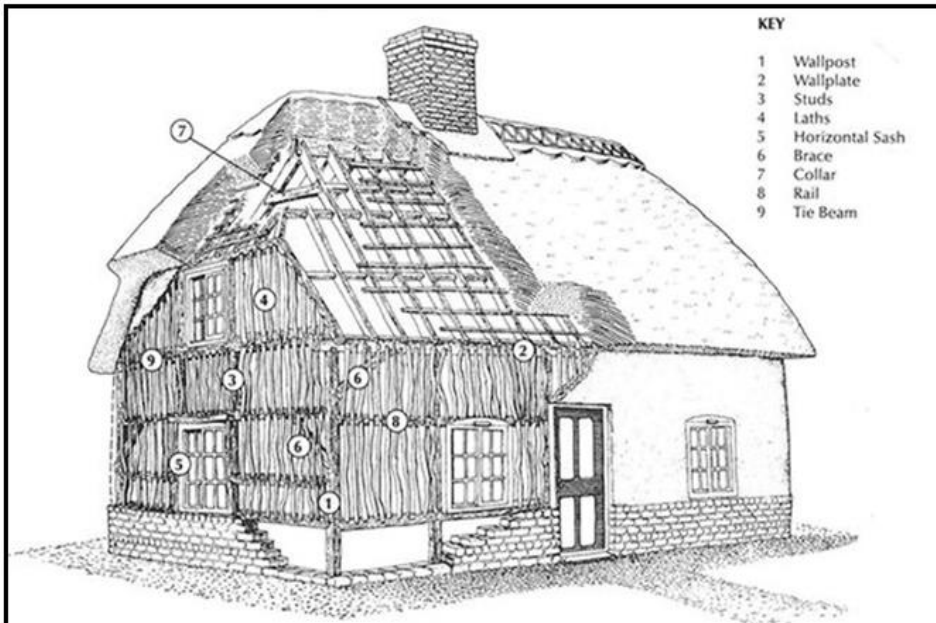
‘The Thatch’

In photographs of the early 20th century, a farmhouse with land to the north and west, bounding Church Farm, is depicted with a corrugated iron roof (and external shutters) and appears rather run-down. Aerial photographs from the 1960s still show the corrugated roof in place. It has had three fires, in the mid 1970s; barely survived one in 1991 and another in 2006. The first of these came about when the corrugated roof was being lifted off in order to re-thatch the roof (for the first time in 80 years or more), oxygen got to the thatch underneath which had been smouldering for years, and the flames took off. It was the last of the working farms in the village and, in all probability, there has been a farm on this site for 1,000 years or more.

Recently it has fared rather better with major renovations and updating – in line with the strict controls imposed for a listed building, by Paul and Carol Teanby from 2006, and since 2016, by Ian and Kitty Wright, including the conversion of the barn which is in the ‘curtilage’ of the cottage. Curtilage is a legal term, referring to an area of land attached to a house, which forms one enclosure with that house – for example, a garden, a yard or an outbuilding – effectively, the whole property is listed and protected. Listing is a two-edged sword – the pleasures of living in a home with such an interesting ‘patina’, but considerable expense, sometimes restrictions which make little sense – and with no support to do so – VAT relief was ended in 2012. This is currently under review and a substantial body of MPs from all parties support the Listed Building Property Owners Association in Parliament.

Now known as ‘The Thatch’, the building is of considerable historical interest. Originating in 1683, it is the earliest, *dated* (primarily by a beam with the date carved in, with accompanying initials), mud and stud building in Lincolnshire, a type unique to Lincolnshire, parts of southern Lancashire and Leicestershire. As such, it has a Grade 2* listing, putting it in the top 5% of all listed buildings, from the perspective of historical significance.

Before the period sometimes referred to as the ‘Great Re-building’ of English villages (from around 1600 in some parts of the country, later in others, including Lincolnshire) when bricks began to be used in domestic and farm buildings, mud and stud was the pre-dominant type of vernacular architecture in the area. The vast majority of North Thoresby’s buildings in the 18th century would have been mud and stud, brick gradually replacing them in the nineteenth, but some surviving into the twentieth (see images of Jubilee Cottages, page 40). The numbers which have survived in Lincolnshire are small – perhaps a little more than 300. In the county, many, like The Thatch, have survived because they were encased in brick at some point – in the case of The Thatch, between 1750-1850 – almost certainly towards the end of this period when so much building was occurring. The barn at The Thatch was built in 1848 It’s very likely that the farmhouse was encased in brick around the same time.

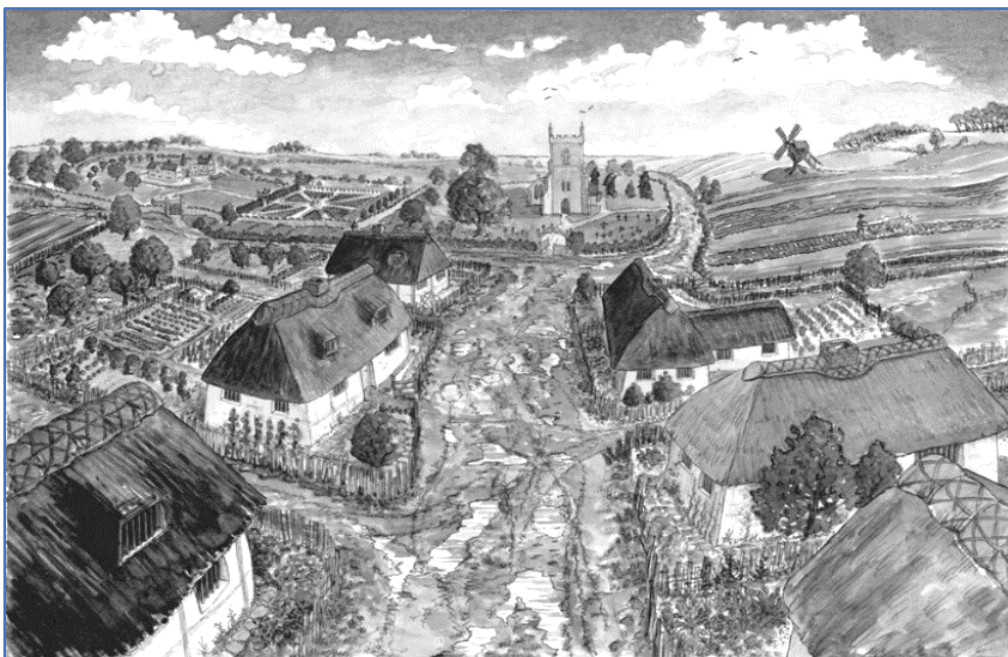


Drawing: David Hopkins, Heritage Lincolnshire

Until 2006, the building was a farmhouse (it is listed under the simple name 'the Farmhouse') with surrounding land, originally going back to Church farm in the north and stretching west behind the High Street. As such, this small holding, right at the centre of the village, is almost certainly a direct descendant of the croft and tofts of the medieval period, when 30 acres was enough to support a family – and typical of the holdings of land of the freeman (sokemen) referred to in the Domesday Book. Ian and Kitty have the original documents of the legal transactions when the

property changed hands, dating back to the 1740s. The interior of the cottage has many exposed beams and some exposed vertical posts. Recent renovations in the cottage which involved removal of plaster from some walls have revealed a timber framework on a brick plinth, infilled with a 'daub' mixture of mud, straw and dung which indicate a second phase of building sometime in the eighteenth century and showing mud based structures continuing to be used.

The notes on mud and stud in the accompanying box, give details of the building method, which was inexpensive, quite draught proof, required only the skills of the village carpenters in constructing the framework, used locally available material and was quite resilient, if cared for. The best remaining group of mud and stud cottages can be seen at the village of Thimbleby (artists impression of the medieval village, below), near Horncastle, while nearby, the mud and stud thatched cottage at New Haven Farm Eggs, Fulstow, gives us a view of what houses in the village would have looked like until brick-building arrived.



Mud and Stud Houses

Until the industrial revolution when the mass production and transport of goods around the country became possible, the homes of ordinary people throughout Britain were built using local traditional techniques and the building materials that were most readily available. Distinctive building types emerged that were characteristic of, and unique to, their own areas. This type of architecture is known as vernacular architecture. In Lincolnshire the local vernacular style of building was a timber and earth-based construction called mud and stud.

Until the seventeenth century, brick was still an expensive material that was largely the preserve of the wealthy, and stone cottages were only built in the limestone belt, especially on the Lincolnshire Edge that runs north to south through the county. Timber was in short supply, especially in the second half of the 16th century, which meant that the most easily obtainable material was earth (mud). Mud and stud used an earth mixture supported on a framework that required the minimum of timber. The particular method of mud and stud is unique to the county.

By 1500, building with earth and wood was an established tradition in the county. The main frame of the house would usually have been made of oak. It consisted of vertical wall posts and horizontal rails braced at the corners. The frame was set on a shallow plinth of stone or brick which kept the timbers out of direct contact with the ground and helped prevent them rotting. Thinner vertical strips of wood (laths) were nailed between the wall posts and rails. The laths formed the support for a covering of mud mixture which was made of earth mixed to a stiff consistency with water and chopped straw. The mixture covered the whole frame on the outside of the house, and most of the frame inside (usually only the wall posts were left uncovered inside).

When the mud covering was dry it was painted with several coats of limewash which had either animal fat or linseed oil added to it to make it waterproof. The limewash had to be repainted, about twice a year, to stop water getting into the structure of the house. The roof of the house was often half-hipped (the roof sloped part way down at either end of the building) and thatched with long straw or reed. Inside, some of the simplest cottages had only one room with a chimneyless hearth open to the roof, but in the sixteenth century, changes and improvements to ordinary houses were being made.

We know this from inventories (lists made of people's belongings when they died) that survive. As time went on cottages were more likely to have two ground floor rooms separated by a brick-built chimney piece, with the extra room being used as a separate sleeping area. Some of the later cottages also had upstairs rooms within the roof space (i.e. with little or no vertical wall space). Some had proper staircases but often these rooms were accessed by a ladder.

The entrance door to the cottages was usually in the middle and facing the chimney stack. Inside the cottages the ground floor rooms usually had floors made of earth or clay mixed with ox blood and ashes, which formed a surface that could be polished, although in stone areas limestone slabs were sometimes cheap enough to be used. Where there was an upstairs, the wooden planks tended not to be nailed down. This served two purposes. Firstly, as wood was expensive, the tenant of the cottage could take the floor boards with them when they moved, and it also meant that where bulky items needed to be brought upstairs they could be hauled up through a hole in the ceiling rather than having to negotiate a steep and narrow staircase or even a ladder.

Although most of Lincolnshire's mud and stud buildings no longer exist, nearly 400 do still survive. Often they are hidden behind more recent exteriors and are difficult to spot, but many have been rescued and restored. In fact, mud and stud as a building technique is very environmentally friendly and sustainable. Its insulation properties are very good, it uses materials that are natural and relatively inexpensive and it does not involve the transporting of materials over long distances. Lincolnshire's surviving examples show that if the buildings are properly cared for they can last for hundreds of years.

One of the best places to go to see a number of mud and stud cottages together in a village context is Thimbleby to the west of Horncastle. Church Farm Museum in Skegness also has a reconstructed example that was moved from the village of Withern and rebuilt on the museum.

Edited – with permission - from a Heritage Lincolnshire Essay. Ian Wright



The farmhouse, now The Thatch. The small pair of thatched cottages, middle right, indicate that this is pre-1943, when the cottages were destroyed by the Lancaster crash. The road now has its characteristic curve.



An earlier image of the farmhouse - with the T-Junction still in place. possibly, pre-1914

How many people were awarded land, and how much land did they get? This table answers those questions.

Landowners of N. Thoresby in August, 1846

The table is arranged in order of the size of ownership.

NAME OF OWNER	Amount of land awarded		
	Acres	Roods	Perches
1. Reverend John Parkinson (deceased)	865	1	11
2. Thomas Barkworth	306	3	25
3. Earl of Yarborough	198	1	23
4. Parr and Meery's Trustees	143	0	6
5. William Haigh's Trustees	114	3	16
6. William Stothard's representatives	93	3	26
7. Francis Bond (deceased)	73	3	30
8. Thomas Hewson	64	0	18
9. Rector of N. Thoresby	54	0	26
10. John Burman	51	3	7
11. N. Thoresby FREE SCHOOL	39	1	13
12. Joseph Marfleet	35	1	23
13. Thomas Parker	21	1	11
14. Trustees of the Poor Charity	16	3	12
15. Theophilus Harneis (deceased)	15	0	30
16. James Hopewell and his wife Mary	13	3	23
17. Richard Johnson's representatives	10	2	4
18. John Dows	8	0	20
19. Thomas Dows, Junior	7	3	21
20. William Walkerley	7	2	33
21. Allen Smith	7	0	25
22. Thomas Forman	6	3	16
23. Thomas Forman and Elizabeth his wife, and their Trustees	6	1	21
24. James Stothard	5	1	5
25. Elizabeth Croft	4	3	17
26. Charles Watson Bennett	4	3	1
27. John Pottage	4	2	14
28. John Brown	4	0	15
29. Francis Procter	3	3	28
30. Sarah Walker's representatives	3	3	24
31. Francis Cook (deceased)	3	3	3
32. John Procter	3	1	8
33. John Cook	3	0	37
34. George Beckett	3	0	37
35. Overseers & Churchwardens of Fulstow	2	3	8
36. Edward and John Bogg	1	3	30
37. Parish Clerk of N. Thoresby	0	3	8
38. James Ashton	0	3	1
39. Marmaduke Burton (deceased)	0	2	36
40. William Colbeck	0	2	26
41. William Glover's representatives	0	2	18
42. Earl of Scarborough	0	1	30
43. Edmund Allison	0	0	20

A BUILDING BOOM IN NORTH THORESBY 1851 EVIDENCE

Page
| 34

NAME	AGE	STATUS	OCCUPATION	BORN
BRICKMAKERS				
Thomas HOLDEN	25	Head : M	Brickmaker	New Bolingbroke
David WEST	53	Head : M	Brick & Tile Maker	Fulstow
Robert WEST	20	son : U	Brick Maker	Fulstow
Charles WALLER	16	lodger : U	Brick Maker	Burgh?

BRICKLAYERS				
Heney ATKINSON	19	lodger : U	Bricklayer's Labourer	Lacey
George MACKRELL	21	lodger : U	Bricklayer	Binbrook
Thomas LORD	40	Head : M	Bricklayer	Binbrook
William DUNKLY	28	serv : U	Journeymen Bricklayer	Bolingbroke
Luke FAWCITT	20	son : U	Bricklayer	N.T.
Thomas WRIGHT	34	Head : M	Bricklayer	N.T.
Frederick PRIESTLEY	25	Head : M	Bricklayer	Kirton in Holland

CARPENTERS				
John JACKLIN	31	Head : M	Carpenter	Mumby Chapel
George JANNEY	49	Head : M	Carpenter	Strubby
Edward JANNEY	60	Head : M	Carpenter & Joiner	Strubby
George JANNEY	19	son : U	Carpenter	N.T.
Solomon JANNEY	22	serv : U	Journeyman Carpenter	Fulstow
William JANNEY	40	serv : Wid'r	Carpenter	Strubby
Henery CANNON	17	serv : U	Apprentice Carpenter	Louth
Samuel HIND	32	Head : M	Carpenter	Notts : Gotham?
Anthony STOVIN	38	Head : M	Carpenter employing 3 Lab'rs	Great Grimsby
William JOHNSON	20	serv : U	Carpenter's Apprentice	N.T.
Christopher GOODHAND	18	serv : U	Carpenter's Apprentice	N.T.

CARRIERS				
James ANDREWS	50	Head : M	Common Carrier	N.K.
Martin HARNEISS	45	Head : M	Common Carrier	Limber
James INGLEBY	39	son : U	Carrier [<i>father an Ag Lab</i>]	N.T.

Source: Bob Kershaw

Key: M = Married; U = Unmarried; serv. – Servant; Head = Head of family;

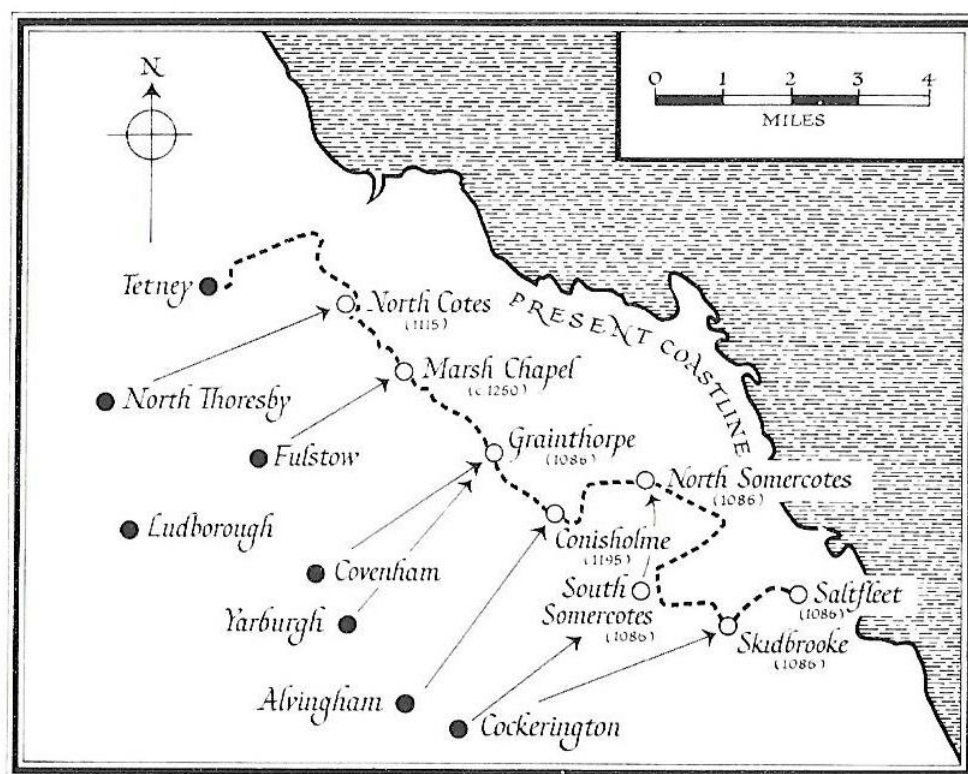


FIG. 7. THE EARLY COLONIZATION OF THE
LINCOLNSHIRE MARSHLAND

The early Anglo-Saxon villages (and North Thoresby, which is Danish in origin) are marked thus: ●. The probable course of the Sea Dike constructed by these villages before the Norman Conquest is indicated by a broken line. Daughter-villages founded on the Dike are shown thus: ○ and the earliest reference to them is indicated by a date in brackets. The marshland between the parent villages and the Dike had been reclaimed from the sea by the eleventh century for the most part; and the earliest settlements on the Dike were probably of huts occupied in the summer months only (as is suggested by the name Somercotes, 'summer cottages or huts'). Beyond the Dike lie no villages but only single isolated farms of varying dates from medieval times onwards. The parent villages were all founded between twenty and forty feet above sea-level.

Source: W.G. Hoskins, 'The Making of the English Landscape. His remark about North Thoresby being 'Danish in origin' is, of course, incorrect – his work dates from the 1950s.

The Legacy from Old Norse (see <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/139-norse-words>)

The Old Norse word *viking* meant an overseas expedition, and a *vikingr* was someone who went on one of these expeditions. Many words in everyday use today come from Old Norse, including days of the week - Thursday means Thor's Day, Friday means Freya's day; Wednesday means Wodin's (or Odin's) Day; Tuesday comes from Tyr's Day (the God of single combat). The words law, justice, crook, knife, window, husband, ransack, plough, sky, raft, slaughter, club (the weapon), loan, sale, skill, steak, thrift, saga, bull, reindeer, wing, skate, dirt, muck, rotten, bark, blunder, crawl, glitter, give, haggle, hit, kindle, sprint, stagger, stain - and many more have Scandanavian roots.

'*Traust* me, *pó* (though) it may seem *oddi* at first, we *er* still very *líkligr* to use the same words the Vikings did in our everyday speech. *Þeirra* (their) language evolved into the modern-day Scandinavian languages, but *þeir* (they) also gave English the gift of hundreds of words.'

Now turn into: Church Lane



1930s bungalow. .

Locally, Church Lane, which is almost certainly the oldest street in the village, and was called Dark Lane in living memory. In 1918 it was called Front Street. On the OS Map of 1906, it is labelled Front Street, which indicates its predominance as the 'main road' of the village for centuries. As you walk down Church Lane, notice the road is lower than the land either side. This is a sunken road (made by cart traffic over centuries of use) from the medieval period of North Thoresby.

In the photograph right, 'The Cottage' remains on the right, once 2 cottages and now rendered. Opposite, 'Highgate' a

Ivy Dene House

This is a very interesting building and tells us a great deal about the village's development. From the road, the original dwelling is seen on the left – historical legal documents, suggest a date of 1790 and this is credible – we see the most common bonding pattern in the handmade brickwork. Almost certainly, this is the replacement for a previous dwelling and the sideways on positioning, and the substantial plot of land of land in which it sits, is indicative of the crofts and tofts discussed earlier. At one time it had more land attached to it and was clearly a farmhouse belonging to persons of some substance. There are initials JP on the side of the house –perhaps indicating John Parkinson, the largest landowner at the time of enclosure in the 1840s. This is a rather grand house in itself, and it may well be one of the first of its type in the village. Two bay windows have been added later to the old house on the garden side. From the garden, we can see the original entrance, up steps from the road.

At the back, is a substantial barn, contemporary with the oldest part of the house, and the ruins of numerous pigsties can be seen on the current entrance drive – many more were once near the barn. Next to the house, opposite Mapletoft, are two small cottages – once 3, as we see a bricked-up door. Typical of cottages for farm labourers, and with the same brick bonding we have seen in the Square. These were built for labourers on the farm centred on what is now Ivy Dene and they have long, narrow, back gardens stretching west – which also have pigsties and would have provided vegetables, eggs etc for the cottages.

So we can now see a small farmstead centred on The Thatch, another here at Ivy Dene and, round the corner, you will find another based at Church Farm, and just after, the Glebe Land belonging to the Church/Rectory, and, we think, the Manor House and the Demesne Farm (demesne being the land retained by the lord of the manor for his own use – pronounced 'dih-mayn') behind the Church. So, we see a network of 'enclosed' land at the centre of the medieval village.

At some point, another phase of building took place, so the house is now double-gabled. This was sometime considerably later. In the 1939-45 war, the house was occupied by RAF officers with 'other ranks' in the barn.

Mapletoft, the Pinfold and Poplar Farm

A little further down Church Lane on your right, you will come to the old Mapletoft School, now a private residence. The school took its name from its founder, Dr. Robert Mapletoft. Mapletoft was the ninth child of the Rev. Hugh Mapletoft, who was Rector at St. Helen's for 32 years in the 16th and 17th centuries. Robert was educated at

Louth Grammar School and became Dean of Ely in later life. He also became a college head at Cambridge. He took an interest in the education of the poor and in his Will, he left property and land in his birthplace, for the founding of a school and the employment of a schoolmaster.

He established a similar school in Louth, in Padehole (Northgate) in 1677. Mapletoft's school in North Thoresby was founded in 1676. Unusually, its scholars were taught entirely free from school fees. On the garden wall of the property, you will see a plaque explaining the present criteria that young people of North Thoresby must satisfy in order to be awarded a grant for further education from the Mapletoft Scholarship Foundation. This charity is still run by trustees who live in North Thoresby. Grants are awarded each year in October. The land left by Robert in his Will, is still bringing in a steady income and it is this which is used today to provide grants to local youngsters for further educational needs. In 1854 a new Wesleyan school, along with Master's House, was built in Station Road, which was to rival the Mapletoft School. By 1899 it became obvious that there was not room for two schools in the village and sadly the Mapletoft school closed. The 'master', was also a farmer and the land attached to Mapletoft stretched north, south and east. Evidently, the last occupant was more interested in farming than education.

Moving further down Church Lane, the road turns at right angles. On the left-hand side at the corner, once stood the Pinfold. A plaque marks the site. The Pinfold was the site of the village pound into which stray animals would be put to await collection, at a fee, by their owners. Neddy Hallett was the last village Pinder, and he lived in the old cottages (page 41) now replaced by Jubilee Cottages a little further up the lane. See also page 86.



Church Lane, opposite the Pinfold before new houses were built from the 1990s

Opposite the Pinfold is a little cutting which takes you to open fields. The photograph above shows the former farmhouse, up the rise – once Poplar Farm, now named 'Old Bolingbroke'. If you swing right from the cutting, you can get a closer look at the farmhouse (See aerial photograph page 38).



Poplar Farm, now 'Old Bolingbroke'.

Probably dating from the mid 19th century - perhaps one of the new farmhouses built in the aftermath of enclosure. By the 1950s, the house was derelict and was renovated by Wolds Builders. The outbuildings are still there, but are overgrown.



Above: Church with Pinfold in foreground. Below: Church with south aisle before demolition.

Jubilee Cottages

The cottages that once stood on this site, were of mud and stud construction with a thatched roof. In 1935 (George V's Silver Jubilee), Mr. Frederick Askew, a local councillor and magistrate, built four alms houses in their place. See page 41.

Church Farmhouse

Walk past Jubilee Cottages, past the modern bungalow, and you will see Church Farmhouse opposite the church. If you look carefully, you will see that Church Farmhouse is dated 1836 – once again, illustrating the building

boom of mid-century. This is all that remains of the extensive Church Farm complex. The brick building – seen in the background below – is now rendered and has a prominent date-plate displayed.



Church Farm.



Jubilee Cottages - note the sunken road. Church Farm buildings in the background.

A moments relaxation – Church farm, 1960s





The original Jubilee Cottages - clearly, once thatched.

St Helens

Walk across the lane and turn through the small church gate. This is the ancient Parish Church of St. Helen. The Church may have been built on the site of an open-air preaching ground, at the centre of which may have stood a stone cross. A Saxon grave marker of a high-status individual stands just inside the Church door – suggesting both that there was a Saxon community here and a previous church. The 2025 excavation in Bondcroft Field revealed a significant collection of early Saxon pottery.

Much of the fabric of the Church is of a thirteenth century, Early English, period of church architecture - the Chancel is of a later date. At one time the Church had two aisles (see page 39) but only the north aisle remains. A major restoration took place in 1848 when parishioners and landowners subscribed £600 to the work - a not inconsiderable sum in those days.

In the chancel wall there is a blocked Priest's Door which according to one local historian is of Saxon origin. Another blocked doorway can be seen on the outside of the remaining aisle, and part of it can be seen on the inside. This doorway was blocked in Elizabethan times. The font is Norman with some of its decorations never completed. The eight pinnacles of the tower date from 1929. The Three Bells which hang in the belfry have inscriptions, one saying "God Save the King 1605". This is possibly a thanksgiving bell as that was the year of Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot.

There are several ancient carved oak bench-heads (Poppy heads), which Bob Kershaw has dated from the 1550s or 1560s, with initials of long-gone occupants. The bench heads in the north aisle are made of cast iron to match the wooden ones in the remainder of the church.

The trackway between the church and the bungalow, 'White Gates', is usually known as Stanholme – but on the 1888 OS Map it is named as Bond Croft Lane - it leads to the parish of Grainsby. Until recent times, there was still a farm dwelling at the bottom of this track on the right.

The Domesday Book lists one of its entries as a Manor belonging to Bishop Odo, Bishop of Bayeux and half-brother to William. Odo appointed Ilbert de Lacy, who also served in the conquest, as his steward, someone to look after the manor. However, as Ilbert had several manors to serve in Lincolnshire as well as Lancashire and Yorkshire, it is doubtful he ever came to Thoresby, so he entrusted the manor to a Bailiff to do his job for him.

In the field behind the church are two fishponds, fed by Bond Croft Drain, along with several field markings. The field also contains a glacial erratic, a so-called Blue Stone. Tantalisingly, the field is full of promising ‘lumps and bumps’ which have led to, yet unfounded, speculation that this may have been where a Manor house was located but excavations in 2023 and 2025 have revealed no sign of this. They have been produced substantial pottery finds which tell us, for example, which tell us much about the domestic life of the late medieval and early modern village.

Leave the churchyard by the same gate and continue walking down Church Lane.



St Helens, with Church Farm buildings in the foreground.



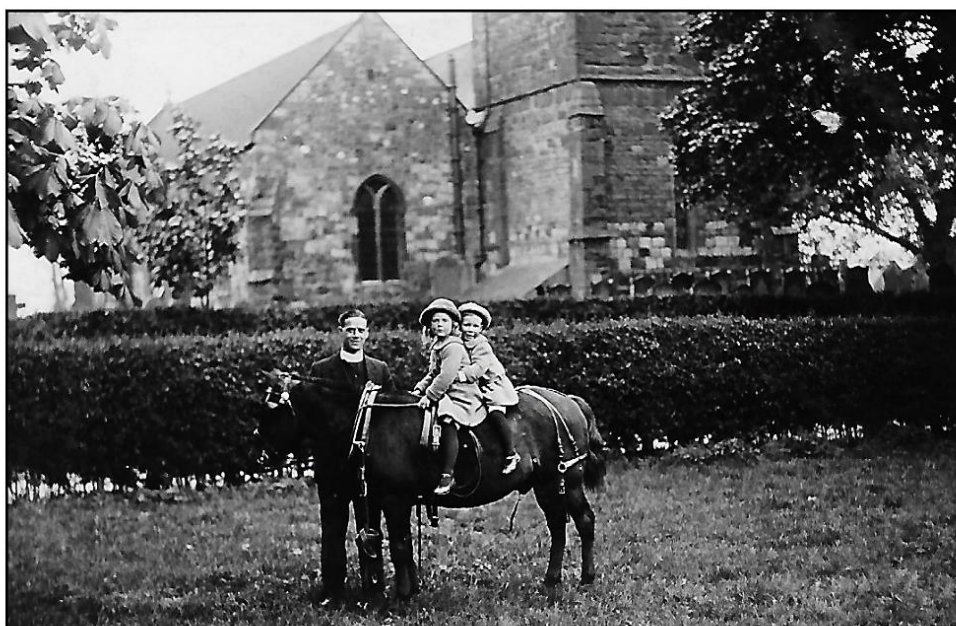
One of the medieval fishponds, looking towards St Helens Church, North Thoresby, February 2019

'Poppyheads' in St Helens





Reverend Tucker and family



Tithebarn, Rectory and Sports Field.

A little further on in Church Lane you come to the 'Tithe Barn' with the Rectory on its western side. The OS map of 1906 shows that at that time, the two buildings were joined together. At one time a tenth part of the main produce of the land, later commuted to a cash payment, would be paid to the Rector or incumbent of a Parish. A 'Tithe Barn' was used to store the tithes of corn, oats, wood etc., due to the Rector. There is considerable doubt that the building called the Tithe Barn, long since converted to a private home, is actually the case. It may well be the 5 bay Rectory mentioned in records of 1711. The Rectory was sold by the Lincoln Diocese and is also a private dwelling. The field to the west of the Rectory is the site of the old village cricket pitch and would once have been the glebe land, farmed by the parish priest.

Page
| 45

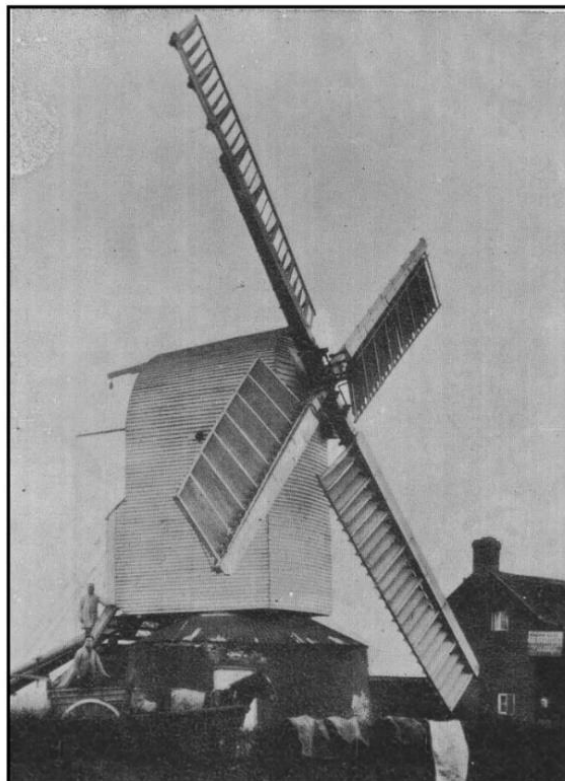
Just beyond the Rectory, on the right of the lane, there is an opening which reveals a field which is still farmed and illustrates the typical medieval signs of 'ridge and furrow'. Further up the lane towards the A16, on your left, you come to the present village football field. Richard Haigh, who owns Grainsby Estates, generously allows the North Thoresby Sports Club to use this land as a sports field. In the past, the Sports Club field has been in other locations around the Grainsby Estate. There's been a long association of the Haigh family with North Thoresby – see page 33, where 'Willian Haigh's Trustees' are shown as the fifth largest landowners resulting from Enclosure.

At the point where the football field begins, you can cut across the field diagonally to the far-left hand corner of the field and cross an improvised bridge – currently being replaced at the time of writing, eventually emerging at the Halfway House. Take care over the bridge. Or continue to the busy A16.

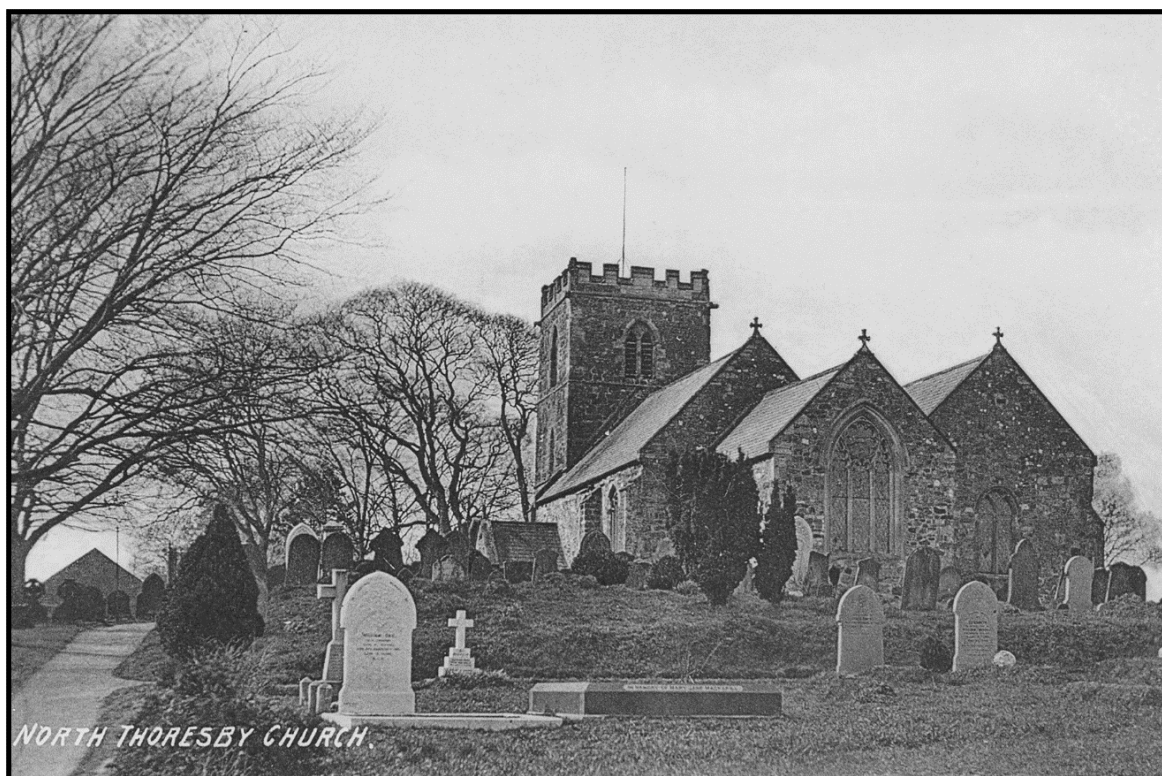
Thorbeck

If you have walked to the A16, you can turn right and walk for a short distance until you are opposite the bungalow, Thorbeck. There's nothing to see here now, but the village post-mill and miller's cottage once stood on this site, much closer to the road than the present dwelling. The mill was dismantled in 1912. Such mills were important to villages for the grinding of corn. This mill was ideally situated for the prevailing southwest winds. See research article on the mill owners, page 87.

Retrace your steps and walk along the A16 to the 'Halfway House'. The A16 is now a very busy highway, but this is a relatively new factor, dating from the 1960s and stimulated by the closure of the rail link between Louth and Grimsby and the growth of car ownership.



The Post Mill, dismantled, 1912.



The Origins of Tithes

So far as the payment of Tithes is concerned in relation to the Christian Church in England the origin dates back to the early days of Christianity in this country. The fourth section of the Laws of Ina, King of the West Saxons, circa 690 A.D, reads:

'The first-fruits of seeds, or the church dues arising from the product of corn, etc., are to be paid at the feast of Saint Martin, and let him that fails in the payment forfeit 40s. and besides, pay the dues twelve times over.'

Martinmas falls on November 11th. In promulgating these laws King Ina was actually consolidating into an ordinance the previously existing customs and usages whereby the obligations and gifts of the people, rendered as acts of piety and benevolence, had been bestowed as offerings for the maintenance of the Church.

Before the Enclosures of 1839 the inhabitants of North Thoresby paid tithes, for example, three pence for every new bearing cow and one penny for every foal. But, after the Enclosures, this procedure was not generally possible, consequently alternative arrangements were necessary, and these are set out in the pre-amble to the Parish Award as follows:-

'Now Know Ye that I, the said John Rawlinson, Do hereby award that the Annual Sum of Four Hundred and thirty Pounds four shillings by way of a Rent Charge be paid to the Rector of the said Parish instead of all the Tithes arising from all the Lands of the said Parish, except the Glebe'.

From: Willian Toyne, St Helen's Church, North Thoresby: A Miscellany, 1969



Garage and Petrol Station on the A16 - where the caravan sales are now.

‘Venney’s at the Granby’

This bar and restaurant has recently been renamed from The Halfway House – in recognition of its original name ‘The Marquis of Granby’. In 1803, the Scartho Turnpike Trust was established and coach services between Grimsby and Louth began, eventually linking up with other turnpikes down as far as London (taking 27 hours by mid-century - see map of Lincolnshire Turnpikes on page 90). The rapidly expanding railway system made the stagecoach age a relatively short one - although my paternal grandfather ran a taxi service from Immingham to Haborough Station in the 1920s, using an old stagecoach. In the Turnpike days, the Granby was the ‘Midway’ house for the coaches that travelled between Grimsby and Louth.

Stagecoaches and Mail coaches could travel up to 12 miles per hour with frequent changes of horses and the Granby was ideally situated to act as a Coaching Inn, being 8 miles from Louth and Grimsby. There were many stables in the back yard. Wagonettes from Grimsby used to visit the Granby rather like our modern Mystery Tour by Bus. One gathers that they rather liked the ale. For a period of 70 years, from 1844 to 1914, the Granby was used as the meeting place of the Manor Court.

It is reputed that North Thoresby at one time, had 22 Inns and brew houses and was locally called ‘Drunken Thoresby.’ Of course, any householder who obtained a license, could brew ale in their back yard and sell it in their parlour. This may explain the large number. The field known as ‘Beanland’ south beyond the turn into the village, is sometimes said to get its name from the produce grown to feed the horses that pulled the coaches – but the name long pre-dates the coming of the turnpike (before potatoes arrived in Britain, beans provided much of the protein for villagers..

The Granby was named after Lieutenant-General John Manners, Marquess of Granby, (1721-1770) – a British soldier and the eldest son of the 3rd Duke of Rutland. As he did not outlive his father and inherit the dukedom, he was known by his father’s subsidiary title, Marquess of Granby. Manners served in the Seven Years’ War in the 1750s and was popular with his troops. It is said that more public houses are named after him than anyone else, due to his practice of setting up old soldiers of his regiment as publicans when they were too old to serve any longer. Most ‘Granby Inns’ are to be found in village centres – perhaps there was a Granby in Thoresby village itself and it moved to capture the coaching trade once the turnpike was established in 1803 (long after the memory of the Marquess had faded). In 1888, the OS map labels the current High Street, as ‘Granby Inn Road.’

High Street

High Street was referred to as Town Street in house sale documents of 1878 and on the 1888 OS map it is called ‘Granby Inn Road.’ The OS map of 1824 (see page 12) shows no buildings on High Street beyond those now in, or near, The Square, and the 1888 map (see page 8) still clearly shows that the western end of the road had only a few, isolated dwellings. Those that are there, in the centre, around the kink in the road, are relatively ‘new builds’ at the time of the map – mainly from the mid-19th century. The only older buildings on the road, then as now, were

at the eastern end (officially in The Square). This strongly suggests that most of what is now High Street was not part of the main settlement area in medieval times and through to the middle of the 19th century. It may only have developed beyond a track with the coming of the turnpike. As the population increased in the early and mid-19th century, and with the completion of Enclosure between 1836-46, a spate of building took place in mid-century, especially in the area on both sides of the road near where the school now sits, and towards The Square. Other 'infill' building took place in the 1930s and 1960s-70s and the bungalows in the early 1980s.



The Granby around 1900 - clearly showing the road as more of a dirt lane.



Turn the corner at Venney's and walk to the entrance to the Bowling Green. Attached to the gate at the second entrance you will see a plaque with the name 'North Thoresby Bowls Club'. You have seen the name William Storr before. He was the village butcher whose parents' house was in the Square. On marriage, William Storr, had moved up High Street to the house he had built adjoining the Bowling Green. At that time, the land adjacent to his garden was owned by Hewitt's Brewery. In 1964, he bought the land from them, and he and his friends turned it into a bowling green. The North Thoresby Bowls Club was formed in 1975. William Storr died in 1993 and, in his will, he left this piece of land to North Thoresby Bowls Club, and it is thanks to his generosity that people from North Thoresby and surrounding villages can still play here today.

Continue to walk along High Street.

Not far past the Bowling Green, you will pass 'The Limes' on your left. This used to be an old Farmhouse, one of only a few buildings standing on the west end of High Street at the time it was built. The earliest known reference to it is in 1880, but it, like so many of the village's older brick buildings, it probably dates from the mid 19th century. By the 1880s, its owners were hay and straw merchants, operating from the outbuildings at the rear of the premises. Once rendered, the present owner has revealed the brickwork. At the back, the outhouses have been converted to living accommodation.

Page
| 49

Across the road, on your right you will notice a little lane. The lane used to lead past a row of cottages called Cuxwold Row. One local historian thinks this used to lead to the site of an early windmill. Local legend speaks of a Roman villa here and recent archaeology (see page 77) gives this some credibility – if not of a villa, at least of Roman presence here.. Walk on until you are opposite the cricket field.

North Thoresby Cricket Club

The cricket field was left to the villagers of North Thoresby by Bert Garner who once resided in the house, 'Fairview', on the far side of the cricket pitch. In his will, he stated that as long as one cricket match per year was played on this field, it would remain as a facility for the villagers. If no games were played during a calendar year, then the land would go to the church. North Thoresby has long had a cricket team and from 1880 onwards, possibly earlier, the Cricket Club, then known as the North Thoresby Albion Cricket Club, played teams from surrounding villages.

Cricket was considered a gentlemanly game and was supported by gentry and clergy. In these early days cricket matches were played in the Rectory Field, which was adjoining the Rectory, running west towards the A16. If villagers were unhappy with that game, they could take a short walk down Stanholme, the lane by the Church, and across to Grainsby Lane, where they would come to the Grainsby ground. The present ground was in use in the early 1920's and still has a strong following today.

This is a good place to see the 'ridge and furrow' legacy of ploughing over many centuries.



North Thoresby Home Guard in front of the old cricket pavilion

From the Lincoln, Rutland & Stamford Mercury
of Friday, April 10th 1840

PUBLIC-HOUSE.

To be LET or SOLD, and may be entered upon at Old
May-day next,

ALL that well-accustomed *PUBLIC-HOUSE*, known by the name of the *Granby Inn*, standing near the Cross Roads in NORTH THORESBY, being half way between the populous and flourishing town of Louth and the port of Great Grimsby.

The Mail Coach from Grimsby to London calls every morning at Eleven o'clock, by which passengers and parcels are forwarded direct to the metropolis in 21 hours. The down Mail passes every afternoon at Two.—There is also a Tide Coach every day between Louth and Grimsby, which calls at the Granby for the accommodation of the passengers by the Steam and other Packets to and from Grimsby, Hull, and every part of the North.

The House is spacious and well built, comprising a good arched cellar, also a large dining-room, traveller's room, tap-room, bar, kitchens, store-room, pantry, and seven sleeping-rooms; also a Brewhouse, Chaise-house, Stabling, Piggery, and other detached Offices (all brick and tile), an excellent Pump in the Court-yard, and a good Kitchen Garden attached to the premises.

The Tenant's Fixtures, and also part of the Effects, to be taken at a fair valuation.

~~For~~ For a view of the premises apply to Mr. Hobson, the present tenant; and further particulars may be known at the office of Mr. F. Lucas, solicitor, Louth.

Louth, 7th April, 1840.

The (Market) Square

'The Square' is not marked on the earlier OS maps as such, its never been a square and today it merges seamlessly with High Street, starting at The Thatch and stretching south to Thoresby Homecare. The answer is probably quite simple – it was the location of the Market – hence Market Square – quite possible for many centuries. The T-junction at the where High Street met Front Street/Church Lane was turned into the present curve in the late 1920s.



The west end of High Streer, 1950s. The Limes is in the left foreground.

Fairview

At the far side of the cricket pitch, stands 'Fairview'. This is a fine example of a late Victorian building, built at the beginning of the twentieth century, with its bay windows and ornate brickwork on the gable end. Its land once stretched east to include the present school. It was once the meeting place for the local hunt, a fact commemorated by the horse and rider weathervane. In 1925, Fairview also comprised of a wagon shed, a 2-stall stable and a cow stable. There is evidence of the old pump in the current garden, also the footings of an old pigsty and the hinges of the field gate. The land adjoining Fairview was 2 acres, 3 roods and 30 perch, some of which was sold in 1963-65 to Baxter Bros to form plots on which were built 6 bungalows. In 1975 the remaining land was sold to LCC on which the current primary school was built.

The field on which the present school was built belonged, in part, to one of the two large Open Fields in the village. The 'West Field' stretched right over the A16 and down to the parish boundary on the Barton Street and the East Field stretched towards North Cotes (see page 84). North Cotes (north cottages) was a daughter (satellite) village of North Thoresby used for summer pastures – a practice still followed in the 1950s and 1960s by Church Farm. To the east of the East Field lay a permanent pasture and meadowland, Prim Fen, the Cow Fen, the Ox Pasture and Oxholme (meaning Ox island). You can see from this that the parish was long and narrow being some four miles long by approximately half to one and a half miles wide. See William Toyne's explanation of the continuity of the Parish boundary (page 14).

The Westfield along with the Eastfield disappeared with the enclosure of the village between 1836 and 1846. The initial meeting to elect officials for the enclosure was held in December 1836 in the Granby Inn. The division of the Parish was completed by August 1846.

Some small, hedged fields (closes) had always existed in the village – originating in the tofts and crofts of medieval times. Some of these old enclosures became farmhouses, farm buildings and cottages in and near the village centre. There was a large block of 'closes' at Autby, in the S.W. corner of the Parish, where the Recycling Factory is sited. The deserted medieval village of Autby now lies beneath the factory buildings (see page 13)..

Thoresby Lodge

On the left, is Thoresby Lodge – formerly Wyndyridge - a substantial and impressive, late Victorian or Edwardian building. For several years this house was the residence of one of the village doctors. The new house adjoining the Lodge is called White Cottage and was once the workshop of Mr. 'Candy' Hall who was, during the late 19th and early 20th century, one of the village's principal joiners .



Sadlers

The earliest document for Sadlers is an Abstract of Title from 1890, which records its prior history. There are references to a Lot 54 being purchased by William Espin for the substantial sum of £100 15s 10d in 1831 from the estate of Marmaduke Dixon. Dixon had bought the property on 13th May 1828. These could be possible build dates for the property, which consisted of the area under the front gable with additional outbuildings. The brick bonding is of the most common type found in the village, Flemish Garden Bond, and this – in conjunction with the documents – suggest an early 19th century origin. The roof timbers in the front part of the house are quartered tree trunks. The OS Map of 1888 clearly shows two dwellings with a long profile of outbuildings stretching back into the large garden.

What is now Sadlers, the Saddlery, and the surrounding land, appear to have been in single ownership for most of its history. While still separate dwellings, the cottages seem to have been occupied by members of the middle class – there was a clergyman and ladies with a chauffeur in residence at various times. The rooms are bigger than the labourers' cottages nearby and there was stabling and a significant amount of land.

Originally, each cottage had a front door (see photo, page 54). In 1922, major changes were made to the cottage on the left side. A bay window was added, leaving a section of the original wooden door lintel still visible to the right of the bay. A very elegant portico entrance was created at the side and a large extension was added. A lounge with lantern windows and balcony above was created on the side (see photo, page 53) and at the back, a breakfast room, kitchen, and garden loggia were added. There are several examples of ironwork, created by the village blacksmith, dating from this period, including the garden gate, light fitting by the door and balcony railings. Inside, a lavish interior was created, including a sweeping mahogany staircase made from a single tree.

The ladies who lived there at the time were known for their grand ways. Their chauffeur used to walk from Station Cottages to Sadlers to collect the car and the ladies and drive them to the village shops. They would choose their groceries, ask for them to be delivered and return to Sadlers in the car. The chauffeur would then walk back home!

The two cottages were made into one in 1976 to create a substantial family residence. In recent years, the 1920s additions have been sympathetically modified to improve the outward appearance and functionality of the interior whilst preserving the oldest part. Although the name may have been in use earlier, the first official reference to Saddlers Cottage or Sadlers Cottage was in the 1960s. In 2021 the name was changed to Sadlers.



The Saddlery is thought to date from the early 1800s and from 1880 to 1950, was the workshop of Ernest 'Baggy' Larder (see page 56), who made and repaired saddles, harnesses and leather goods. In the 1980s, it was converted to living accommodation and the openings on the roadside, bricked up. In 2017, after a full refurbishment, it was opened as The Saddlery Holiday Cottage – and has welcomed nearly 400 guests from the UK and around the world.



The Saddlery in the foreground, Baggy Larder's workshop until 1950



The Saddlery before conversion.



Sadlers on the near left while still separate cottages

North Thoresby Primary Academy

Opposite Sadlers is the entrance to the present village school. After nearly 40 years fighting, the village finally achieved its goal, and this new school was opened on 14th November 1985. It had four classrooms, a hall, changing rooms and administration block. The one thing the children enjoyed most when they moved into this building were the indoor toilets and hall. The old school in Station Road had neither. Many areas inside the school and around the grounds have been developed since it first opened and a thriving school with around 100 children and very strong leadership, contributes greatly to the vitality of the village.

The Laurels

Next to the school, is a former farmhouse. Built in 1842 as a small farmstead with a stable, pigsty, large washhouse with coal-fired copper and a tiled pantry with gantry. The bay windows, porch and added timber on the front, are much later additions.

Continue on the right-hand side of the road.

Shops and Workshops, Chapel and Dancehall

We now approach an area of the village which was a busy centre of shops and workshops well into the 1950s. Continue walking down High Street. On the right you will see a terrace. Valuable evidence for the appearance of this area in the 1930s is provided from the recollections of Mr W.D. Rawson (which were preserved in an annotated map in the 1960s) and Nancy Blythe's memories of walking to school in the 1930s (see page 58).

'Ye Old Homestede', originally two houses, was built in 1848 for a master tailor – Joseph Bradley – and a cordwainer (shoemaker), Henry Hewins. By the 1930s these had become a cycle repair shop run by Johnny Hewins, a sweet shop run by his wife, and Mr Higgs tailor's shop. Later a T.V. repair business and electronics shop, operated from here. The same Johnny Hewins who repaired bicycles, visited Market towns to obtain shopping for the villagers. Often, his destination was one of the many Inns in Louth where he spent a very happy day letting his assistant do the shopping!

Still on the right, now going down the slope, was Foundry House, and, set back, the foundry's chimney. The Foundry is not on the 1906 map as annotated by Mr Rawson, so it looks to have been established sometime after. Then, a bungalow (The Bungalow), still there, was built in the 1930s. We have postcards of a large building running back which was a builder's workshop, and became a library, reading room and Post Office. It was also used as a dancehall.

The bungalow called St. Helen's Lodge was the site of a village Primitive Methodist Chapel, built in 1915, and destroyed in the Lancaster crash of October 1943 (see page 57).

Re-trace your steps back to Sadlers on the opposite side of the road.



Foundry House, probably George V's silver Jubilee, 1935.

From Sadlers to The Thatch

On the left of the road, next to Sadlers is a distinctive row of little cottages. As we know, there was a building boom in the village in the 1840s, especially in this area of the village, and a current resident confirms that these were indeed built in the 1840s. These houses have quite exquisite detail and most likely built for renting to farm workers or others in the village, they are very well constructed (see page 100 for some background on the provision of homes for agricultural labourers and the difficulties they faced)

Next to the cottagers is Holmfirth - built as two cottages in 1841 – by a builder who came from Holmfirth, according to current owners David and Carol Brown – who generously loaned me documents they have relating to the sale of the properties in 1879 – and an early photograph of the building. Evidence from that mortgage document includes the history of the land on which the property was built going back to 1796. In the 1930s, Charlton Cottage housed Mr T. (Tommy) Johnson's business as a cabinet-maker and undertaker. It also dates from the mid-19th century.

The terrace of 3 houses next door was built in 1910 or 1911. On the back of one of the postcards reproduced here, it speaks of 'the new houses, Tommy Johnstone had built' – clearly on land previously belonging to Charlton Cottage.

In old postcards, two small cottages – almost certainly mud and stud, can be seen further down towards The Thatch – but were destroyed by the Lancaster crash in 1943. It's usually said that these were thatched – and undoubtedly were at one time - but close inspection of the postcards suggests a ridged roof – perhaps corrugated or asbestos (see page 58).



'Baggy' Larder

Why 'Baggy Larder'? It was because of his exceptionally baggy trousers. He has a very large corporation and couldn't find trousers to fit his waist, so the waistband fastened under his belly. Unfortunately, because men's trousers were cut so much higher in the waist in those days, that created considerable bagginess between his stomach and his knees.

As told by Mary Channon to Joyce Erswell



Holmfirth - once two cottages



Looking up the eastern section of the High Street, inter-war period. The Primitive Methodist Chapel, built 1915, destroyed 1943 to the left. The long building was, at one time or another, a workshop, dancehall, reading room and post Office. The Foundry Chimney can be seen and Foundry House behind the long building. No footpaths on the road.



The Peace Garden.

The Chapel, and old cottages opposite, were destroyed in 1943 by a Lancaster bomber which crashed during a training mission. A meeting room at the back of the chapel survived and was in use into the 1970s. The men who died are remembered in the Peace Garden next to St Helen's Lodge. The Parish Council led by the late Mr. Dave Barnett, developed this lovely garden and memorial, along with Tim Stones, which is such a valuable space at the centre of the village. Have a look at the railings around the outside and the beautiful tiles set into the path. Rest awhile.

Memories of Life in 1930s North Thoresby

This is an extract from a booklet produced in 1996 to mark the 150th anniversary of the Methodism Chapel, where Nancy Blythe recorded her memories of walking to school and through the village to what was then the village school, now the Wesley Centre. I have edited and abbreviated it slightly to make it more understandable from a 2021 perspective.

Imagine walking almost three miles from Westfield Farm, White Road, to and from school every day. This was the task my two sisters, brother and I had to achieve from the time of our starting school. Not only that, but we also attended the Methodist Sunday School twice each Sunday, crowded into the back rooms of the chapel or in the chapel itself.

We started off across two fields which could often be muddy, especially in winter. When we reached White Road, it was very different from today. A narrow lane, it was roughly surfaced with black asphalt, but this was only rolled on by hand-held rollers, so it quickly came loose. Most days the village roadman, Mr Parrinder, would come along, brushing the loose stones into heaps along the road, no doubt to fill any potholes as they occurred later.

During the week, only one regular car ever came along the road, and this belonged to the squire at Wold Newton, Mr Parsons Wright. The other traffic in White Road was either pedestrian or bicycle: the workers at the chalk pits of North Ormsby mostly lived in North Thoresby, for instance, and travelled to work by bike. They, and we, were annoyed at the poor state of the road. Not only did sharp-edged stones often cause punctures, but when the roadside hedges were cut back, even sharper thorns used also to play havoc with bicycle tyres. So, we arrived eventually at the main road, our shoes or boots usually either muddied or scuffed, and occasionally with sticky

soles from new tar on White Road. On the way, there was no necessity to observe road safety even whilst crossing the main Grimsby to Louth Road at the Granby Inn, as there were very few cars indeed on that road: the main way of getting between Louth and Grimsby was still by railway.

Once we passed the Granby Inn, the village proper began, and what an interesting and lively village it seemed to be then. When I and the others who walked along White Road - my sisters, brother, cousins, and neighbours - had passed the doctor's surgery on the left (the large gabled house with rendered walls, nearly opposite the present school entrance), we came to the first of a number of village craftsmen, Mr W. 'Baggy' Larder. As I remember him, he was a dumpy figure, wearing a white apron, whose bulk filled his doorway and prevented us seeing inside his shop.

Across the road from Mr Larder's, on the right, was Mr J. Hewin's shop, part of a row. He was a bicycle repairer who lived with his sister; together they owned a sweet shop, which his sister ran. Everyone knew that she used to chop sweets in half by the use of a sharp knife and a poker, to make the exact weight of your purchase!

Just down from the Hewins's was the Post Office, run at the time by Mr Cecil Bradbury, whose father was the North Thoresby stationmaster. The Post Office did move from one site to another around the village, but I remember it at the end of the village dance hall, partitioned off and facing the street. It was a builder's store, then demolished for a new housing development. Foundry House is on the site where it used to be.

Next came Roberts' Stores, facing not into the 'Square' then, but across a narrow road to some old cottages, later pulled down. In one of them lived old Mr Coxon. Round the corner you turned left into Church Lane, and about half-way down on the right-hand side was a cottage where Miss Jane Tyson ran her dressmaking business. This had been a traditional occupation for unmarried ladies, but more and more people now bought ready-made clothes, which were cheaper.

Back to the village square, where [in 1996] there was a general store and butchers of Jones and Hopwood. Here [in the 1930s] were three businesses. First was the butcher's shop of Mr W. Storr; then the baker's and confectioner's shop of Mr Fred Askew (which had belonged to the Mumby family before my time) and next door again was Mr Albert Green the blacksmith, whose widow Lizzie was still alive in 1996, aged 96. Mr Green's forge and shop was on the corner of Haith's Lane (an earlier blacksmith was Mr Haith) and was attractive to us because of the noise and heat. The clang of the hammer on his anvil drowned out any noise from the very occasional wheeled traffic.

Also in the centre of the village were three other shops. Mr Albert Dickinson was one of a large family in the village. He kept a village butcher's shop, with a slaughterhouse behind, and was once seen chasing a cow into his slaughterhouse with a shotgun! This shop was revived in 1989 as a greengrocer's, run by Mr Andrew Dickinson. Next door, another blacksmith - Mr G. Stephenson - made the sparks fly, opposite the present Post Office. A few sparks also flew at Mr Albert Ostler's shoemaker's shop, (now gone, but near Mr Hippisley's Homecare shop) as he drove nails and segs into leather-soled boots and shoes to protect them from everyday wear and tear. (see the inside of the back cover - this shop was still there - but soon to disappear.

Perhaps the most prominent shopkeeper in village life was Mr Fred Broughton. Mr Broughton's was a general store, now where the Post Office is, selling the widest range of goods. Outside his shop life, he was also a loyal supporter of the Day School and a steward of the Wesleyan chapel. With all these shops to choose from, when spending hard-earned pennies, the village children knew which shop was most beneficial: where the best bargain could be made.

Opposite the school [now Wesley Centre] in Station Road was the workshop of Mr Jess Bratley, the village joiner and funeral director. His yard was made available for the parking of schoolchildren's bicycles. Some of the models used then were not too safe. One, known as the 'Fairy' cycle, was actually quite dangerous: it had solid tyres, and if you were not very careful in operating the one and only brake - at the front - you could well go flying over the handlebars as it 'threw' you off in a somersault!

A most welcome sight in the village, in summer months, was 'Poll' Ostler's (later Mrs Olive Oxby) ice cream cart, which was basically a tricycle. 'Poll' pedalled her cart around the village, ringing a bell to attract customers. She also spent much time during the school holidays and Bank Holidays in Grainsby Park. This was a favourite picnic spot for people from Grimsby, and busloads of mothers and their children were deposited at Grainsby to enjoy the park, eat ice cream if they could afford it, and swing on the trees. This ice cream business was owned by Mrs Mary Smith (later Mrs Briggs) who also ran the fish and chip shop. Her husband, Mr Hedley Smith, was the last in a long family line of threshing machine owners, and his yard was where Smithfield now turns off Ludborough Road.

The Show, 1911

The great day in North Thoresby, is the day of the Show. This consists of a Horse Show as the principal feature of the earlier part of the day, and athletic sports at night, so that the attraction appeals to varied tastes and brings in the people from all the villages from a very wide area in the Marsh and towards the Wolds, as well as from Grimsby and Louth.

Mr J. Plumtree is an admirable Secretary of the Horse Show, which involves a large amount of by no means easy work, and Mr John Kettlewell is the secretary for the sports, which has been worked up into one of the most interesting meetings in a wide radius. Stock owners and competitors at the sports have talked to us about North Thoresby sports, and it is a pleasing reflection to remember that in absolutely every case we have heard the highest opinions expressed as to the management. They have not always been winners that we have conversed with on the matter, and some of them reside a considerable distance from North Thoresby, so that the consensus of opinion may be taken as quite unbiased.

As to the value of the Show and Sports to the village, little need be said. It must be good for business in North Thoresby, and though the hotel proprietors and shopkeepers are not the whole community, the spending of money by the visitors gets into a good many different hands.

From 'Green's Lincolnshire Villages Series, 1911. The Show was staged down Station Road.

From North Thoresby Parish Magazine, April 1893 Source: transcribed by Doreen Tyson,

The Parish Meeting of March 9th accepted Mr. PARKINSON's offer of a piece of land on the Eastern side of the present Churchyard, of about 1 rood 11 poles, at £25 a rood, and the cottage at £40, the whole price being about £71, it was decided to raise the money for purchase, etc. which was estimated at £90 to £100, by voluntary subscriptions. The Committee, which was elected on February 9th, was re-elected with power to add to their numbers for the purpose of collecting, etc. it consists of Messrs. J.F. BROUGHTON and W.H. CAMPION C.C. (Chairman), Rev. H. GARRETT (Hon.Secretary). Messrs. H. GEORGE, M.R.C.S., H. HALL, R. HUTCHINSON, W. JOHNSON, C. MACKARILL (Treasurer), J.W. PARKER, G. SMITH, C. STEPHENSON, J. WRIGHT. The subscription was well opened by the donations of the Committee at their meeting on March 3rd.

Source: transcribed by Doreen Tyson, 1997

ALBION CRICKET CLUB North Thoresby, Louth, Lincs, April 26th 1893

The members of the above Club had their Annual General Meeting in the Church Schoolroom on Monday, April 10th, Mr. J. W. PLUMTREE in the chair. The accounts for 1892 were examined and confirmed. It was proposed and agreed that the officers for the year be as follows:-

President. -	Rev. H. GARRETT
Captain. -	Mr. C. SWAIN
Vice-Captain -	Mr. H. ISAAC
Secretary -	Mr. J.W. PLUMTREE
Treasurer -	Mr. H. KETTLEWELL

The above with Miss A. GEORGE, Messrs. KETTLEWELL, HALLETT and Wm. PICKETT to form the committee

'Ridge and Furrow' Source: Historic England : Field Systems.

The most characteristic and widely recognised feature of regular open-field systems is the practice of ploughing the individual strips in the Open Field system, to form patterns of ridges flanked by furrows – reinforcing the separate nature of the strips and facilitating good drainage. A large proportion of surviving medieval 'ridge-and-furrow' takes the form of a reversed 'S' when viewed in plan – a form dictated by the movement of the ox-teams drawing the plough. The furlongs of open fields, where the individual strips terminated, can be as long as 700 m in length: the width of individual ridges varies considerably but rarely exceeds 5 m in width. See pages 96 and 99

18. 8. 1950

NORTH THO SILENT VILLAGE

IN his ivy-covered cottage at North Thoresby, 86-year-old Ernest Larder is eagerly awaiting the day when he can again unlock the door of his nearby saddler's shop and resume his 70 years record of village craftsmanship.

Mr. Larder is not the only one who wants to see the workshop door reopened. Many people have saddlery jobs needing the attention of the old master.

"But I've had to tell them I cannot do any more work yet," he says. "It's not age; I never bother about that. An illness last year caused me to take a rest. But I'll be back again when I'm rid of a pain in the side."

During his 70 years as local saddler, Mr. Larder has seen North Thoresby, once a centre of North Lincolnshire craftsmanship, become an almost silent village.

"It's the result of the machine age," he says. "On the farms horses have given way to tractors, and there is not the same demand for saddlery work."

★

"When I first started here I walked every morning from Louth, did a good day's work, and walked back again at night."

"North Thoresby, then, was a busy village, with its craftsmen always in demand."

The demand has decreased, but it has not vanished.

In his 100-year-old smithy, reputed to be the cleanest in England, Mr. J. A. Green finds that despite mechanised farming and a general use of machinery, many people still prefer a job to be done in the old-fashioned manner.

"Since I came here 30 years ago there has been only one change in the smithy," he says. "The old hand bellows have been replaced with an electrical blower."

"In the older days North Thoresby's industry came from the rural areas and ours was mainly concerned with shoeing. There's none of that now. It's all tractors."

"And the people who bring work do so because they want it doing the old way. New ideas, they say, result in a quicker job, but it seldom lasts."

★

"These people reflect a growing modern demand for the old craftsmen. They have tried modern methods and found them wanting. Now they want the old ones again."

"For how long they will get the old methods I would not like to say. Once upon a time craftsmanship used to be handed down from father to son. That was before the introduction of mass production and shorter hours," he remarked.

Craftsmanship could not compete with that, and sons who should have followed their fathers chose, instead, the new attractions.

"When the few remaining craftsmen go there will be hardly any more to take their places," says Mr. Green.

It is because of this that North Thoresby is becoming a silent village.

The smithy and the wheelwright and carpentry shops still carry on.

Mr. Larder's workshop door will open again. So for

Part of a local Newspaper article on village craftsmen Ernest Larder – saddle maker and leather worker, and blacksmith, Mr J.A. Green. 1950. Source: John Butterworth. It illustrates that village trades and crafts were coming to an end.

PARTICULARS OF FREEHOLD ESTATES

SITUATE AT

Cetney and North Thoresby, in the County of Lincoln,

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

AT THE GRANBY INN, IN NORTH THORESBY

The Eighth day of February, 1878;

IN NORTH THORESBY.

LOT 2.—Two COTTAGES or TENEMENTS, with the Outbuildings and Gardens thereto adjoining, abutting South on the Town Street, and East on an Occupation Road, and containing 0

Tenants—Mr. Edward Haith and Mr. Stephen Dows.

LOT 3.—Four COTTAGES or TENEMENTS, with the Outbuildings and Gardens thereto adjoining, abutting East on Lot 2 and South on the Town Street and containing 0

Tenants—Mr. G. Stamp, Mr. A. Stovin's Representatives and others.

LOT 4.—Two MESSUAGES or DWELLING-HOUSES with the Shop, Engine Sheds, Outbuildings and Gardens thereto adjoining, abutting East on Lot 3 and South on the Town Street and containing 0

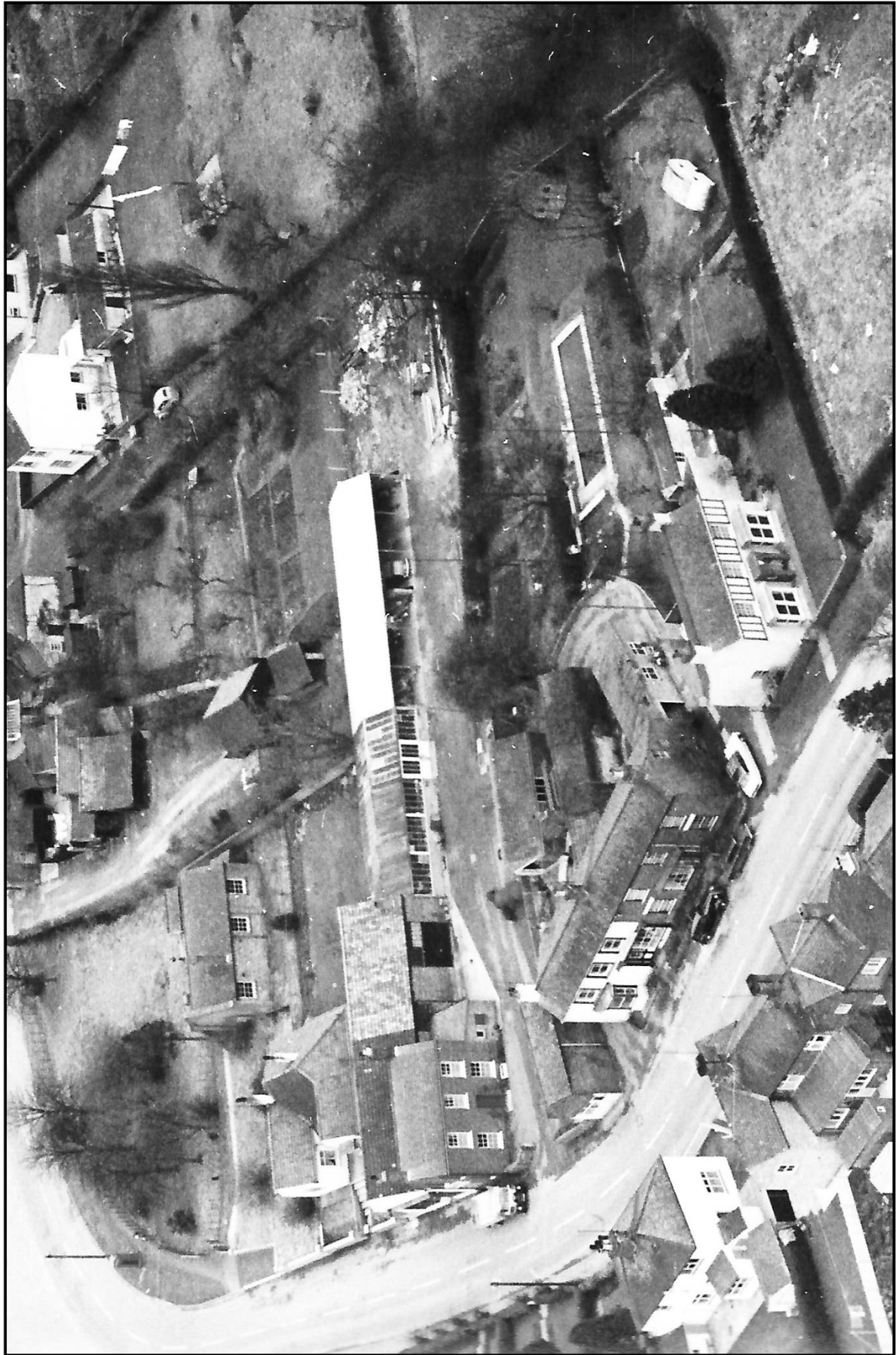
Tenant—Mr. Samuel Atkinson.

LOT 5.—A COTTAGE or TENEMENT with the Outbuildings and Garden thereto adjoining, abutting North, South, and West, on the Estate of G. H. Haigh, Esq., and containing 0

Tenant—Mr. David Fawcett.

A document provided by David and Carol Brown, owners of Holmfirth, relating to the sale of their house and others nearby – probably the cottages near Sadlers and Charlton House. Below, man and pig pass Holmfirth





Aerial Photograph, probably mid 1950s

William White (3 January 1799 – 3 September 1868) of Sheffield was a British publisher of White's Directories. He began his career in publishing at the age of 18 when he joined Edward Baines of Leeds in the preparation of county histories and directories. Within four years he had succeeded Mr Baines and proceeded to publish directories of numerous counties of England until 1864 when he was succeeded by his son, also William White (1832–1870).

WHITE'S 1842

THORESBY (NORTH,) a large village on the Grimsby road, 8 miles N. by W. of Louth, has in its parish 544 souls and 2485 acres of land, extending 2½ miles eastward to *Thoresby Bridge*, on the Louth navigation. It was nearly all in open fields, &c., till 1837, when an act was obtained for the *enclosure of the parish*, which was finished in 1840, when the drain water was carried under the Louth navigation, through an *iron culvert*, of an elliptical form, 250 feet long, and 10 feet in transverse diameter. The Earl of Yarborough is lord of the *manor* of Thoresby-cum-North Coates, and holds a court leet and baron here twice a year; but a great part of the soil belongs to the Parkinson, Haigh, Barkworth, and other families. The *Church* (St. Helen) is an ancient structure, except the chancel, which is of more modern date. The *rectory*, valued in K.B. at £24. 10s. 10d., has a yearly rent-charge of £44l. 12s. 11d., awarded at the enclosure in lieu of tithes; a glebe farm of 54A. 3R. 37P., and a good parsonage house. The Rev. Henry Bassett, of Glentworth, is patron and incumbent. The Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists have each a chapel here. A pleasure fair or feast is held here on Holy Thursday. The *Free School* was founded in 1676, by Dr. Robt. Mapletoft, dean of Ely and master of Pembroke College, who was born here, and founded several other charities. The school-land comprises about 47 acres, worth about £50 a year, but charged in 1838, with about £300, towards the expense of the enclosure, which is to be paid off in twenty years, by instalments. The master has a good house, near the school, and is required to instruct as free-scholars all the poor children of the parish. The *Poor's Land* comprises 16A. 3R. 12P., partly allotted at the recent enclosure, but mostly purchased with £20 left by Mrs. Frances Smith, in 1680, and other benefactions. There are two cottages upon it, and the whole is now worth about £25 a year, exclusive of a *Sunday School*, which has been erected upon it. The rents, after paying a yearly instalment towards the expense of the enclosure, are distributed among the poor of the parish.

Cooke John, butcher	Lister Robert	Marfleet Joseph
Dowse Thomas, beerhouse	<i>Farmers.</i>	Mumby John
Hobson William, vict. Granby Inn	Allison, Edmond	Pocter John
Hull Rev. John, B.A. curate	Barker James	Strothard James
Mumby John, schoolmaster	Barkworth Thos.	Walkerley Wm.
Pottage Richard, miller	Bingham Thos.	<i>Shoemakers.</i>
West David, brickmaker	Borman John	Cooke William
Wilkinson David, bricklayer	Dows John	Goodhand Robt.
Wright Christopher, parish clerk	Dows Stephen	Hewins Henry
<i>Blacksmiths.</i>	Forman Thomas	<i>Tailors.</i>
Beckett & Cooke	Hewson Anthy.	Button John
Heath William	Hewson Thos.	Walkerley John

<i>Wheelwrights.</i>	Janney Edward	<i>To Louth, Wed. &</i>	Harnis Matthew
Coulbeck Wm.	CARRIERS.	<i>Grimsby, Sat.</i>	Ingoldby James

WHITE'S 1892

THORESBY (NORTH), a large village on the high road, 8 miles S. by E. of Grimsby, and 8 miles N. by W. of Louth, has a station on the Great Northern Railway between Louth and Grimsby. It is in the Parts of Lindsey, Louth union and county court district, Bradley Haverstoe wapentake, Grimsby petty sessional division, and Louth Ekeo rural deanery of Stow archdeaconry. Its rateable value is £3376. Its parish contained 573 inhabitants in 1891 and 2485 acres of land, extending 3 miles eastward to Thoresby Bridge, on the Louth Navigation. It was nearly all in open fields, &c., till 1837, when an Act was obtained for the enclosure of the parish, which was finished in 1840, when the drain-water was carried under the Louth Navigation, through an iron culvert, of an elliptical form, 250 feet long and 10 feet in transverse diameter. George H. C. Haigh, Esq., is lord of the manor of Thoresby-cum-North-coates, and holds a court leet and baron here once a year. The custom of Borough-English prevails here. The owners of the soil are R. J. H. Parkinson, Esq., of East Ravendale, G. H. C. Haigh, William H. and Peter H. Campion, and William Payne, Esqrs., the representatives of the late Stephen Dows, and a few smaller owners. There were formerly eleven public-houses in the village, though there are now only two. The village has been much enlarged and improved since the enclosure of the

commons and open fields in 1840, and has now some good shops and many new houses and farmsteads; and the produce of the parish has increased fourfold. In a field near the church, called Bound Croft, is a blue stone, over which the manor court was formerly held. In the parish are a number of Blow Wells, containing beautiful spring-water, like those at Grimsby and Tetney. *Authy* (formerly written *Andby*) in this parish was formerly extra-parochial, and had a chapel. *ACTBY* House is occupied by Mr. John Wright.

The **CHURCH** (St. Helen) consisting of nave, chancel and square tower, containing three bells, is an ancient structure, except the chancel, which is of more modern date. It was thoroughly repaired in 1848, at the cost of more than £600. The register dates from 1546. The rectory, valued in K.B. at £24 10s. 10d., has a yearly rent-charge awarded at the enclosure in lieu of tithes, a glebe farm of 54a. 3r. 37p., and a good parsonage house, the net value now being about £360. It is in private patronage, and the incumbency of the Rev. Henry Garrett, M.A. The **WESLEYAN** and **PRIMITIVE METHODISTS** have each a chapel here, and in the village a Wesleyan day school was erected in 1856, at a cost of £650. A **SCHOOL BOARD** was formed in September, 1886, for the united district of North Thoresby, Grainsby and Waith. The Wesleyan School above referred to has been transferred to the Board. Mr. Thomas E. Markham, of Louth, is clerk to the Board.

A **FREE SCHOOL** was founded in 1676, by Dr. Robert Mapletoft, dean of Ely, and master of Pembroke College, who was born here, and founded several other charities. The school land comprises 41a. 1r. 25p. worth about £80 a year. A scheme was established by the Lord Chancellor for the future management of the school, under twelve trustees, who in 1854 built a new school and a house for the master, at a cost of £269. By a scheme approved by the Charity Commissioners in January, 1891, four scholarships of £5 each (or not more than £6) were founded, tenable for one year, and an exhibition at Louth Grammar School of £25 (or not more than £30), tenable for three years. R. J. H. Parkinson,

Ayscough Thomas, carrier
Battersby Miss Elizabeth, Ivy Dene
Baxter David
Baxter William, carrier
Blackburn William, butcher
Brooks Mrs Mary
Broughton Jesse Foster, grocer,
draper and druggist
*Bryan Wm. foreman, The Bridge
Butt Wm. farmer, &c.; h Grimsby
Campion Peter Hand, farmer (W.
H. & P. H.); h Utterby
Campion W. H. & P. H., farmers
and graziers; and at Utterby
Campion William Hosea, C.C. (W.
H. & P. H.); and landowner,
Highfield house
Coney Edward, joiner, &c
Dennis John, farmer, Eastfield
Dickinson John, florist and market
gardener
Dickinson William Laking, butcher
and parish clerk
Dows Mrs Adelaide, frmr. Westbrook
Dows Mr John
Dows John, junr. farmer
Dows Thomas, farmer, Rose cottage
Fanthorpe Mrs Mary, carrier
Freshney John, vict. New Inn
Garrett Rev Henry, M.A. rector,
The Rectory
George Henry, M.R.C.S. (Eng.),
L.S.A. surgeon, medical officer
for the Tetney district of Louth
Union, and public vaccinator
Grantham Croft, farmer
Green George, licensed hawker

Haith Mr Edward
Haith Mrs Mary
Haith Wm (exors. of), blacksmith
Hall Henry, joiner, wheelwright
and plough maker
Hawke Wm. farm foreman
Hewins John, poulterer and carrier
Hewson Henry, farmer
Hewson William, pig dealer
Higgs John, tailor & breeches mkr.
Hill Asaph, bricklayer
Hodgson Peter, farmer
Hutchinson Richard, saddler
Ingoldby James, farm bailiff to Mr
G. H. C. Haigh
Isaac Thomas, flour dealer, and job
and post master
Janney Ernest, manager
Janney Isaac, joiner & wheelwright;
and at Fulston
Johnson Richard, farmer, Westfield
Johnson William, joiner, &c
Kettlewell John, insurance agent
Mackarill Chas. builder & contractor
Moody William, farmer
Moore Thomas, bootmaker
Mumby Joseph, baker & shopkeeper
Oak William B. farm foreman
Ostler Charles, bootmaker
Parker Mr John Would, Maple
cottage
Patchett Mrs Ann, lodgings
Payne William, farmer, South Field
house
Pennell Blyth, farmer, Holme lane
Peters Edwin, stationmaster
Plumtree John Wm. plumber, &c

Pottage Charles, corn miller
Raithby William, coal agent
Robinson Jno. frmr. Eastfield house
Robinson Thomas Wright, Board
schoolmaster
Sempers Miss Alice, Board school-
mistress (infants')
Sempers William, grocer, &c
Skelton Mrs Eliza
Smith Jesse, land surveyor, tax
collector, and registrar of births,
deaths and marriages, and
vaccination officer for the Tetney
district of Louth Union, Crispin
cottage
*Smith John, farmer, coal and corn
merchant, &c. The Bridge; h
Cleethorpes
Smith Samuel, cattle dealer and
machine owner
Sowden James, sexton
Stephenson Charles, blacksmith
Swain George Clement, C.M. vict.
Granby Inn and Cyclists' Rest,
and art and drill teacher
Veasey Herbert Holmes, grocer,
draper, boot dealer & postmaster
Wright John, farmer and grazier,
Authy house (post Grimsby)
CARRIERS.—Fanthorpe & Hewins,
to Grimsby, Fridays, and they and
Ayscough & Baxter, to Louth,
Wednesdays and Saturdays
RAILWAY.—G. N. R. station on
the East Lincolnshire line; Edwin
Peters, stationmaster

KELLY'S 1913

NORTH THORESBY is a parish and large village, with a station on the East Lincolnshire section of the Great Northern railway, 8 miles north-by-west from Louth, 8 south-by-east from Grimsby and 148 from London, in the East Lindsey division of the county, parts of Lindsey, Bradley Haverstoe wapentake, Grimsby petty sessional division, Louth union and county court district, rural deanery of Ludborough No. 1, arch-deaconry of Stow and diocese of Lincoln. The church of St. Helen is an ancient building of stone in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, south aisle, south porch and an embattled western tower containing 3 bells: the chancel is of more modern date: the remains of a Saxon cross are preserved in the church: in the year 1848 the church was thoroughly repaired, at a cost of £600, and the chancel has since been restored, and in 1903 the belfry, nave and south porch were restored at a cost of £300: in 1909 a carved oak reredos was placed in the sanctuary: there are 350 sittings. The churchyard was enlarged in 1893. The registers date from the year 1546. The living is a rectory, net yearly value £335, including 57 acres of glebe, with residence, in the gift of Col. Sargeant, and held since 1908 by the Rev. Alfred Richings Tucker. There are Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapels here. The poor's land comprises 18 acres, partly allotted at the Inclosure, but mostly purchased with £20 left by Mrs. F. Smith in 1680, and other benefactions; the whole is now worth about £35 a year; the trustees of this charity are the rector and Messrs. George Smith and S. L. Patchett. George Henry Caton Haigh esq. of Grainsby Hall, who is lord of the manor, Robert John Hinman Parkinson esq. of Allarby, Mablethorpe, and the trustees of the late F. Campion are the principal landowners. The soil is generally strong and stiff, excepting the Fens, which are of a peaty nature; subsoil, strong

clay. The chief crops are wheat, oats and turnips. The area is 2,563 acres of land and 8 of water; rateable value, £3,269; population in 1911, 595.
Parish Clerk, George Proctor.

Post, M. O. & T. Office, North Thoresby, Lincolnshire.—Thomas Sanderson Prestwood, postmaster. Letters arrive from Louth at 6; delivered at 7 a.m. & at 5.40 p.m. to callers only; dispatched at 8 p.m. No delivery on Sunday.

Wall Letter Box, at Station, cleared 8.25 p.m.

Public Elementary School, erected in 1856, at a cost of £650, & enlarged about 1877, at a cost of £200 & again in 1911, at a cost of about £500, for 150 children; average attendance, 115; the children of the adjacent parishes of Grainsby & Waythe also attend here; Thomas Dudley, master; Miss Hilda Lane & Miss Nellie Barker, assistant mistresses. Attached to the school are Mapletofte scholarships, value £6 each, & one exhibition scholarship, which is awarded once every three years, value £90. These were left in 1622, by Dr. Robert Mapletofte, then rector of North Thoresby & afterwards dean of Ely; there are nine governors, three being ex-officio, three representative & three co-optative.

The school is controlled by six managers, appointed March, 1904; T. E. Markham, 6 Lee street, Louth, correspondent.

Railway Station, Joseph Bradbury, station master.

County Police, Walter Short, constable in charge.

Carriers to

Great Grimsby—Joshua Winn, Hewson Fawcett & John Hewins, Tues. & Fri.
Louth—Hewson Fawcett, Joshua Winn & John Hewins, Wed. & Sat.

PRIVATE RESIDENTS.

Atkinson John Henry
Brooks John
Corden William
Day Mrs.
George Misses
Grason Alfred
Hutchinson Mrs.
Leak Mrs.
Miller Guy Witton
Scargill Charles Mumby
Snowden Arthur R. Homefield
Tucker Rev. Alfred Richings (rector),
Rectory
Wright Richard

COMMERCIAL.

Atkinson Walker, farmer, Autby
Baxter David, market gardener
Bratley Jesse, wheelwright
Broughton Brothers, grocers
Brown Jabez, market gardener
Campion William Hosea, farmer
Cockerline Thomas, farmer
Dickinson William, butcher

Dows Adelaide (Mrs.), farmer
Dows Mary (Mrs.), farmer
Fawcett Hewson, carrier
Glasswell John, Granby inn
Grantham Henry, farmer
Grason Alfred, farmer
Haith Edward, blacksmith
Hall Henry, wheelwright & joiner
Hewins John, shopkeeper & carrier
Hewson Charles William, farmer
Higgs John, tailor
Hill Asaph, builder & bricklayer
Hinch John Thos. fmr. Church fmr.
Isaac Andrew, New inn
Johnson Tom, joiner
Kettlewell John, insurance agent & clerk to Parish Council
Lambert Albert Edward, farmer
Larder Ernest, saddler & harness maker of every description
Miller Guy Witton M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond. physician & surgeon, medical officer & public vaccinator, Tetney district, Louth union, & school medical officer

Mumby Eliza (Mrs.), baker
Ostler Albert, shoe maker
Patchett Samuel Lloyd, farmer
Plumtree John, plumber
Prestwood Isaac, coal dealer
Prestwood Thos. S. grocer, Post office
Roberts John Henry, grocer
Robinson John, farmer
Scargill Chas. M. buildr. & bricklayer
Smith Brothers, farmers
Smith Jesse, tax collector & registrar of births & deaths for Tetney sub-district, Louth union
Smith John, (Mrs.), thrashing machine owner
Smith Samuel William, thrashing machine owner
Smith Walter, farmer
Stephenson Charles, blacksmith
Storr William, butcher
Townend Walter, manure manufacturer & horse slaughterer
Wetherell & Lowies, wheelwrights
Willerton William, farmer
Winn Joshua, carrier

KELLY'S 1937

590 NORTH THORESBY.

LINCOLNSHIRE.

[KELLY'S

NORTH THORESBY is a parish and large village, with a station on the East Lincolnshire section of the London and North Eastern railway, 8 miles north-by-west from Louth, 8 south-by-east from Grimsby and 14½ from London, in the Louth division of the county, parts of Lindsey, Bradley Haverstoe wapentake, Grimsby petty sessional division, Louth rural district and county court district, rural deanery of Luddborough, archdeaconry of Lindsey and diocese of Lincoln. The church of St. Helen is an ancient building of stone in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, north aisle, south porch and an embattled western tower (restored in 1929) containing 3 bells: the chancel is of more modern date: the remains of a Saxon cross are preserved in the church: in the year 1848 the church was repaired, and the chancel has since been restored, and in 1903 the belfry, nave and south porch were restored: in 1909 a carved oak reredos was placed in the sanctuary: there are 350 sittings. The churchyard was enlarged in 1893 and 1929. A granite cross was erected in 1921 on a site for the extension of the churchyard, in memory of the 21 men of the parish who fell during the Great War, 1914-18; their names are inscribed on the front of the centre base. The registers date from the year 1546. The living is a rectory, net yearly value £444, including 57 acres of glebe, with residence, in the gift of Fairbanks Kirby esq. and held since 1936 by the Rev. Herbert Henry Ashley B.A. of Manchester University. There are two Methodist chapels here. The poor's

land comprises 18 acres, partly allotted at the Inclosure, but mostly purchased with £20 left by Mrs. F. Smith in 1680, and other benefactions; the whole is now worth about £35 a year. £500 was left by F. Lord, of Grimsby, in 1923 to build a Village Hall, as well as the land for the site, and the interest on £500 towards a local widows' fund. George Henry Caton Haigh esq. J.P. who is lord of the manor, the trustees of the late G. F. Sleight and of the late William Campion esq. and William W. W. Butt esq. are the principal landowners. The soil is generally strong and stiff, excepting the Fens, which are of a peaty nature; subsoil, strong clay. The chief crops are wheat, oats and turnips. The area is 2,563 acres of land and 8 of water; population in 1931, 653.

Post, M. O., T. & T. E. D. Office. Letters should have Lincolnshire added

Police Station

Rate Collector & Registrar for Births & Deaths, Mrs. Wraithby, Luddborough

Railway Station (L. & N. E.)

Carriers to

Great Grimsby—Joshua Winn & George Rawson, Tues. & Fri

Louth—George Rawson & Joshua Winn, Wed. & Sat

Conveyance.—A motor omnibus service passes through hourly between Louth & Grimsby

PRIVATE RESIDENTS.

(For T N's see general list of Private Residents at end of Book.)

Ashley Rev. Henry Herbert B.A. (rector), The Rectory

Bascombe Mrs. Edith E. Highfield house

Brooks Charles

Butt Wm. Wlfr. Wright, Westbrook

Campion Mrs. Mary E

Chatterton Mrs., Acacia bungalow

Clegg Harold Hewson, Ivydene

Cox Ralph, Southey

Dale Henry William, Mapletoft house

Deeks John Robert, The Orchard

Garner Bertie, Fairview

Gaukroger Roy

George Miss

Grason Mrs. Hill crest

Guy Miss, Clifton

Hutchinson Misses

Ryder Mrs. Winifred, Burghwallis

Stanley George Wheldale, Wyndy-ridge

Taylor Thomas

COMMERCIAL.

Marked thus ° farm 150 acres or over.

Askew Fred, baker

Barker Alfd. coal & coke mer.(depot)

Barker Wm. haulage contrctr.

T N 16

Barling Wm. farmer, Micklemore

°Baumber Jn. Wm. farmer, Authby

& Westfield farms

Bradbury Cecil, tobaccnst. Post office

Bratley Jesse, wheelwright

Broughton Fredk. H. grocer. T N 4

Brown Chas. Albt. bricklayer

Butt Wm. W. Wright, farmer, West-

brook. T N 6

°Campion Rd. Hand, farmer

Carr Albt. Hy. bldr. T N 23

Clark Agnes (Mrs.), teacher of

music

Coxon W. F. & F. haulage contrctrs.

T N 32

Dennis Jn. Hy. Gordon, grazier, The

Poplars

Dickinson & Sons, butchers

°Gaukroger Roy, farmer

Granby Inn (Mrs. Martha Ethel

Smith)

Gennay Jack S. butcher

Green Jn. Albt. blacksmith

Hinch Jn. Thos. dairyman

Larder Ernest, saddler

°Mumby David, farmer, Southfield

Mumby John William, motor

accessories, engineer & agent &

cycle agent, The Garage, Louth

road. T N 42

New Inn (Hy. Perry Capron)

North Thoresby Social Club

Ostler Albt. shoe mkr

Rawson Geo. carrier. T N 17

Roberts Jn. Hy. grocer. T N 27

°Robinson Jas. Barton, Church frm

Smith Hedley, thrashing machine

owner

Smith Walt. thrashing machine ownr

Stanley Geo. Wheldale L.R.C.P. &

S.Irel. physcn. & surgn. Wyndy-

ridge. T N 2

Stephenson Geo. blacksmith

Storr E. E. (Mrs.), butcher. T N 22

Townend Bros. dairymen

Townend Fred, electrl. engnr

Tyson Jane (Miss), dressma

Ward Edwd. hairdrrsr

West H. F. Ltd. hay & straw mer-

chants & manure manufacturers.

T N 33

°West Chas. Jsph. farmer, Park frm

Winn Joshua, carrier

Woods Maud Alice (Mrs.), garage

Important People in the Enclosure of North Thoresby

Historical change has causes; individual people cause things to happen, in particular historical circumstances. Enclosure happened because a small number of wealthy landowners wanted it to happen, for their own interests, in an age when enclosure had become the norm, driven by the various aspects of the agricultural revolution – and in themselves, essential to support the social consequences of the industrialisation – and urbanisation – of the country.

Rex Russell's study of North Thoresby enclosure tells us much about who the 'movers and shakers' were in the village affairs. He tells us:

In 1836 an important general enclosure act was passed. This permitted enclosure by the consent of a majority of the proprietors (generally at least two-thirds), without the requirement of any special application to Parliament. North Thoresby was enclosed under the provisions of this Act.

The Stamford Mercury of 4 November 1836 printed this long and important public notice:

NORTH THORESBY INCLOSURE

We, the undersigned, being Three of the Proprietors of . . . Parcels of Land and Ground within the Open and Common Arable Fields and Lands ... of NORTH THORESBY and having an interest in the Open and Common Arable Meadow and Pasture Lands and Fields do, by this notice ... call a PUBLIC MEETING of the Proprietors and Persons interested in the said Open and Common Arable, Meadow and Pasture Lands and Fields ... for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of the General INCLOSURE of the said Open and Common Arable, Meadow, and Pasture Lands and Fields ... and of extinguishing the Right of Intercommonage existing in respect thereof ... and also for making an agreement in order to effect such Inclosure; and we do also give Notice, that such Meeting will be held at the GRANBY INN in ... NORTH THORESBY, on THURSDAY the Twenty-fourth day of November instant, at ... Eleven in the Fore-noon. - Given under our hands this First day of November, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six.

Witness,

FRED. LUCAS.

JOHN PARKINSON JOHN DOWS THEO. HARNEIS.

Lucas was a Louth solicitor. Who were the three signatories? The Reverend John Parkinson* (of East Ravendale) owned much of the land in N. Thoresby: at enclosure he was awarded the major share, 865 acres. John Dows was much less important as a landowner, at enclosure he was awarded a fraction over 8 acres: however, John Dows was a more substantial man than at first appears. The Tithe Award for N. Thoresby (1839) shows him owning nearly 113 acres already and also as the major tenant-farmer of the Reverend Dr. Parkinson, renting a little under 299 acres. John Dows may well have acted on behalf of Parkinson in pressing for enclosure.

Theophilus Harneis was awarded 15 acres and 30 perches, and he had considerable status in this area. White's Directory of 1842 states: 'Hawerby is the property of Theophilus John Harneis, Esq., of Hawerby Hall, a handsome mansion all a pleasant acclivity, commanding extensive views, and erected about 50 years ago, but much enlarged and improved in 1840.' Hawerby Hall still stands on the site of the deserted medieval village (now largely destroyed by ploughing): Hawerby parish adjoins N. Thoresby on the west. It is not unlikely that people in Thoresby could recall, in 1836, a savage sentence passed on two of their parishioners at the Quarter Sessions held at Kirton in Lindsey in January 1840. It concerned Mr. Harneis.

'Christopher Grant, late of North Thoresby, mariner, convicted of stealing two geese and three ducks, the property of Mr Theophilus Harneis of Hawerby, was sentenced to be transported for seven years; Joseph Grant, late of North Thoresby, labourer, convicted of stealing one hempen sack ... was sentenced to be transported for seven years.'

The Commissioner appointed to oversee the process was the immensely wealthy John Burcham of Coningsby (he left the sum of £400,000 in his will of 1840)– he was also the land agent for Lord Yarborough, the Lord of the Manor of North Thoresby – and on his death in 1840, was succeeded by Robert John Atkinson (who had also become Lord Yarborough's land agent!).

*The initials JP can be found on Ivy Dene House on Church Lane.

What Happened to the Traditional Village? What Future for the 21st Century Village?

Having said that we cannot understand our village history without looking at important continuities, we also need to address the question of why and when the traditional village disappeared. One of the best explanations is that of Trevor Rowley in his, 'Villages in the Landscape', which, while written 30 years ago, remains a perceptive analysis. I've abbreviated, edited, amended and added to the final chapter of the book below.

Page
| 69

The modern village reflects the society in which we live. The very basis on which the village flourished for thousands of years - agriculture and crafts - no longer play a serious part in the life of most rural communities. The basic stability that welded the village population together through dramatic changes has now all but disappeared.

The Enclosure of North Thoresby ended the system of communal farming, which obliged everyone to co-operate, and which recognized widespread common rights – for example to pastureland - as Rex Russell summarizes:

'Enclosure helped to create both our modern landscape of hedged fields with farmsteads and farm cottages away from the village centre, and our system of farming. Enclosure swept away the field system which had been familiar to many, many generations of North Thoresby people and created in its stead the system we know today. In a very real sense, enclosure was the creation of modern North Thoresby. After enclosure farming was no longer the concern of the whole community of people with land and rights of common. With the abolition of common-rights and the dividing and hedging of the land, the community after enclosure counted for little: the individual landowners and their individual tenants became much more important than the community.'

Throughout the twentieth century there were two fundamental developments in British agriculture. Firstly, a steady and relentless decline in the number of people involved in agricultural production since the late nineteenth century, to the point where today only 1 per cent of the population are employed in agriculture compared to 73 per cent of the land surface still in agricultural use. The second process which has accelerated since 1945 is the application of technology to agriculture, resulting in the creation of an agricultural 'industry' which over much of the country is highly efficient but operates largely independently of local rural communities.

The result of this has been that farm and village have become increasingly divorced from each other and the links between the farm and its land and the village community have been severed in most places. The village and the locality have long since ceased to be the market for local farm produce, except perhaps for specialist products sold at the farm-gate to passing motorists or farmers' markets; the farmer is part of a national, and international syndicate. There are still parts of the kingdom where villages and hamlets consist largely of working farms - but generally the number of farms operated from within the village framework has diminished drastically and is continuing to diminish.

Craftwork has virtually disappeared from the countryside. By 1939 there were very few village craftsmen still operating. Employment opportunities in many villages are now virtually non-existent. The countryside is increasingly regarded by the town dweller more for its amenity value and less for its capacity to produce food. Some villages have become tourist 'honeypots' – but tourism is essentially transient and fluctuating, yet another impermanent ingredient to village life and can also be a great nuisance to the everyday lives of village residents. It effectively creates artificial zoo-like entities, houses, commonly bought up by second homeowners, places largely deserted in winter.

In the inter-war years, village England was in a state of physical decline. Agriculture was at a very low ebb and job opportunities within the community were strictly limited, so the process of migration from many rural areas which had started in the nineteenth century continued unchecked. Against this, however, should be set the fact that most of the village institutions were still, in the 1920s and 30s, functioning, and very many rural communities still included at least one flourishing religious building quite apart from their parish church. Like North Thoresby, many villages could boast of a school and often a Sunday School, shops, a post office, a baker and often a carpenter, shoemaker and tailor, quite apart from builders, saddlers, blacksmiths and so on. Nevertheless, all these reflected a former stability and way of life that was declining quickly - a decline that was accelerated by the 1939-45 war.

Increased mobility from the 1950s onward, through the motorcar and, to a lesser extent, public transport, meant that many services that were previously provided in each village are now available only in the nearest town or in a key village chosen because of its central position. The local store and post office have followed the school to the market town, and parish churches are being made redundant at the rate of about one hundred a year. Most people are now prepared, and able, to travel considerable distances to their places of work. In this, North Thoresby

has been relatively fortunate, but the number of shops in the village has declined markedly in the last 30 years and may well continue to do so.

Villages like ours, which lie within thirty kilometres of a town, or an employment centre, have been taken up as pleasant places to live in and this is reflected everywhere in the rebuilding and renovation of houses, conversion of farm buildings, house-extensions, single and double garages, infilling and village expansion. Many settlements have been chosen, or more often because of close proximity to a town, have evolved, as nuclei for commuter development [like Holton-le-Clay and Waltham]. Private and council estates have been grafted onto ancient centres, in many cases changing the character of the original village out of all recognition. In some cases, a new road has bypassed the old village centre and acted as a focus for development, while in others the development has joined old villages to an outward spreading conurbation.

In physical terms these villages have experienced a rash of semi-detached ribbon development in the interwar years and the imposition of unyielding local authority and private estates since the war. Quite apart from the sociological impact, such development has transformed many rural areas, making them virtually indistinguishable from the suburbs of countless towns and cities. In some cases, there has been a complete transformation from village to town within a decade.

Villages were not conceived as objects of aesthetic admiration; it is time and not design that has given our surviving villages diversity, character and strength, and time that has mellowed church, dwellings, lanes and fields, welding them into thousands of individual personalities. The problem is not change, rather it is the scale and nature of change that needs to be monitored in order to conserve our villages. The village cannot survive as a fossilized museum piece, it must have a functional role otherwise eventually it will die away.

What are the characteristics of North Thoresby today? In the main, North Thoresby has thrived in recent times – helped by its location between Louth and Grimsby on the A16 artery north-south, and its development as a relatively large village, it has been an ideal residential location for those who need good access to their workplace with the advantages of a country setting, and a short trip to the coast. Its size has meant amenities, shops, school, a surgery, a bus service, pubs, remain – and it is a centre for smaller villages and hamlets nearby.

Easy reach of a very pleasant market town and a small city are further attractions. Walks in the countryside are available from the village itself, or nearby. Its local institutions, and civic and sports groups have a deserved reputation for being ‘lively’ and active. It’s small enough for people to know many of their neighbours, and there’s a core of people who have lived here, grown up here and stayed here, for the village to have an historic identity. In this booklet, the work of many people over several generations bears witness to a care about the history of the village and well-being of the community. People, not bricks and mortar, make a community and there has been, and are, many fine people here. A reasonable conclusion would be that North Thoresby has managed to retain some essential characteristics of a village community, in a much-changed context.

There are, of course, concerns and drawbacks – there’s too much traffic, and too heavy vehicles, passing through the centre of the village; the drainage system is inadequate; ‘infill’ and building development over the last 40 or 50 years has been haphazard, at the whim of developers’ initiatives rather than guided by an overall strategic plan - the lack of parking in the village centre has a range of undesirable, and limiting, consequences. Currently, a most unwelcome, and inappropriate planning application hangs over us.

Despite the fundamental changes wrought by economic and technological revolutions – and their social impact outlined above, villages remain essentially different to towns and suburbs and offer opportunities for a more fulfilling and healthy life. Our objection to this application was based on a view that villages need protecting and preserving as human-scale communities, sustainable in the 21st century.

‘A development of this size, density, and design - and the desirable characteristics it so clearly lacks - involves the enormous risk of destroying the identity of a village settlement, at least 1200 years old; with its essential physical characteristics as a rural setting, lost. Words commonly used to describe the social features of a village ‘small and intimate’, ‘possessing a unique spatial identity’, ‘inclusive’, ‘facilitating social interaction, support and co-operation’; ‘locally driven and locally responsive’ – all point to the inappropriateness of this development.

A village is a distinct form of settlement, of historical and cultural importance and it is vital, in the laudable desire to renew and increase the housing stock, that the importance of sustaining the essential character of a village environment is weighed on the scales.

A village is a form of social existence which can still offer a way of life which is distinctive from town or suburb; where individuals are genuinely part of a community, where there’s a good chance of people knowing (and helping) a wide range of their neighbours; where people have continuity and roots and where fellow villagers can interact in the wide range of community activities, led by active village groups and organisations. Village life

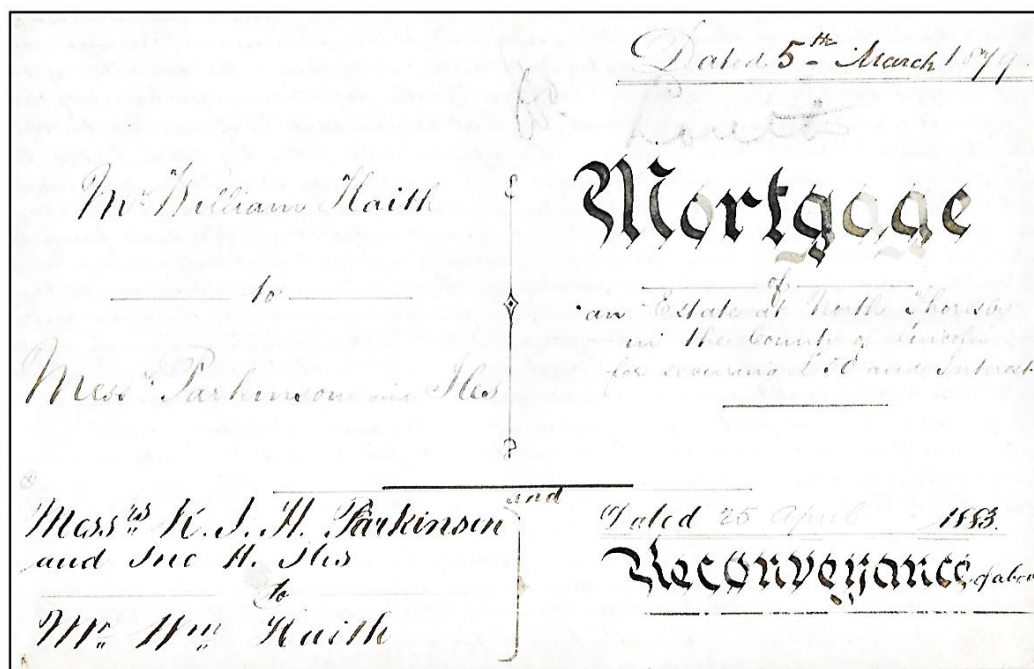
promotes civic pride and a range of important values – from the care of public spaces to participation in sport, cultural and recreational activities. Thoresby is well blessed.'

Of course, this doesn't 'just happen' it needs active community leadership and a willingness for villagers to support and be involved; it needs places and contexts where people can come together; it needs projects and a ritual of annual events; it needs co-operation, communication and dialogue. Academic evidence overwhelmingly suggests that social and community activity contributes significantly to physical and mental health.

In this respect, we are well served: from the Pop In lunches, to the sports clubs, to the activities of the church groups, to the strong leadership in the school; from the Live and Local Concerts to the routines of regular monthly and annual events, much added to in recent times by the North Thoresby Community Events Association. From the Christmas lights and tree to the 'speed-gunners' out on early patrols; to the volunteers who quietly keep the streets and the Memorial Garden spick and span; to the social groups – the Art Group, the WI, the WI book group, 'Knit and Natterers' and many more; the importance of the Village Hall and the Wesley Centre in hosting so many activities, the Village Newsletter and the recent introduction of North Thoresby News and a Village Directory - each one adding to the whole; the whole, more than the sum of the parts.

IW August 2021

Page
| 71



A mortgage document of 1878 relating to the sale of what is now Holmfirth cottage. William Haith owned most of Grainsby Parish. These documents are difficult to decipher but it will be valuable to get experts in to look at the many documents of this kind we have in the village.

The Danish Settlement

The mechanics of the Danish settlement in our area between 877 and c. 910 is not very clear. What is now not disputed is that they came in significant numbers, that they were accompanied by existing leaders - their 'Jarls' - and that these leaders took over the English estates and settled their followers on them. So, after some frightening years during which the take-over was accomplished, one can imagine the Anglo-Saxon peasant farmers coming to terms with the new situation.

This required them to live alongside Danish families, adopt, to a greater or lesser extent, their language, laws and customs, and, like their Danish neighbours, to pay their 'taxes' (cash, food renders and labour services) to the new Danish lord. Although from this time until at least the Norman Conquest it is probably better to speak of Anglo-Danish rather than Anglo-Saxon Thoresby, peasant life would have settled down again pretty much as before - the usual grind of the agricultural year with its constant striving to feed the family and satisfy the demands of the lord.

Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant, 'The Early History of Barton-upon-Humber.'

Scadanavian Place Names

Source: 'The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Lindsey,' Kevin Leahy

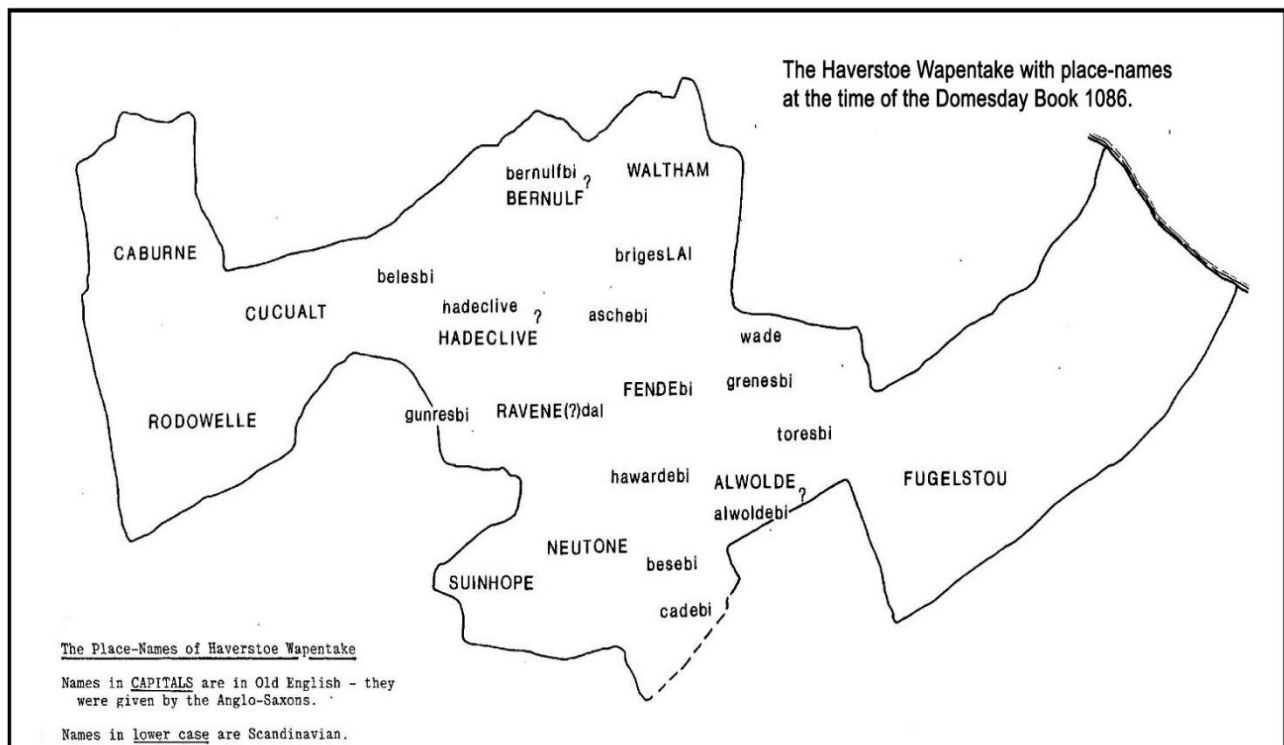
The main evidence for the Danish presence in Lindsey is the remarkable number of Scandinavian place-names. There are 151 place-names ending in -by which represents 30.7 per cent of the 492 places recorded at Domesday. In addition to this there are 38 -thorpes (secondary or outlying settlement; Scunthorpe, Raventhorpe) representing a further 7.7 per cent of the Domesday vills. In Lindsey, therefore, 38.4 per cent of the Domesday villages had Danish place-names. In most cases the -by and -thorpe is compounded with a Danish personal name, as at Scunthorpe: 'Skuma's secondary settlement'. Place-names employing the names of individuals are rare in Denmark but common in England, showing the part played by individuals in the settlement of England.

These place-names have typical Scandinavian grammatical inflections showing that they were created by people who were speaking Danish correctly. It is thought that these place-names were created in the late ninth century. What is significant is that, at whatever date these place-names were formed, they were created by people with Scandinavian names who could speak Danish. The distribution map of Danish place-names in Lindsey shows a major concentration at the southern end of the Wolds and in two lines running up though the northern Wolds (including North Thoresby). While it might appear that these sites are located along trackways they actually seem to lie on the spring lines.

There is a concentration of Danish place-names in the angle between the Trent and Humber and small clusters north of Lincoln. Many of the parishes with Danish place-names (Riby, Laceby, Brocklesby, Irby, Keelby) contain Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and must have been renamed. A striking feature of the distribution is the lack of Danish place-names around Lincoln, which was one of the Five Viking Boroughs. It is likely that, in 877, the leaders of the Great Army settled at Lincoln taking over, for their own use, the estates around the city. The Anglo-Saxon peasants were left in place and the estates not fragmented or renamed. Elsewhere in Lindsey the land was settled by the rank and file of the Great army. Viking metalwork finds in the region show quite crude work, indicating an influx of Danish peasant women to join their menfolk.

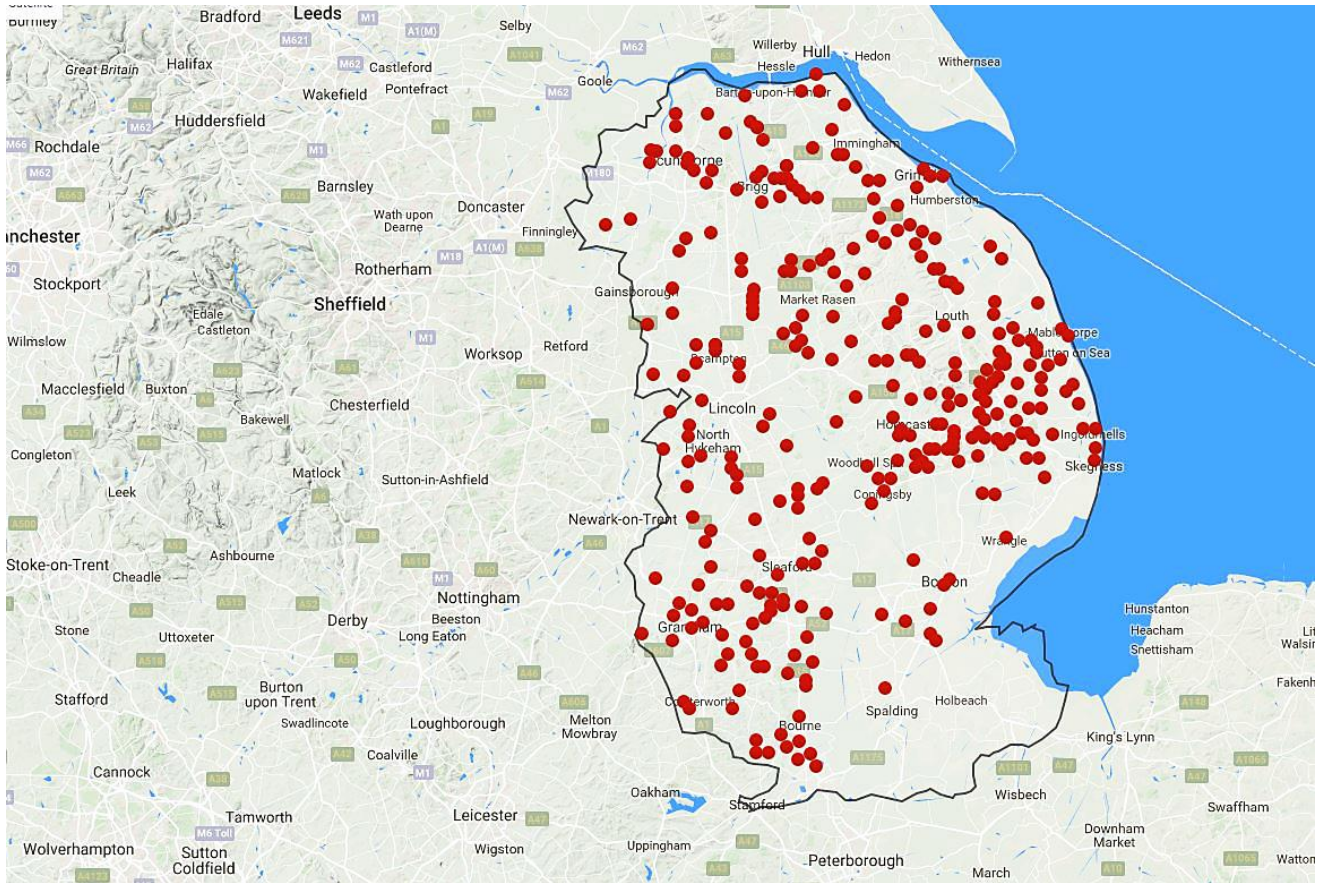
Page
| 72

See page 106 for an explanation of Wapentake.

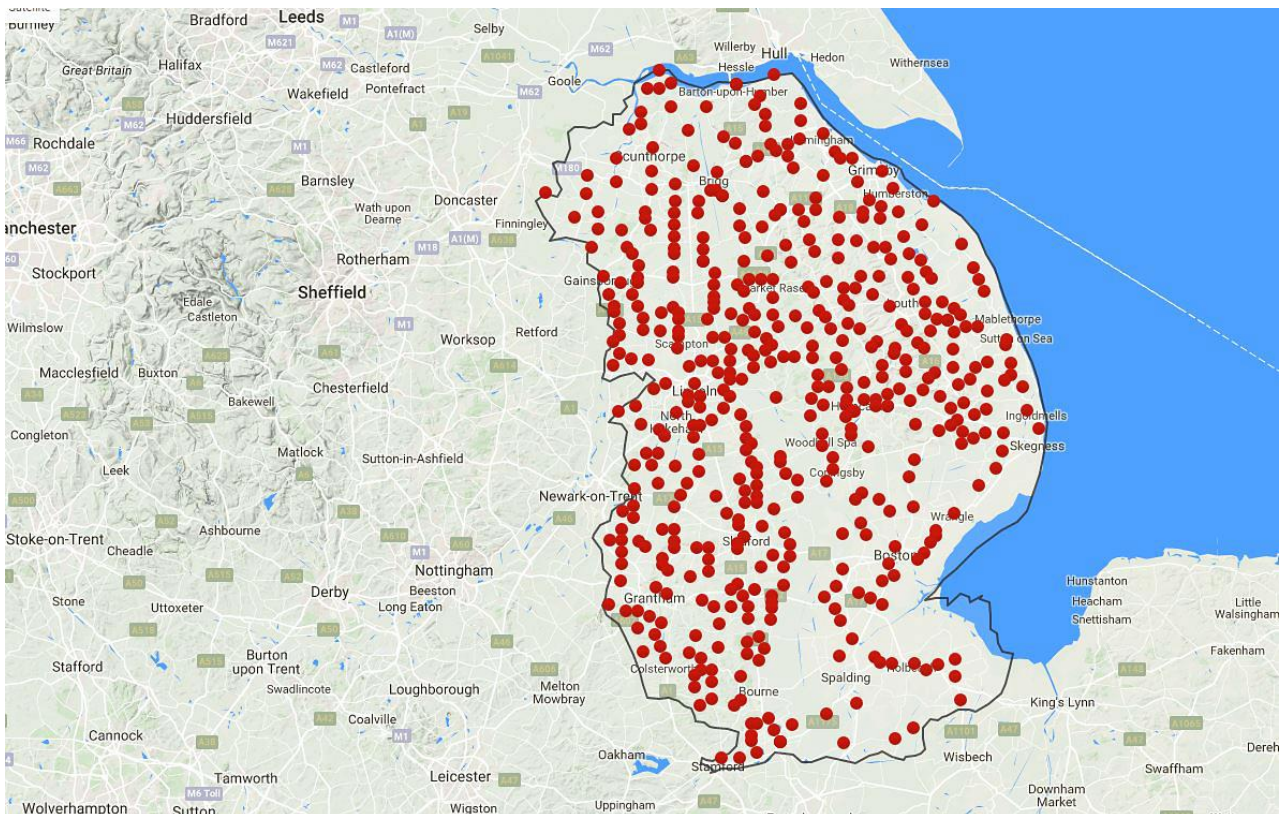


Middle English, from Old English wæpentæc, from Old Norse vāpnatak act of grasping weapons, from vāpn weapon + tak act of grasping, from taka to take; probably from the brandishing of weapons as an expression of approval when the chief of the wapentake entered upon his office

Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant



Villages with names with Old Norse origin – above- and Old English below – suggesting which areas were most heavily settled by the Danes.



Examples of Villages with Old Norse Derivations

Brocklesby

*Broklauss's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old Norse) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **bȳ** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

Hawerby cum Beesby

'Hawarth's farm/settlement'. 'Bes's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old Norse) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **bȳ** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

Clixby

Probably, 'Klippr's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old Norse) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **bȳ** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

Irby

'Farm/settlement of the Irish'.

Elements and their meanings

- **íri** (Old Norse) An Irishman; probably also a Norseman who had lived in Ireland.
- **bȳ** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

East and West

Ravendale

'Ravens' valley'.

Elements and their meanings

- **hrafn** (Old Norse) A raven.
- **dalr** (Old Norse) A valley.

Examples of Villages with Old English Derivations

Hatcliffe

'Hadda's cliff'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old English) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **clif** (Old English) An escarpment, a hill-slope; a river-bank.

Holton le Clay

'Hill-spur farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **hōh** (Old English) A heel; a sharply projecting piece of ground.
- **tūn** (Old English) An enclosure; a farmstead; a village; an estate.

Rothwell

'Clearings' spring/stream'.

Elements and their meanings

- **wella** (Anglian) A spring, a stream.
- **roð** (Old English) A clearing.

Stainton le Vale

'Stone farm/settlement' 'in the valley'.

Elements and their meanings

- **stān** (Old English) A stone, stone, rock.
- **tūn** (Old English) An enclosure; a farmstead; a village; an estate.
- **vale** (Middle English) A vale, a wide valley.

Waithe

'Ford'.

Elements and their meanings

- **wæd** (Old English) A ford.

Examples of Villages with Hybrid Derivations

Kirmond le Mire

'Goat hill' on the peat bog.

Elements and their meanings

- **chevrele** (Old French) A kid.
- **mont** (Middle English) A mount, a hill.
- **mýrr** (Old Norse) A swamp.

Brackenborough

'Bracken/fern hill'.

Elements and their meanings

- **brakni** (Old Norse) Bracken, fern.
- **berg** (Anglian) A hill, a mound; an artificial hill; a tumulus.

Utterby

'Uhtred's/Uhere's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old English) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **bý** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

Normanby le Wold

'Norwegian Vikings' farm/settlement' on the high forest

Elements and their meanings

- **Norðman** (Old English) A Northman, a Norwegian.
- **bý** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.
- **wald** (Anglian) A forest; high forest-land.

Wyham cum Cadeby

'At the shrines'. 'Kati's farm/settlement'.

Elements and their meanings

- **pers.n.** (Old Norse) **pers.n.** Personal name
- **wīg** (Old English) An idol; a shrine.
- **bý** (Old Norse) A farmstead, a village.

Recent Archaeology

Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned in 2019 by Cyden Homes Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land ('Beanland') off Ludborough Road, North Thoresby, in relation to a planning application for a residential development. The evaluation was preceded by a heritage impact assessment, consisting of desk-based research and a geophysical survey. Conclusions included:

'The site lies in an area of archaeological interest, with considerable evidence of occupation of later prehistoric to medieval date in the area and lying close to the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of North Thoresby. Numerous metal finds, dating from the Iron Age to the medieval period have been found near the site, including a Roman coin hoard.

Twenty-two evaluation trenches, measuring 50m by 1.8m were excavated. Sixteen of these contained features of archaeological significance, comprising several linear features and pits. A crouched burial was encountered. Pottery from the site spans dates from the Bronze Age to the Late Roman period, but most of it is of a 3rd century AD Roman date. A small number of sherds were Bronze Age in date and may be residual, while a group of late Iron Age-early Roman sherds may represent an earlier concentration of activity in the northeast part of the site.

The character of the site is consistent with two separate rural Romano-British settlements, with a possible domestic area centred on a group of postholes to the southwest.

North Thoresby's Roman Road? Source: William Toyne

In 1954, William Toyne put forward an intriguing theory about a Roman road running through North Thoresby. This has passed into the folk memory of the village – so, is it now accepted?

A BURIED ROADWAY

Lincolnshire Poacher BY WILLIAM TOYNE, B.Sc. *Spring 1954*

ROADS, of some sort or other, are an integral factor in the life of mankind. I think that at some time or other, when going along an old road, we all must have let our imaginations roam in an effort to conjure up pictures of the bye-gone travellers who have passed up and down the self-same route. In common with other evidence of the past there are old roads buried below the surface, but Dame Nature, so houseproud in her concern for the country-side, so careful in her tidying-up processes, quietly covers, with a gentle green sward, any neglected man-made relics, so that we are continually surprised and pleased by the discovery of long hidden evidence concerning our forefathers.

My particular story of a road starts some years ago, in the winter of 1938. I had recently bought a newly built house at North Thoresby and was in the process of developing a garden. I wished to plant some trees and shrubs along one border and found a hard-core at a depth of

10 to 12 inches. This hard-core was an admixture of chalk and flint, requiring a good deal of effort with a gablick to cut through, and it ran the whole width of my north boundary, parallel to what was previously a field hedge.

It was quite clear that this hard-core had nothing to do with any previous boning for a field gate-way, nor was it of natural origin for the land here is boulder clay. The whole matter was somewhat of a puzzle; local enquiry discovered nothing that could throw light on it, so there the affair rested for a time.

The second stage came out of a talk with an old local inhabitant on the subject of footpaths and in among other matters I was told of an old footpath, now vanished, which ran from near Winn's Corner, North Thoresby to Station Road close to where my garden is. I naturally began to wonder if there was any connection between my "hard-core" and this old, vanished footpath.

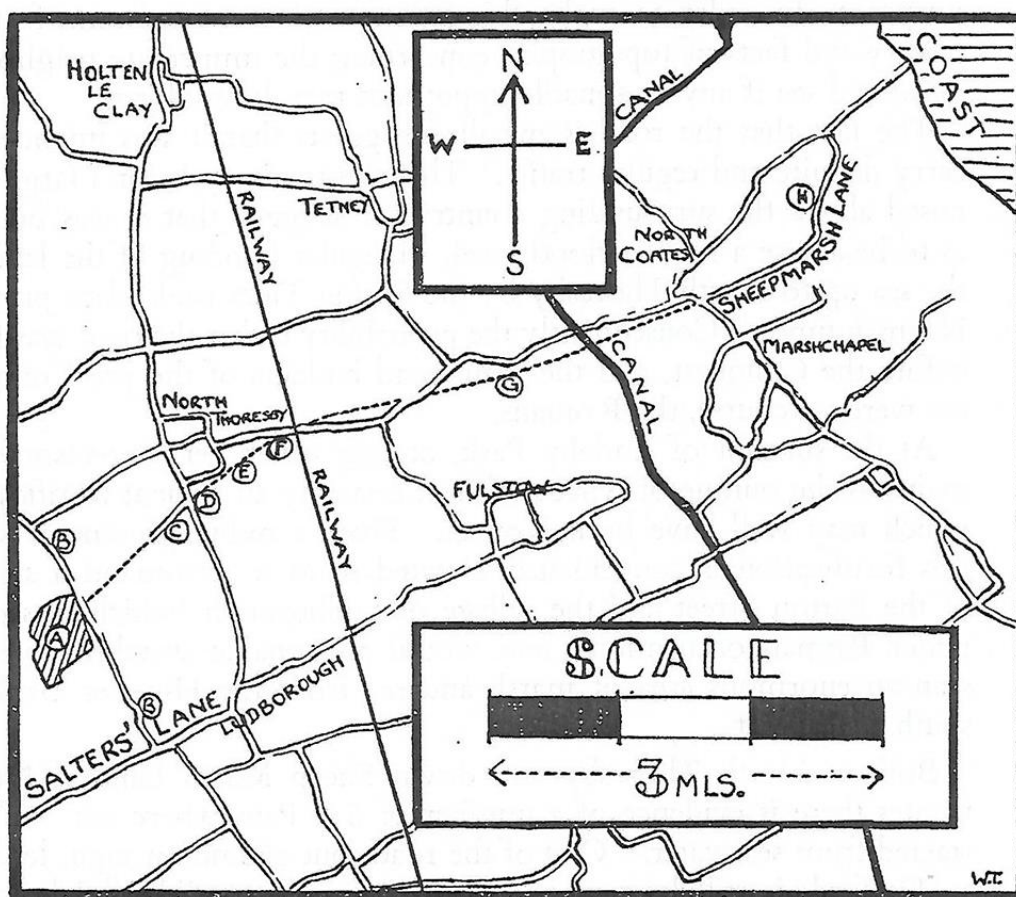
Phase three arrived when a farmer showed me a curious raised "causeway" running in a roughly East-West direction across his grassland between Second Fen Bridge and Thoresby Bridge not far from the Louth Navigational Canal. This raised "causeway" proved to have a chalk and flint hard-core, now, of course, overlaid with soil and grass.

The fourth phase was when I noticed a second raised "causeway," running in an East-West direction, in the grass land immediately to the East of the main Louth-Grimsby Road and opposite the end of Autby Drive; in fact, so exactly opposite as to suggest that this raised "causeway" and Autby Drive were originally continuous. Furthermore this particular section of raised "causeway" appeared to travel to the East in such a way as to probably join up with the old foot-path mentioned in stage two above. Again this "causeway" had a hard-core of Chalk and Flint overlaid with soil.

The O.S. Map came into use and it was quite clear straightaway that Autby Drive, the causeway opposite, the old footpath, and the hard-core in my garden were all part of the same original roadway. Additional confirmation was obtained by going over this part of the course and making sample diggings here and there, and this same hard-core of chalk and flint was found at each dig.

Now a roadway is made for a purpose—to connect "here" to "there"; to carry traffic of some sort. The problem was—where were "here" and "there," so far as this road was concerned, and for what traffic was it built?

In this connection the existence of the raised causeway to be seen near Thoresby Bridge, identical in construction with the other sections,



- A —Cadeby Park.
- B—B —Section of Barton Street.
- C —Autby Drive.
- D —Raised Causeway, continuation of Autby Drive. (Stage 4).
- E —Vanished Footpath. (Stage 2).
- F —Buried "Hardware" in my garden. (Stage 1).
- G —Raised Causeway near Thoresby Bridge. (Stage 3).
- H —Saltpans adjacent to Sheepmarsh Lane.

The Dotted Line from Cadeby Park to Sheepmarsh Lane represents the probable route of the buried road.

raised the obvious query—is the Thoresby Bridge section a continuation of the Autby Drive—North Thoresby section? Again recourse to the O.S. Map showed that these two sections are not diametrically opposed, but that they can be reasonably joined by a slightly curved line, and it is significant to note that this slight curve follows a natural contour running above the low level of the surrounding Marsh landscape.

Two further unexpected facts emerged, namely that an Easterly prolongation of the Thoresby Bridge section leads directly into Sheep Marsh Lane at North Coates, and that a Westerly prolongation of the Thoresby section leads directly to Cadeby Park on the Wolds.

This establishes a strong probability regarding the "here" and "there" of this road (Cadeby Park to Sheep Marsh Lane). Can we go further and make some reasonable suggestion concerning its origin and

purpose? In order to make this attempt we must examine facts of history and facts of topography concerning the immediate neighbourhood and see if any reasonable hypothesis may be evolved.

The fact that the road is metalled suggests that it was intended to carry definite and regular traffic. That the roadway is for a large part raised above the surrounding countryside suggests that it was built so as to be above a regular flood level. Regular flooding of the land by the sea up to North Thoresby by the Spring Tides took place prior to Norman times. Consequently the probability is that the road was built before the Conquest, and the main road builders of the pre-Conquest era were, of course, the Romans.

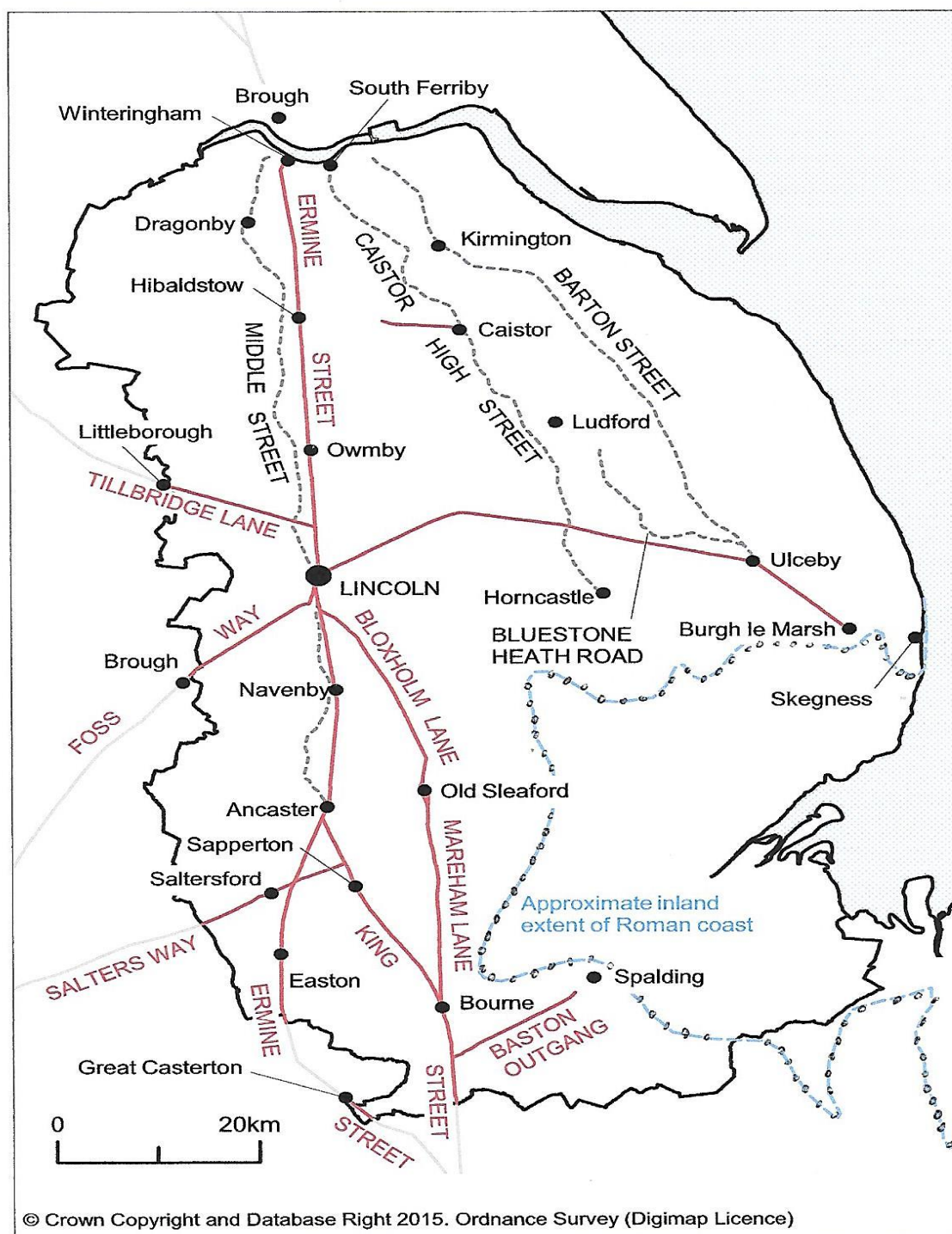
At the summit of Cadeby Park, among other very interesting remains, is the outline of what is almost certainly an ancient fortification which may well have been Roman. From a military point of view this fortification is conveniently situated so as to command a stretch of the Barton Street and the village of Ludborough (which was once under Roman occupation), and would also enable watchful eyes to scan an enormous area of marsh and sea from the Humber Bank to south of Saltfleet.

Both at North Thoresby and down Sheep Marsh Lane at North Coates there is evidence of a number of Salt Pans where salt was extracted from sea water. One of the roads out of Ludborough, leading to Ludford, is still known as Salters' Lane, or possibly "Salt 'oss" (corruption of Salt Horse) Lane. A quotation from Charles Brears' "A Short History of Lincolnshire" is apposite (1927 edition; Chapter on "The Romans in Lincolnshire"; page 15): "From the east gate of Lincoln a straight road ran in a N.E. direction to Langworth, and possibly was continued to salt-works on the coast by way of Ludford and Ludborough."

Thus a picture emerges of a fortification high on the Wolds in Cadeby Park, manned by Roman Legionaries whose task was to overlook the Marshes and Sea towards the East, to guard a section of the Barton Street and to serve as part of the "perimeter" defence of the Roman settlement at Ludborough. We can imagine Ludborough to be concerned with the salt manufacture taking place at North Thoresby, North Coates and, very probably, other places in the vicinity. Perhaps the salt was collected in bulk at Ludborough for despatch by pack-horse trains up Salters' Lane, over the Wolds via Ludford, Langworth, and on to Lindum Colonia, while stretching down like a white ribbon from Cadeby, through North Thoresby and across the Marshes to the salt pans on the coast at North Coates, ran our little road providing the necessary "line of communication."

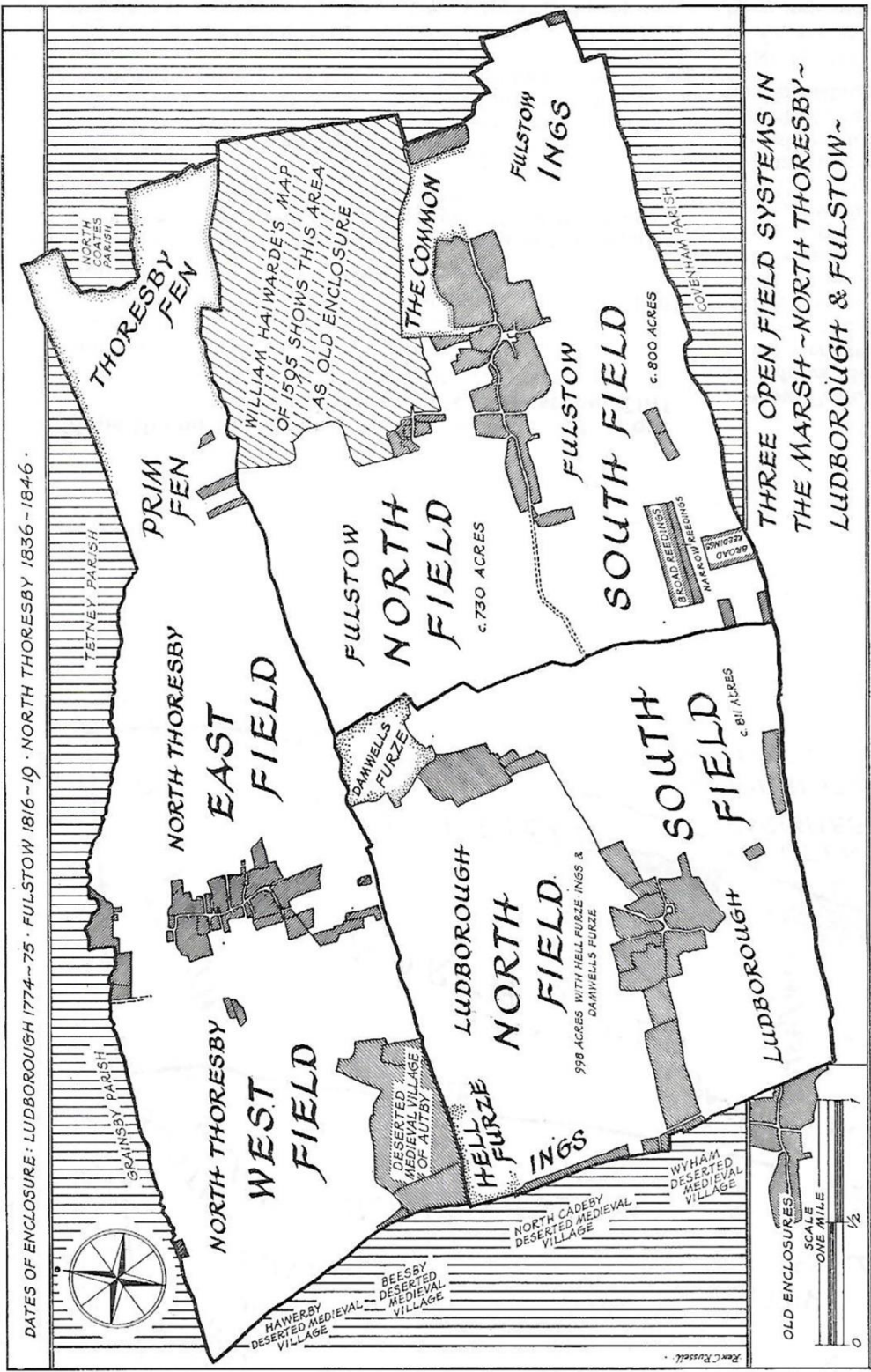
William Toyne undoubtedly found something of significance, and his linking pieces of evidence together, and discovering a number of areas where the foundations of a trackway were identical, typifies the historian at work, piecing together a hypothesis. The proximity of the village to the Barton Street is certainly of significance in explaining evidence of Romano-British settlements in the field known as Beanland (see page 79) but, unfortunately subsequent historians have not confirmed his theory of a 'metalled' Roman road nor a fort at Cadeby. The latest in-depth research into Roman Roads in Lincolnshire, James Edward Albones Doctorate

thesis at the University of East Anglia, 2016, has produced the map below. Note the difference in the coastline today in contrast to the Roman period. Nevertheless, 'ancient' trackways have existed for millennia in the area – particularly 'salt roads' – so further investigations will be made to discover if William's research has been followed up.

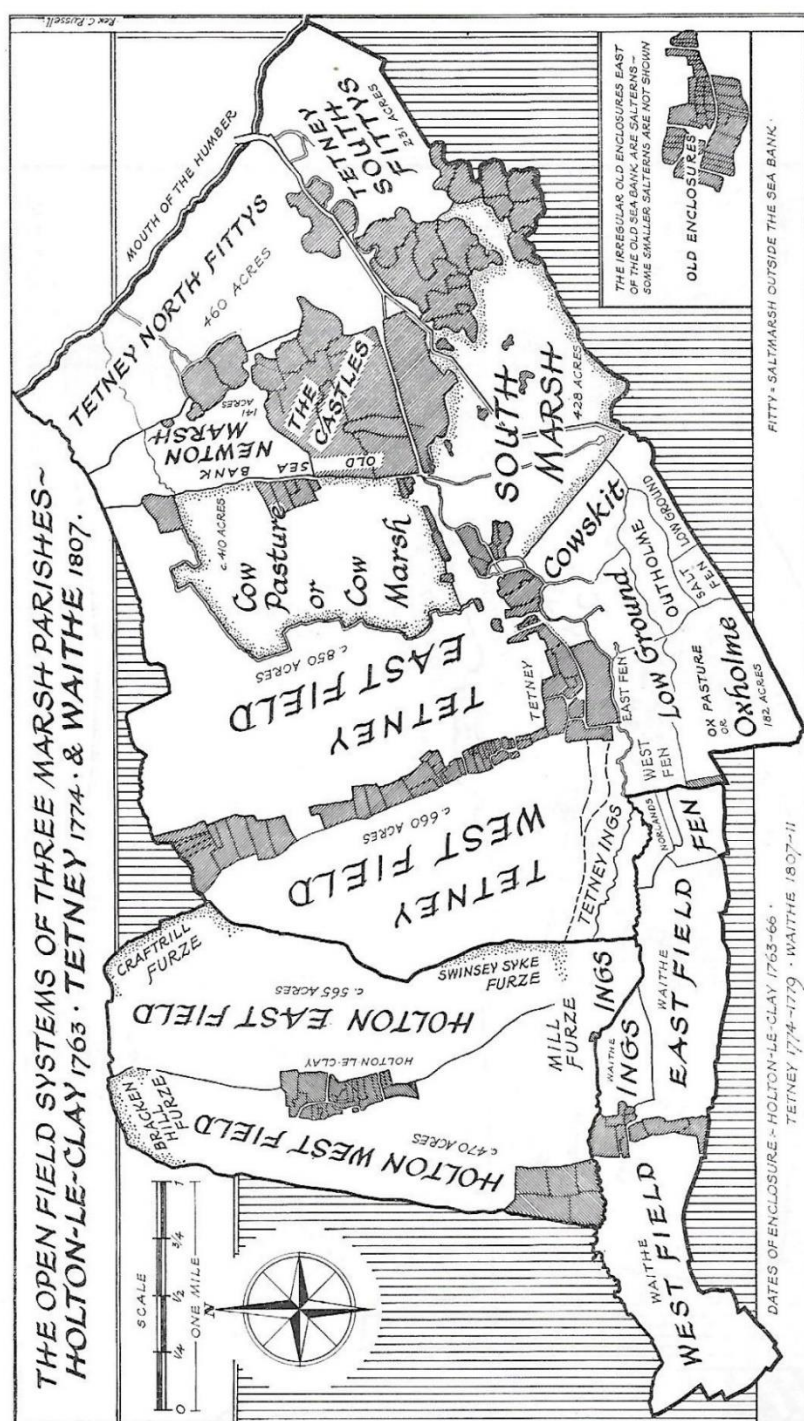


Solid lines are metalled roads; broken lines are unimproved trackways pre-dating the Roman era but known to have been used by the Romans; the area in the south indicates the coastline in Roman times.

North Thoresby's Open Field System and its neighbouring villages to the South. See page 96 for an outline of a typical medieval landscape.



The Open Field lout of North Thoresby and neighbouring villages to the south. Note that the western boundary is formed by the Barton Street. North Thoresby's enclosure was later than both Ludborough (1774-5) and Fulstow (1816-19) - in fact, the village was the last of the 47 villages in Rex Russell's study of enclosure in North Lincolnshire.



Each parish worked out its own system for farming the land - the key issue being how to make best use of the land of varying quality. Some villages used 2 fields - the most common in this area - some 3, others 4.

Areas of land mentioned in North Thoresby Manor Court records, 1613-18

Stanholme	Moregate (West Field)
Beanelande (West Field)	Inkerdale(s)
The Fen	Stockdale Green
'Thacke' ground near a ditch called Crakebeck	

The Pinfold Fines, 1882

At this Court it was ordered by the Jury that the pinders of North Thoresby and North Coats be authorised and empowered to demand and receive the following sums of money for stock etc. found straying or trespassing and impounded by them.

That is to say:

For every stallion	5 shillings
For every horse, Mare, Foal ,Mule or Ass belonging to a parishoner of North Thoresby or North Coats	6 pence
For ditto belonging to a nonparishoner	8 pence
For every Bull	2 shillings
For every Ox, Cow or Calf belonging to a parishoner of North Thoresby or North Coats	6 pence
For ditto belonging to a non-parishoner	8 pence
For every Ram	1 shilling
For sheep from 1-20	6 pence
For more than 20, per score, beyond the first 2	3 pence
For every Boar	1 shilling
For one Pig	3 pence
For more than one pig after the first,	each 1 penny
For any number of Geese or one Goose	4 pence

W. Grange Steward

Source: Elizabeth Kershaw

The terms 'pinfold' and 'pound' are Saxon in origin. 'Pundfald' and 'pund' both mean an enclosure. There appears to be no difference between a pinfold and a village pound. The term pinfold seems to be more popular in the north and east of England, whilst in the south and west the term pound is more popular. Generally, a pinfold was a high-walled and lockable structure and served several purposes; the most common use was to hold stray sheep, pigs and cattle until they were claimed by the owners, usually for the payment of a fine or levy. Early pounds had just briar hedges, but most were built in stone or brick, making them more stock-proof. The size and shape of village pounds varies, some are four sided: rectangular, square and irregular, others are circular. By the 16th century most villages and townships would have had a pound. Very good Lincolnshire examples include Bardney, Gelston, Hougham, Epworth, Boothby Graffoe and Rippingdale (near Bourne).

Areas of land mentioned in North Thoresby Manor Court records, 1613-18 (continued)

Ox pasture	Cowholme	Hopyard
Marefurr	Hubberd Lane	Southcroft
Holmecroft	The smale dayle	Longfurlonge
Butts land	Green furlonge	Ableholme
Maregate furlong	Asgarmere furlong	Fen fures
Little fures	Thugglemare	Kve close
Bonolme Green	Kowe Fen	

Source: Elizabeth Kershaw

See page 96 and 99 for the complexity of the Open Field System – these terms would have applied to areas in the field system.

NORTH THORESBY.

TO BE
SOLD BY AUCTION,
at the
Granby Inn, in North Thoresby,
IN THE COUNTY OF LINCOLN,
On THURSDAY, the 17th day of September next,
At FOUR o'clock in the Afternoon, (subject to such Conditions of Sale as shall be then
and there produced))
ALL THAT
CHAPEL
OR MEETING-HOUSE,

(Used as a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel).

Situate in the centre of NORTH THORESBY aforesaid, and fronting the Public Street. The Chapel is well and substantially built, and might at a small expense be converted into a Dwellinghouse and Shop, and would form a very desirable situation for Trade.

The above Property is Copyhold of Inheritance of the Manor of North Thoresby-cum-Northcotes. The Fine is small and certain.

The Purchaser may be accommodated with all or any part of the Purchase Money on approved Security, and further Particulars may be known, on application at my Offices.

QUESTOR VEAL,

SOLICITOR.

GREAT GRIMSBY, August 27th, 1840.

SKELTON, PRINTER, MARKET-PLACE, GRIMSBY.

Sale documents like this, and on the next page, are very useful as they pinpoint very specific dates which, when cross-referenced can help establish time-lines. This is the first Wesleyan Chapel, built 1821, up for sale in 1840, the numbers of Methodists in the village, by 1843 they numbered 117, having outgrown it. It was converted to two cottages in due course, which faced the current Wesley Centre and Chapel. Cliff Hippisley, proprietor of Thoresby Homecare at the time of publication, 'took the cottages down' in the 1960s when his family acquired the shop, now the Post Office, and the land and buildings to the corner of Station Road. The new chapel opened in February, 1847. Nine Years later, a school was opened and it remained the village school until 1985.

OPENING SERVICES

OF THE NEW

WESLEYAN CHAPEL, NORTH THORESBY.

ON
Thursday, Feb. 4th, 1847,
SERMONS

WILL BE PREACHED
In the Afternoon at TWO, and in the Evening at SIX, by The
REV. R. BRYANT
OF ALFORD,

And on Sunday, Feb. 7th,
In the Forenoon at TEN, and in the Evening at SIX, by
MR. C. RICHARDSON,
And in the Afternoon at Two o'clock, by The
REV. H. D. LOWE.

A Collection will be made at each Service.

SKELTON, PRINTER, MARKET-PLACE, GRIMSBY

Pottages' Mill

This seems well-named! It seems highly likely that the mill on the Grimsby turnpike road was worked by the Pottage family from about the time that the turnpike was built, soon after 1800. After John Pottage married Susanna Horton at North Somercotes in 1801 (was he apprenticed there?), he moved to North Thoresby, and was there by November 1802, when their first child was baptised.

Page
| 87

John worked the mill until 1840, revealing himself as a working miller in his will. The mill then passed to his only surviving son, Richard Pottage. (In John's later years, it may well be that two journeymen millers were employed briefly: this would explain the appearance of Charles Giddey [later of Marshchapel] and William/ Allan Bo[o]rman in the parish registers as parents, in 1836 and 1838, before the Fen Lane/ Station Road mill was in existence.) Richard continued to work the mill until his death in 1864, assisted by one or more of his sons, no doubt. John, the eldest, died at the age of 18 in 1845, and only Thomas was at home in 1851 and 1861. But the other two surviving sons, Charles [Stewart] and Samuel must have been apprenticed as millers, for Charles was back in the village and working the mill with Thomas in 1871.

Following Thomas's untimely death in 1879, Samuel too had returned to the village by 1881, with a wife from Ulceby and a son born at Scartho. Charles and Samuel worked the mill together, the former living at the mill with his sister Susanna as housekeeper, while the married Samuel lived on High Street in 1891. But both remaining brothers died in 1892, at the ages of 64 and 59. It may well be at this time that the mill ceased to be worked, as there is no evidence in the parish registers of any Pottage presence after these deaths and that of Samuel's widow in 1915. Around 1912, the disused mill was demolished by Mr George Rawson, the carrier who had purchased the property as a home, and depot for his business.

Will of John POTTAGE

[LCC Will 1840/261 at Lincolnshire Archives]

Dated : 14 Feb 1837

Proved 6 Aug 1840 (personal estate under £100)

to wife SUSANNA : all real estate in N.T.
[sole executrix] all household goods - furniture, plate, linen, ready money, securities etc.
for life, then to son RICHARD

Real estate : mill; two houses, stables and gardens belonging to the mill

Personal estate : included livestock, and a servant man's bed

to daughter, Elizabeth WILKINSON : £200 [if dead, to her husband, Thomas Wilkinson]

WITNESSES : William HAITH; James CLAYTON [mark]; Edward Mumby [wrote the will?]

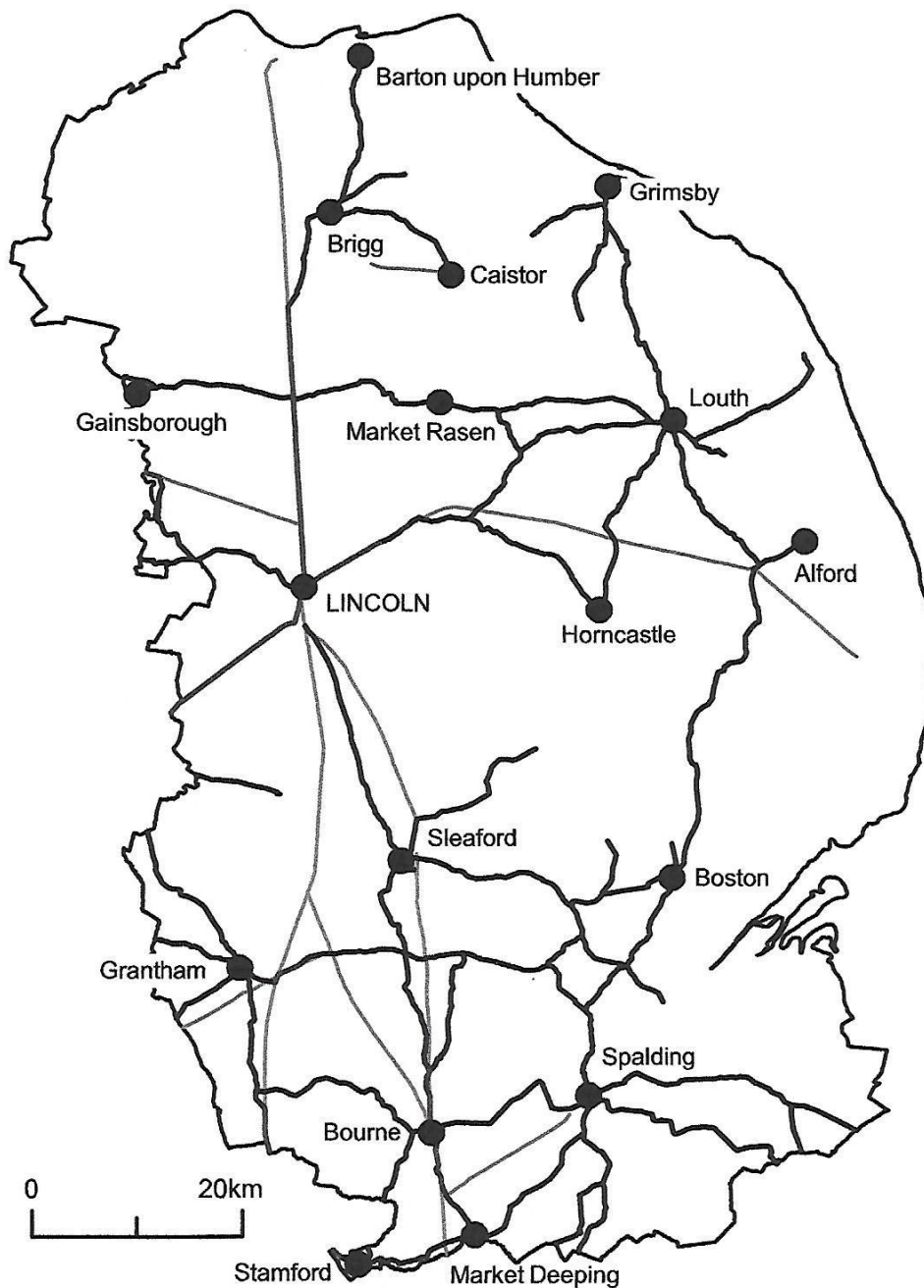
Testator signed

Endorsed [pencil] on cover : "*Sharpley, Louth*"

Source: Bob Kershaw, 1999.

This is an example of the research and scholarship that has taken place in North Thoresby and which has produced an invaluable collection of documentation on which we can draw. Its our ambition to make sure these documents are preserved and made widely available.

Turnpike Roads in Lincolnshire



Heavy lines indicate Turnpikes. Lighter lines are Roman roads - with sections improved as turnpikes in darker lines.

Source: James Edward Albone.

The Turnpike system joined North Thoresby to a network of communications, north, south and west.



Artist's impression of Goltho medieval village, illustrating a typical nucleated village layout.

Goltho

Goltho provides a fascinating insight into the development of a settlement over the best part of 1000 years. We don't have this wealth of information about North Thoresby – and most of our ancient settlement sites – but we do have evidence of settlements here from at least the 3rd century.

The site of the deserted medieval village at Goltho lies in the heart of the ancient province of Lindsey about 9 miles to the east of Lincoln and approximately 800 yards south of the A 158 trunk road leading eastwards from Lincoln to Wragby and beyond to Horncastle and Skegness. Today, the little sixteenth-century brick-built church of St George, standing amongst a cluster of trees in the fields, is all that remains to mark the site of a once prosperous community.

Excavations between 1971 and 1974 on the site of the earthwork castle at Goltho, Lincolnshire, in advance of its levelling and ploughing, revealed not only traces of structures belonging to the eleventh- and twelfth-century castle, but also a sequence of earlier manorial layouts. The earliest period of occupation was Roman (AD 30-200), with a series of circular timber buildings. The next two phases were middle Saxon (AD 800-850 and 850-950), with an undefended layout of houses within separate property boundaries, later replaced by a hall and other domestic buildings, built round three sides of a courtyard and protected by a rampart and ditch.

The next phase (AD 950-1000) was marked by the restyling of the hall and the greater sophistication and privacy of the domestic buildings. In the late Saxon phase (AD 1000-1080), the manor was totally rebuilt within enlarged and strengthened defences. The early Norman phase (AD 1080-1150) saw the construction of a small motte and bailey castle, with a tower on the motte and an aisled hall in the bailey. During the final phase (AD 1150-c1200), the motte was partially levelled and a more substantial hall built on the resulting mound, but soon abandoned.

The name Goltho is interesting because it indicates how a place-name can change over-time – or are recorded differently - and how different, but connected, linguistic roots can be combined. An entry of Golthawe in the episcopal registers 1220-35 is the earliest known record of the hamlet; from this the present name of Goltho appears to have been derived. In the rotuli hundredorum of 1279 it is recorded as Goltehayt, and as Golthag in

the Index to the Charters and Rolls in the British Museum. The latter is probably a derivative of the Old English gold-haga – ‘enclosure where marigold grew’. The meaning of thwait is derived from the Old Norse and varies considerably: Old Norse *joveit* means a meadow or piece of land, and Norwegian *tveit* a piece of meadow in a wood, or cleared meadow. In the English dialect *thwait* means a forest clearing, an enclosed piece of land or a meadow.

Source: Goltho: ‘The Development of an Early Medieval Manor c 850-1150’ G. Beresford, 1987.

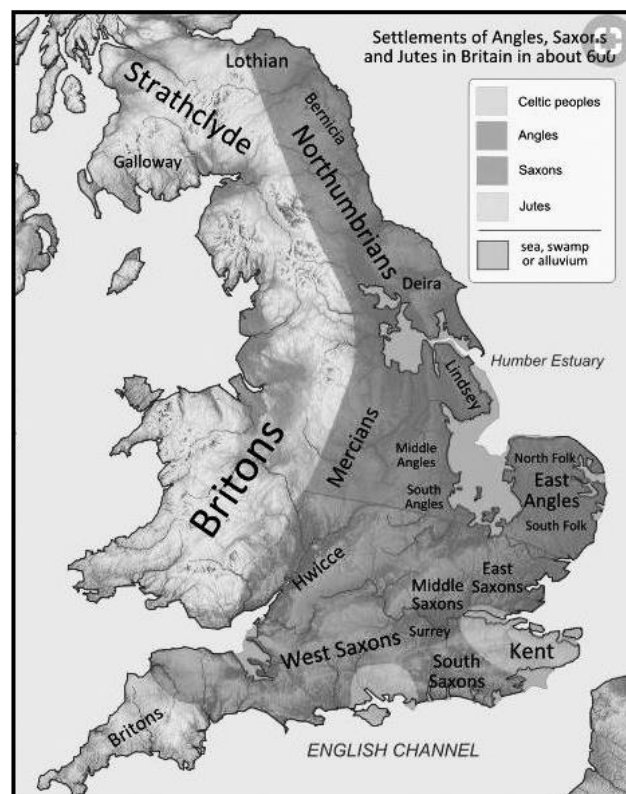
The Ancient Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Lindsey

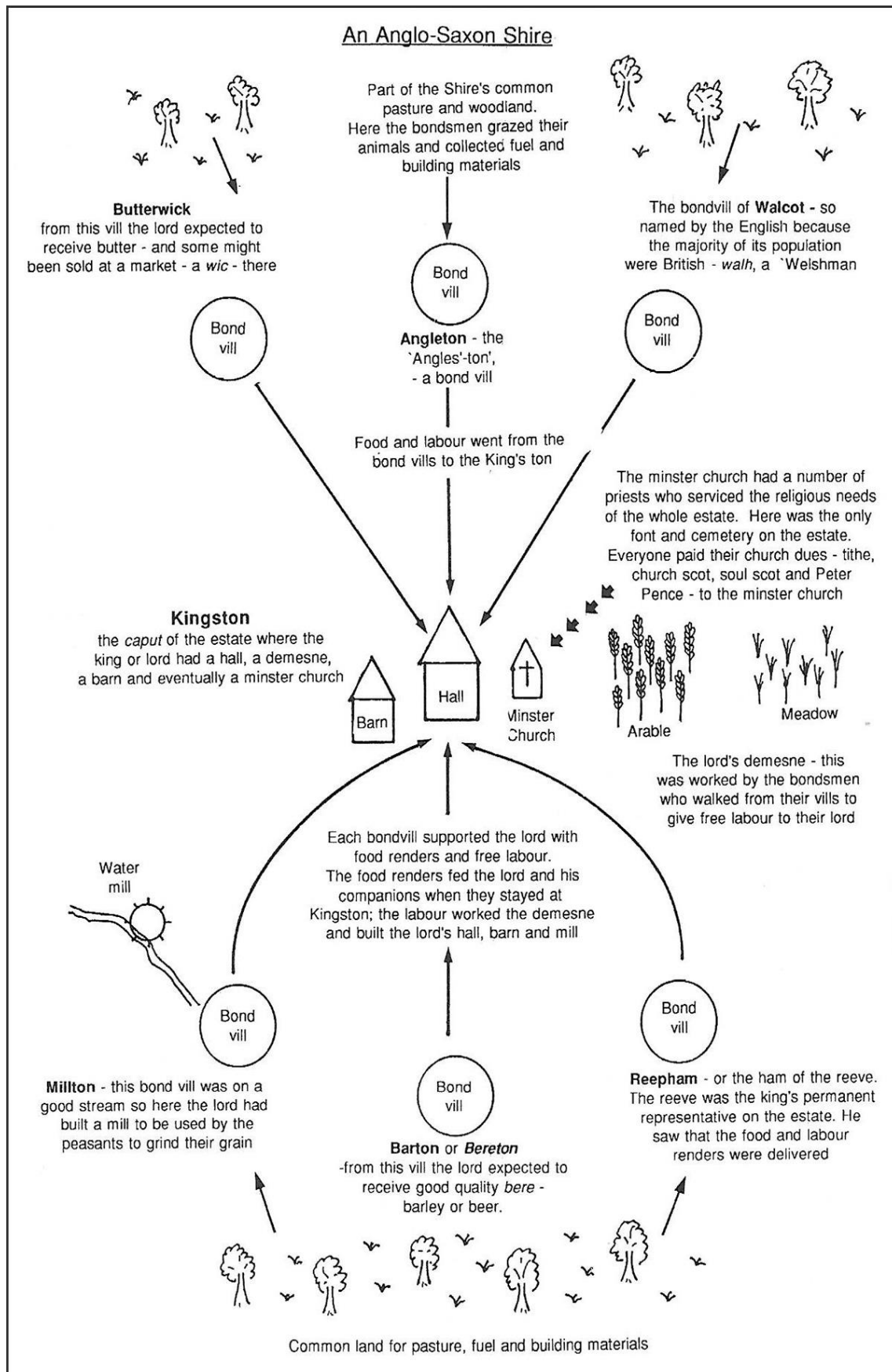
The ancient kingdom of Lindsey was bounded on the north and east by the Humber and the sea. On the west it included the hills between the Don and the Trent which form the Isle of Axholme and the land surrounding the moors of Hatfield Chase. To the south of the Isle of Axholme, the boundary followed the Trent southward to a point near Torksey where it turned in a south-easterly direction along the Fosse Dyke, the Roman navigation canal, and then, below Lincoln, along the Witham to the fens and to the coast beyond.

Little is known of the Lindsey dynasty since none of its kings played an important role in Anglo-Saxon politics. They ruled Lindsey from an early date, possibly as early as the fifth century, but, apart from the last of the line, a king named Ealdfrith who appeared in attendance on Offa, King of Mercia, between 787 and 796, the kings of Lindsey were only names. During the eighth century under two strong Mercian kings, England south of the Humber was developing into a single territory in which the ancient kingdoms of Lindsey, Essex, Kent, and Sussex were no more than provinces.

Source: Goltho: ‘The Development of an Early Medieval Manor c 850-1150’ G. Beresford, 1987.

The Geography and Boundaries of The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Lindsey





Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant, 'The early History of Barton-upon-Humber. See page 93 for an explanation of the Anglo-Saxon shire system.

After the Viking settlement, these shires were called '**sokes**' - a widely-spread estate held and managed by a lord. The term 'sokeman' in the Domesday Book referred to a man who owned his own land - see page 107-8.

Lindsey and Anglo-Saxon England

The new arrivals from northern Germany and the Low Countries who entered the area in the fifth and sixth centuries found in the Wash and Humber estuaries reminiscent of their homeland coastlines; but the process of invasion and settlement is far from clear. When the region emerged from the obscurity of the migration period, it was divided into two parts. In the north was Lindsey, a small kingdom whose origin may even be pre-Saxon; its name indicates an early connection with Lincoln and there are signs of British survival in the names of its earliest kings. Lindsey had a considerable measure of organisation, probably based on Lincoln. It had its own bishop, recognised by 677, as independent of the neighbouring bishops of Northumbria (York) and Mercia (Lichfield). The southern half of the county formed part of the kingdom of the Middle Angles probably centred on Leicester; it too had its bishop. The Fens, inundated again during the fifth and sixth centuries, appear as a more or less untamed frontier land between the kingdoms of Lindsey, East Anglia and Middle Anglia.

Neither Lindsey nor Middle Anglia was large enough to survive in the troubled days of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, though Lindsey did better than most of the smaller kingdoms. The Middle Angles were absorbed by pagan Mercia which under Penda, one of its greatest kings, was waging war against the Christian British in the west and the Christian Northumbrians in the north and east. Some of his battles with the Northumbrians probably took place in Lindsey which changed hands between Mercian and Northumbrian overlords many times before Mercia established a predominance in 678. Throughout this time however Lindsey preserved its own identity; it is mentioned as a separate political unit up to about 800, and the names of its kings were cherished for many centuries. It probably ceased to exist as an independent entity before the Danish invasions destroyed most of the remaining Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, but the struggle between Mercia and Northumbria for control over this area left its mark on the later history of the region in the separate identity of medieval Lindsey and in the quarrels between the bishops of Lincoln and the archbishops of York who claimed Lindsey as a part of the northern province of the Church.

Source: www.wilcuma

The Viking Conquest, Anglo-Scandinavian Lindsey and the creation of England

Source: 'The Anglo-Saxon Kingdom of Lindsey,' Kevin Leahy

The first recorded Viking raid on Lindsey was in 841 when the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle recorded that, 'many men in Lindsey, East Anglia, and Kent were killed by the enemy'. This appears to have been followed by a lull in raids on eastern England, although this may only reflect our inadequate historical sources for the period as Viking activity continued elsewhere. In 865 the Vikings returned with the arrival, in East Anglia, of the Great Army led by Ivar the Boneless and his brother Halfdan. Having ravaged the area for 12 months and acquiring horses they moved up to Northumbria in the Autumn of 866 and in November they captured York. Northumbria was at that time enduring a civil war and some months passed before the two rival Anglo-Saxon kings united their forces, storming York in March 867. They fought their way into the city but unfortunately both kings and eight of their ealdormen were killed in the attack. The Northumbrians were forced to buy peace and the Vikings installed a puppet king.

The Great Army then moved south, waging a series of campaigns, taking up winter-quarters each autumn and going back into the field the following spring. They were back in Northumbria in 872 but soon afterwards moved south into Lindsey, over-wintering at Torksey on the River Trent. The Vikings had clearly got control of Northumbria by 869 and may have taken over Lindsey. After 12 months at Torksey the Great Army moved into the heart of Mercia, fighting a campaign that led to the flight of King Burgred, in whose place the Vikings appointed Ceolwulf. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* described him as 'a foolish king's thegn' who 'swore oaths to them and gave hostages that it [the kingdom of Mercia] should be ready for them on whatever day they wished to have it'.

Late in 874 the Great Army divided, one part going to Cambridge and the rest travelling north to the Tyne, eventually settling in Yorkshire. In August 877 the southern group, whose attack on Wessex had been repulsed, returned to Mercia and reminded Ceolwulf of his oath. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle recorded: 'Then in the harvest season the army went away into Mercia and shared out some of it, and gave some to Ceolwulf'. The term 'shared out' suggests that it was a controlled act and not a free for all, but we lack any details. It is assumed that the area the Vikings took was Lincolnshire because of the concentration of Danish place-names in the county and that it forms a discrete entity on the edge of Mercia. The succession of bishops of Lindsey seems to have been broken around this time with no bishop being known between 862 and 953.

In the following year, 878, King Alfred defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Edington, stabilising the military situation. Under the terms of the Treaty of Wedmore; negotiated in the aftermath of the battle, England was divided

into two; the area to the north and east of a line between Chester and London was ceded to the Vikings, with the English retaining control of the rest. Unlike the Vikings of York, the Mercian Vikings do not seem to have been united but consisted of a loose federation, based around the Five Boroughs, a weakness that the English kings were able to exploit. The early tenth century saw the gradual reconquest of the southern Danelaw by the English, led by Alfred's son Edward the Elder and his daughter Ethelflaed, the 'Lady of the Mercians'.

The date at which Lincoln was retaken by the English is not known; it could have been around 918-20 but, if Lindsey was under the control of the Vikings of York, the English may not have regained control until the fall of Northumbria in 927. During their years of control the Vikings had made a great impact. Lincoln, apparently after years of decay, woke up and became an important trading city.

Lindsey was in the Danelaw, where Scandinavian people were governed by their own laws and customs, as were set down in the strongly Scandinavian 'Wantage Law Code', accepted for use in the Danish 'Five Boroughs' (Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham and Stamford) by King Ethelred in 997. 'Lawmen' were appointed in boroughs and other aspects of the administration took on Danish features. In 1066 Lincoln had 12 lawmen who seem, from their names, to have come from the same families. In the Danelaw, land was measured in 'carucates' instead of the 'hides' used in England. 'Carucate' is a Latin translation of the Danish 'plogetland' (ploughland) and they were counted in units of 12 (for taxation) while English hides were counted in 10s. The local administration was based on the Danish 'wapentake' not the English 'hundred'. Like Yorkshire, Lindsey was divided into three Ridings (thriojung: third); north, south and west. However, the unnatural symmetry of the Lindsey ridings suggests that, unlike the wapentakes, they were a new creation.

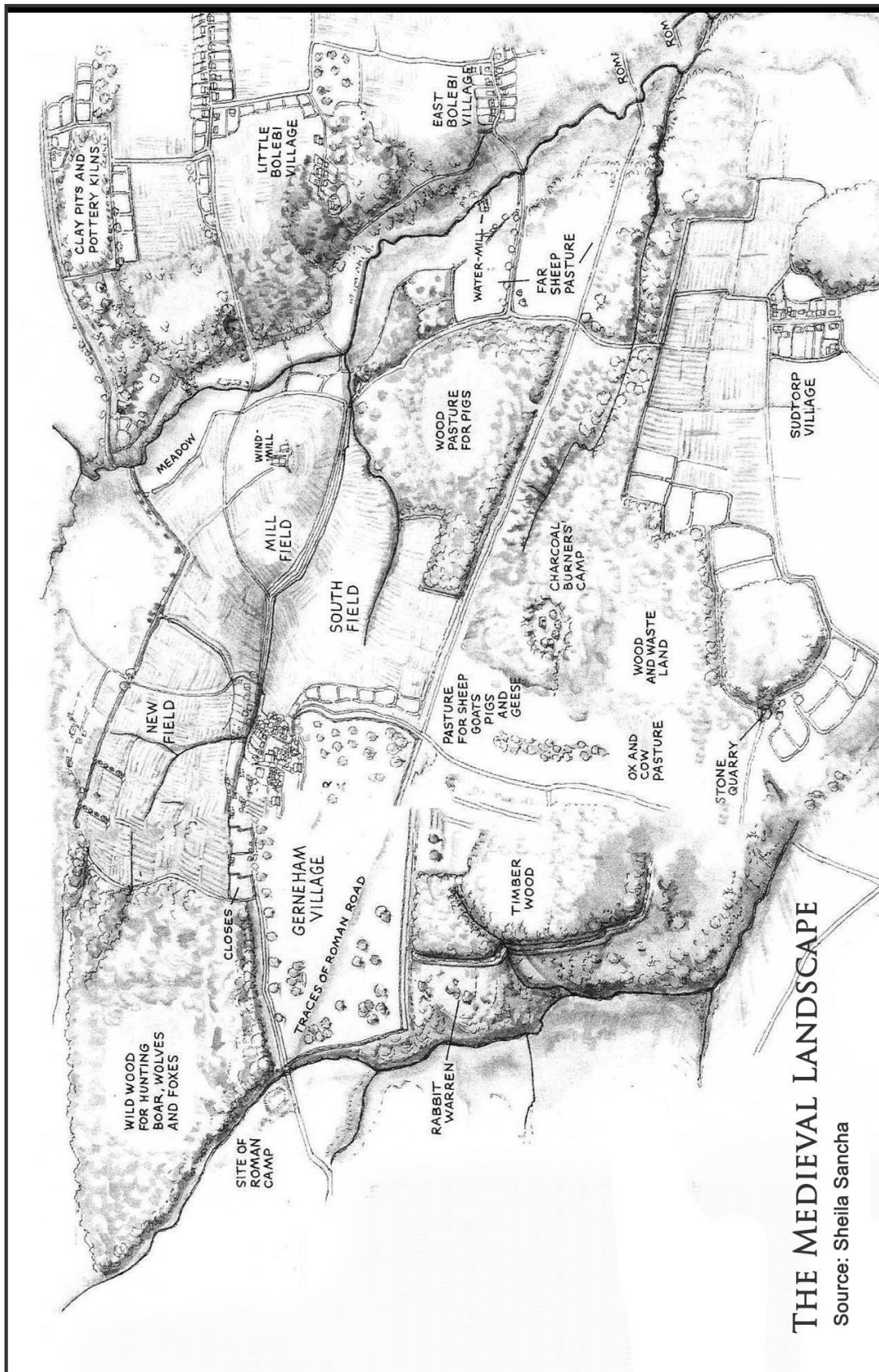
The Domesday survey records that all of the major landowners in our area in 1066 had Danish names and that Danish personal names were more common than English amongst the rest of the people. The dialect spoken in Lindsey today still uses Danish words to describe the landscape. A stream is not a brook but is a 'beck' from the Danish 'bekkr'. An island is a 'holme' from the Danish 'holmr'. Roads or streets may be 'gate', 'gata', as in 'Middlegate Lane'. This is a remarkable survival in people's daily lives. A feature of Lindsey at Domesday is the very high numbers of 'sokemen' recorded, representing, on average, 54 per cent of the population, rising, in one wapentake, to 70 per cent. This is very different from Essex where sokemen represent only 7.3 per cent of the population.

Sokemen were peasants but, unlike villeins, they were free and could dispose of their property. Most sokemen only owned around three bovates, about 45 acres; although they were free, their economic status was low. Caution must be used in interpreting the high numbers of sokemen in Lindsey (we don't know much about the situation before the Danes arrived) but it is likely that these people represented the descendants of the Great Army who settled in 877. Their status had been reduced but they could still remember that grandfather had been a Viking and that they were 'free'. It is interesting to see that in 1086 sokemen were concentrated in those areas of Lindsey where Danish place-names were most common, supporting this interpretation.

The Anglo-Saxon Shires Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant (see diagram page 91)

Prior to the arrival of the Danes it is clear that the English landscape was dominated by large estates, known in pre-Viking times as 'shires'. Some seem to have had their origin in Roman times or even earlier. These estates were held by Anglo-Saxon kings, lords and churches who used their ability to exact tribute (food, fodder, labour and eventually cash) from the estate's inhabitants to support themselves in their various leadership roles. Within each of the estates there was a 'headquarters' settlement (the caput) where the lord might have a residence that he and his retinue of followers would live in or visit periodically. Here he would act out his 'lordship' role by holding some sort of court for settling local disputes and enacting legal transactions, and he would also collect the renders owing to him, some of which (the food) would support his stay there.

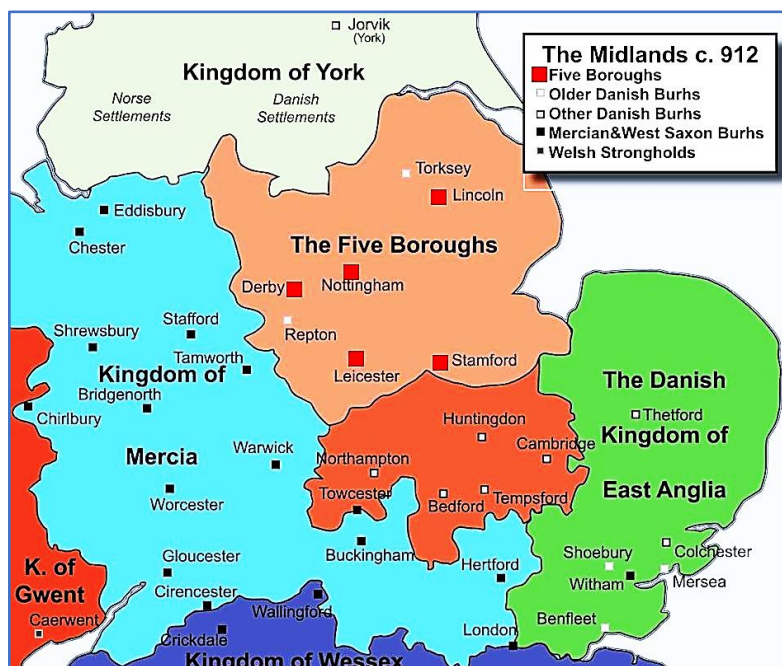
The caput might also accommodate a church (a minster or mother church) built by the lord who appointed a body of clergy to service the religious requirements of the church's parochia - the whole estate. A number of other tributary settlements completed the estate and it was in these that most of the peasant farmers lived and produced the surpluses of food and labour which they were required to render to their lord. The great Danish leaders appear to have fragmented some, perhaps even most, of these large estates by giving particular settlements to each of their followers - they 'shared out some of it' as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle said. When these men settled into their new properties they diverted to their own use the renders which had previously gone to the former lord's caput - there came into being a 'more intensive and localized manorial economy'. They also frequently renamed these 'new' settlements in their own honour - 'This is now Ulf's village', hence 'Ulf's-by' = Ulceby. Some of the earlier great multiple estates, which the Danes called sokes, continued in existence and can still be recognised in the pages of the Domesday Book. Places such as Barnetby, Caistor, West Halton and Kirton Lindsey in our area were certainly estate caputs and still functioned as such in 1086.



This imaginary map shows a typical medieval village - Gerneham - in the wider landscape. It illustrates the wider ecology of the village - how the different elements combined. We see the nucleated village, with its manor, crofts and tofts and 'closes' - enclosed land. Tracks lead to the Open Fields. Other important resources are shown - meadow and pastures for sheep, goats, pigs, geese, oxen and cows, a rabbit warren, a timber wood, Mills are seen, and clay pits and charcoal burners (smelting metals). There's a wood for hunting - a major social event. An old Roman road and site, indicates that the village site has a long history of occupation. Other villages, in easy walking distance, share some of the resources.

Language and the Viking Era Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant

The Viking settlement was not a take-over by a small aristocracy such as occurred with the Normans after 1066. Only the presence of a significant group of Scandinavian peasant newcomers could have produced the dramatic effect on the language spoken in the area. Whilst communication between the newcomers and the English would initially have required the presence of translators, it is thought that by the 10th century at least East Midlanders would be speaking a hybrid dialect in which the Scandinavian element was prominent. The fact that English and Danish were closely related Germanic languages would have made it easy to move loan words from one to the other.



A Time of Turmoil: Lincolnshire in the 10th and 11th centuries

After the English kingdom was created, for a time Lincolnshire lay on the frontier between the new kingdom of England and the new pagan Norse kingdom of York. War was endemic; in 940 the lands of the Five Boroughs were acknowledged as part of the kingdom of York, and Scandinavian sagas indicate that north Lincolnshire at least was regarded as being under the control of the York kings. Coin evidence suggests that this rule extended south to Stamford where a sub-king with his own currency may have been set up. But political domination over the area changed several times until in 954 the York king was killed in battle and the threat from the Norse at York was removed.

Norsemen from overseas continued to harass the shores of England and Lincolnshire saw a good deal of the fighting. Gainsborough with its riverside camp became the headquarters for the conquest of England by King Swein of Denmark and his sons in 1016-23, and it was there that Cnut was chosen to succeed his father as king of Denmark and England.

After Swein's death, Cnut stayed with his host in Gainsborough, and an agreement was made between him and the people of Lindsey to supply him with horses. Then King Aethelred came with levies at full strength into Lindsey before they were prepared, 'and they made raids and burned and slew every human being they could find'.

Resistance in Lincolnshire to these raids was led in turn by the earl of Northumbria and (in the first years of the 11th century) the 'ealdorman' of Mercia. There was apparently an ealdorman of Lindsey for a short time but in May 1066 it was the earl of Mercia rather than the earl of Northumbria, Morcar, who called out the men of Lindsey to resist Tostig the rebel brother of King Harold when he invaded.

After Tostig, a Danish army under Harold Hardrada entered the Humber and moved into Yorkshire where Hardrada was killed at Stamford Bridge by Harold. Immediately after the battle news came of the invasion of William duke of Normandy and Harold hurried south, leaving the sheriff of Lindsey to restore order in the north. The French-Normans won the battle at Hastings/Senlac Ridge, and in 1068 William – himself came north to suppress revolts. He entered Lincolnshire after ravaging Yorkshire but in general the county was peaceful. Although resistance smouldered north of the Humber and in the south where the dispossessed Hereward led a rising in the fens around Ely in 1070, the French-Norman occupation of Lincolnshire was not on the whole accompanied by violence.

Source: www.wilcuma

Selected extracts from the Manor Court Rolls for North Thoresby - 1613
(Extracted from the Court Rolls and transcribed from the Latin)

The verdict of the jury

" And that Abraham Bormand, John Browne and Agnes Kermond have broken every one of them the assize of bread and ale.

And that George Dunham and John Lowthe have accepted excessive tithes.

And that Thomas Tharrolde sen. And William Tharrolde allowed their horses to go in the cow pasture against orders.

And that John Louth (hath tethered and trespassed) [*in English*] with his horse in the sown field.

And that Trustrum Smythe gent. has tethered and trespassed with his horses and other animals in harvest time.

And that William Lyson being in the office of constable is neglectful of his office.

And that Thomas Storre and Richard Tharrolde being in the office of overseers are neglectful of their offices.

And that Richard Kirmond and Robert Manby being in the office of reeves of the ways are neglectful of their offices to the great inconvenience of the inhabitants.

And that Eric Butterworth (and many others) have trespassed every one of them with their geese in the sown field."

The Manor Court regulated the village's communal farming system, North Thoresby's Manor Court records are virtually continuous from 1613 to 1914. It seems, from this extract, that not all was harmonious, nor were the officials up to the job!
Source: Elizabeth Kershaw.

The Open Field System Source: Oliver Rackman, 'Illustrated History of the English Countryside.'

The Open Field system has been referred to throughout the booklet. It appears to have developed to maturity between AD 850 and 1150 in England, although documentation is scarce prior to the Domesday Book of 1086 and it may have originated as early as the eighth century. In its heyday, about 1350, open-field cultivation covered nearly one-third of England. From then on, people began to aggregate strips into single ownerships and to privatize them. By 1720 about half the open-field areas, especially in the north, had been privatized by agreement.

The open-field system was never practised in all regions and countries in Europe. It was most common in heavily populated and productive agricultural regions. The primary area of open fields was in the lowland areas of England in a broad swathe from Yorkshire and Lincolnshire diagonally across England to the south, taking in parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, large areas of the Midlands, and most of south central England. This area was the main grain-growing region (as opposed to pastoral farming) in medieval times.

The typical planting scheme in a three-field system was that barley, oats, or legumes would be planted in one field in spring, wheat or rye in the second field in the fall and the third field would be left fallow. The following year, the planting in the fields would be rotated. Pasturage was held in common. The tenants pastured their livestock on the fallow field and on the planted fields after harvest. An elaborate set of laws and controls, partly set by the Lord of the Manor and partly by the tenants themselves regulated planting, harvest, and pasturing.

Open-field cultivation was organised in very complex ways. For example, in late-medieval Cambridge the arable land in the town's West Fields was divided into about 3,350 'selions', each nominally half an acre in extent and measuring one furlong by two perches (220 yards long by 11 yards wide). The selions were grouped into 68 furlongs and these into four vast fields which extended away to the town boundary. Each year an approximate third of the land, one field or the two smaller fields, lay fallow, and the remainder was sown. Landowners had land scattered in strips through the West Fields. A strip might be one selion, or two or three, or occasionally a block of up to forty selions. One-tenth of the crop was due as tithe to the ecclesiastical tithe-owner of each particular selion. Few owners tilled their strips themselves. Between landowners and the land there intervened a largely unrecorded world of agents, tenants and subtenants. We know little of how selions were grouped by those who actually cultivated them. See page 99.

Lincolnshire in the Nineteenth Century

Source: www.wilcuma

We have seen, early in the booklet, that the nineteenth century saw great changes in the village. This extract places North Thoresby in a wider context. The source of this information is from a website last updated ten years ago and appears to be well-researched and authoritative – but it is ‘thin’ on specific reference sources.

Page
| 97

Farming

The rate of population growth in 19th-century Lincolnshire was slower than elsewhere, and it fell off sharply after 1851. At first, both towns and rural areas shared in the growth but most of the gains in the later years were focussed in a few towns and on the coast. The urban population of the county rose from 28 per cent in 1801 to 33 per cent in 1851 and to 46 per cent in 1901, but the towns were still small – in 1831 only six places had more than 5000 inhabitants.

As the towns grew, there was a decline in regional variations brought about by improved communications, better marketing of goods and changes in farming and in the social structure of rural society. The drainage schemes and enclosure, followed by a depression in the 1820s, prosperity in the 1850s and a severe depression in the 1870s, encouraged the Lincolnshire farmer everywhere to diversify rather than to specialise. Throughout the county pasture gave way to arable, stock-rearing to corn or mixed farming. Lincolnshire became a major corn-producing area for the nation (wheat rather than barley) but it still had a substantial investment in sheep (28 per cent of the cultivated land was permanent pasture late in the century). The ring-fence farm became the focus of agricultural life rather than the estate or the local community. The farmer, both the freeholder and the tenant (protected as he was by the ‘Lincolnshire Custom’) and his family were the risk-takers, and the beneficiaries when times were good, rather than the landlord or the village as a whole. By 1900 there was more difference between town and country than between the Marsh and Heath, Fens and Wolds.

Lindsey and Kesteven were the home of the great landlords. In Lindsey the Pelham earls of Yarborough dominated from their Brocklesby estate. Lords Scarbrough and Willoughby d'Eresby who held extensive but scattered estates were non-resident, and the local gentry like Chaplin of Tathwell and Dixon of Holton le Moor emulated or opposed Yarborough. Like Nottinghamshire and south Yorkshire, large farms and wealthy farmers characterised the area, and sheep gave way to wheat. In Kesteven, which looked more towards Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, the influence of the Ancaster estate at Grimsthorpe was rivalled by the Brownlows of Belton and the Manners at Belvoir. A larger number of gentry, often of ancient Lincolnshire lines, resided on their lands – the Chaplins of Blankney, Thorolds, Welbys, Tumors, Whichcotes and others. They were conservative – and although the area saw an increase in corn (especially barley), sheep and cattle continued here longer than elsewhere in the county.

The Marsh and Axholme were characterised by smaller farms, somewhat less prosperity with less innovation. The coastal economy changed from fishing (apart from Grimsby) and wrecking. The Saltfleet wrecker waiting for his ‘Godsend’ was notorious: ‘These Christian savages when they see a vessel driving on the beach, clap their hands and shout exaltingly, Thank God a Wreck’. The Lincolnshire Coast Association (1826) put a lifeboat at Gibraltar Point near Skegness, and inns for sea bathers sprang up at Cleethorpes, Saltfleet, Mablethorpe, Sutton, Skegness, Frieston and Fosdyke. Fuller development began in the 1840s, first at Cleethorpes, then at Mablethorpe-Sutton and Skegness.

The Social Fabric

The emergence of class differences affected 19th-century Lincolnshire as elsewhere. The greater landlord, gentry, small owner and larger tenant farmer, smallholder, and labourer began to take their terms of reference from other members of the same class rather than from the community in which they resided. The distinctions were never entirely clear. The gentry and major landlords built similar houses (Harlaxton by Gregory, Stoke Rochford by Tumor, Denton by Welby, Revesby by Stanhope) and shared common interests like the Belvoir and Brocklesby

The Corn Laws were tariffs and other trade restrictions on imported food and all cereals, enforced in the United Kingdom between 1815 and 1846. They were designed to keep corn prices high to favour domestic producers. The Corn Laws blocked the import of cheap corn, initially by simply forbidding importation below a set price, and later by imposing steep import duties, making it too expensive to import it from abroad, even when food supplies were short. The Corn Laws enhanced the profits and political power associated with land ownership and raised food prices and the costs of living for the British public, and hampered the growth of other British economic sectors, such as manufacturing, by reducing the disposable income of the British public. Source: Wikipedia (edited)

Hunts. The gentry and the larger tenant farmers were both concerned about church and poor rates, tithes, corn prices and protectionism (particularly in Lindsey – see the Corn law boxes 99-102), malt taxes (especially on the Kesteven heathlands) and poaching (the Lincolnshire poacher was celebrated in song, and trainloads of poachers from Yorkshire were alleged to raid the region of Woodhall Spa). Many tenant farmers had held their farms for generations, investing large sums in the land and buildings, and came to regard the tenancy as family property to be handed down in the same way as freeholds.

The gentry and larger farmers joined together in Agricultural Societies which organised competitions, ploughing matches, stock shows, lectures, visits and publications, and spread ideas like Lord Yarborough's tree planting at Brocklesby or Henry Handley's use of steam in Kesteven. A county society existed from 1819 to the 1840s, mainly in Lindsey, with local ones in Caistor, Alford and Sutton. The North Lincolnshire Society, established in 1836, was extended to Kesteven and Holland in 1868. Large estates pre-dominated: in 1873, just over a quarter (28 per cent) of Lincolnshire was held in estates of more than 10,000 acres, less than Nottinghamshire (38 per cent) with its 'Dukeries' but more than most other counties.

The major social divide came between the farmer (gentleman or tenant) on the one hand and the smallholder and labourer on the other. The latter were more concerned with prices and inflation, unionism (which the landowners resisted) and the tied cottage (for which they often paid excessive rent). This group formed the bulk of the county's population. in 1873,

The Closed Village, Poverty and Disorder

Characteristic of the landlord society was the 'closed' village which belonged entirely or almost entirely to one landlord, resident or non-resident. They were frequent on the Wolds and heathlands and a few existed in the Fens; in Kesteven, nearly half the villages were closed, in Lindsey as a whole about one third, but in Holland they were relatively few. The landlord of the closed village often restricted the building of new houses and even pulled down empty houses to lessen his liability to the parish poor rate, provided he could draw sufficient extra workers from neighbouring 'open' villages. The Board of Guardians complained

'that the exclusive proprietor (failing to provide the necessary accommodation for the increased population, and not only so, but in some instances indeed pulling down cottages upon his estate, and in many cases suffering them to dilapidate in order to get rid of the poor) had forced that portion of the population which in common fairness belonged to him, into the neighbouring market-towns and villages (consisting of small freeholds) and that it had caused such an increase in the poor rates in those localities as to render them almost ruinous.'

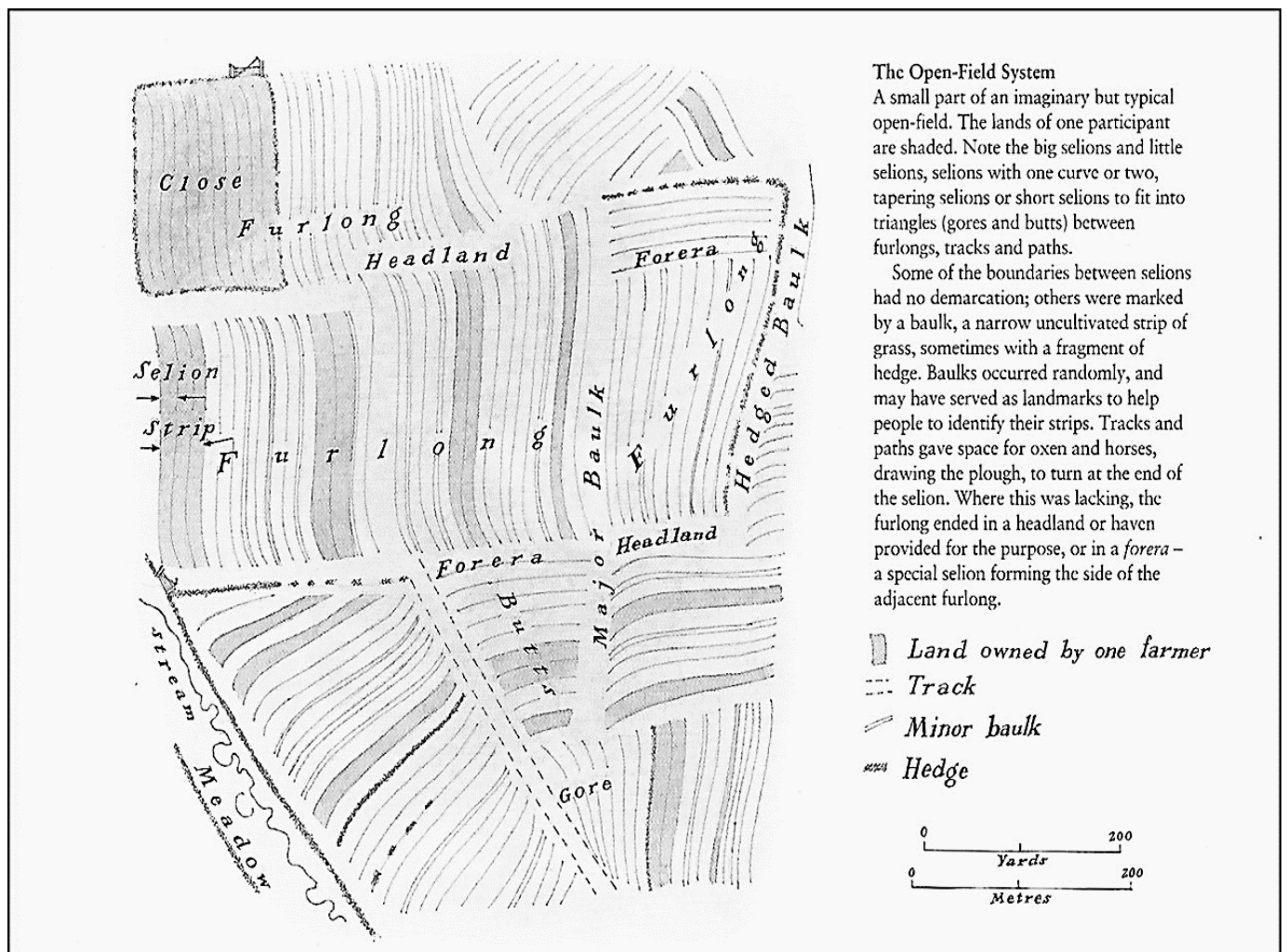
The labourers moved to the open villages, as James Caird, a Lincolnshire farmer who won a prize in 1851, the Great Exhibition year, with his essay on farming in the county, wrote: *'In some localities, [the labourers] pay very high rents for their cottages, being swept out of close parishes ... and obliged to compete with each other for the possession of the limited number of cottages which speculators run up in open parishes for their accommodation. They are thus in many cases compelled to live at a great distance from their work, to which it is quite common for them to ride on donkeys a distance of six or seven miles.'*

They lived in great poverty, according to William Cobbett (see box, page 101) who saw the richness of the land but noted 'it is in the villages that you find the depth of misery', though others have suggested that the Lincolnshire labourer was better off than labourers elsewhere. Some open villages became very large and earned notoriety as centres of nuisance, becoming 'sink' villages. Places like Kelsey, Coningsby, Wrangle and Binbrook had such reputations. The gangs of agricultural labourers which lived in these open villages, gave their name to groups of criminals. The magistrates transported troublemakers. The county constabulary was created in 1857, gaols like Folkingham (1808) were built, public lunatic asylums replaced private ones like Greatford and Shillingthorpe, and the local militia was developed (the Lincolnshire Regiment was formed in 1881).

Repeal of the Corn Laws 1846: The Corn Laws were much to the advantage of the landowning class but Britain was increasingly an industrial nation. From the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 the laws became the focus of opposition from manufacturers, merchants and urban groups who had far less political power than rural areas. The first two years of the Great Famine in Ireland of 1845–1852 forced a resolution because of the urgent need for new food supplies. The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, a Conservative, who had previously opposed reform achieved repeal with the support of the Whigs in Parliament, overcoming the opposition of most of his own party. Source: Wikipedia (edited)



Enlarged section of the map on page 15 – now confidently dated to 1961. Also see map on the inside of the back cover.





Above: Enlarged section of the map on page 15 – now confidently dated to 1961. Also see map on the inside of the back cover.

Disasters and Decline

The growing sense of identity of the agricultural labourer led to the 'Revolt of the Field' of the 1870s. In one sense this agitation reflected the increased security of the labourer, especially when faced with the end of the good times which followed the Crimea War. A series of disasters struck the county – cattle plague in 1866, 'the worst rains on record' in 1879, foot and mouth disease in the 1880s, and through it all the Great Depression of the 1870s-80s.

At first it was the landholder who suffered from the poor yields, expensive harvesting and low corn prices. Rents were rebated and arrears (sometimes as high as £2000) written off, since 'never before have the cultivators of the land suffered as much as they have of late from a succession of unfavourable seasons and other causes'. The rent takers lost much of their income; clergy who relied heavily on glebe-land rents, lost as much as three-quarters of their rents. The result was that 'many old estates have been sold and broken up and are now replaced by an infinite number of small holdings and an incredible number of small freeholds, with no game, no resident proprietors, no large places or estates'.

But, in the end, it was the labourer who came off worst and they began to 'emigrate from the land'. Cheap Irish labour was brought in for seasonal work. When the Great Depression began to bite, the farming community saw that 'many farmers may be reduced to labourers and then be compelled to emigrate when nothing is left to them but poverty and wretchedness'. The labourer, fearful for his job and the tenancy of his tied cottage, became increasingly resentful. Reluctant to break traditional community bonds but emboldened by his allegiance to and training in Primitive Methodism, he began his way towards unionism. A national farmworkers' union was not established until 1906, but the foundations were laid by the strikes and associations, especially in the Fens, between 1872 and 1882.

The Consequences of the repeal of the Corn Laws: The threat to British agriculture came about twenty-five years after repeal due to the development of cheaper shipping (both sail and steam), faster and cheaper transport by rail and steamboat, and the modernisation of agricultural machinery. The prairie farms of North America were able to export vast quantities of cheap grain, as were peasant farms in the Russian Empire with cheaper labour. Between 1877 and 1886, the price for British wheat fell by almost 50% and wheat growing land declined by a million acres. In the 1830s Britain supplied 98% of its own grain needs; in the 1860s it supplied 76% and during the 1880s it was 55%. In 1870, agriculture contributed around 17% to national income; in 1911 it was 7%. Britain's reliance on imported food led to the danger of it being starved into submission during wartime. In 1914 Britain was dependent on imports for four-fifths of her wheat and 40% of her meat.

Source: Wikipedia (edited)

Industry and Towns

There were relatively few manufacturing or extractive industries in Lincolnshire to which the labourer could turn. The coast offered tourism, fishing and work in the docks; elsewhere there were stone and ironstone quarries. The village brick and tile works were hit by the slump, and milling, malting and brewing were moving into larger and more mechanised premises in towns like Spalding, Sleaford, Grantham and especially Newark. A good deal remained in the countryside – brewing, crushing seeds for oil, coach building and canvas and sack making in Epworth and elsewhere, and John Parkinson established his unsuccessful factory for crepes and bombazine in the Fens at New Bolingbroke, not in one of the towns – but these all used relatively little labour.

The towns of Lincolnshire had little effect on the surrounding countryside or even on each other as bridgeheads of urban culture. They were more influenced by rural society rather than being centres of influence themselves. Lincoln in 1859 was 'a place which almost stood by itself – isolated as it were in the midst of an. agricultural district', and Grimsby's impact was reduced by. having within its boundaries 'an insulating layer [of rural parishes] between the borough and the country'.

There were no national centres in Lincolnshire as there had been in the Middle Ages. Instead the network of market towns which grew up in the 17th century served the county well. A few, the coaching towns with their theatres, assembly rooms, inns, and fine houses, had become centres for the diffusion of fashion – Lincoln, Stamford, Boston, Grantham and to a lesser extent Spalding and Grimsby; while spa towns were established or attempted, for example, at Woodhall Spa (hotel and bath house, 1838-9). From 1799 the coastal resorts advertised to attract visitors for the season. Literary and philosophical societies as at Spalding and Stamford and other features of urban life attracted gentry and clergy to reside in these places.

Canals and Roads

Turnpike roads and waterways helped the growth of places like Market Deeping, Gainsborough and Louth, while Long Sutton and Brigg grew up on the backs of drainage schemes. The railways for a time fostered markets and fairs and increased the focal role of the town with its newspapers and banks; they also helped new industries to develop and led to the expansion of the coastal resorts. But most towns in the region declined in the later 19th century, along with the rural areas they depended upon. Throughout the county, fairs and markets like Stow Green, Kirton in Holland and Swineshead ('now nearly deserted little business done . . . except in the evening when the principal farmers assemble at the Griffin Inn') dwindled. The pull of Hull in the north, Leicester, Nottingham and Newark in the west contributed.

Grantham benefited from the enclosure of the heathlands around and the canal; factories grew up by the canal wharves. When the railway sheds were established (1852), the town changed from an agricultural market and staging post with inns and hotels into an industrial centre and railway junction with heavy and light engineering. Gainsborough built up an extensive carrying trade on the Trent between Nottingham and Hull; its ship building came to outstrip East Stockwith nearby. In the early 19th century, iron foundries and engineering works grew up. The coming of the railways hurt the river-borne trade but growth began again in the 1860s based on mills, maltings and breweries. The great days of Stamford with its coaches to London, York, Leeds, Edinburgh, Leicester and Cambridge, were over, but some brewing and engineering sprang up despite the lack of a main line railway.

The towns serviced the countryside, milling, tanning, processing and supplying fertilisers and machinery; shops, markets and services were the mainstays of their economy. The large-scale industrial growth of Victorian England passed the region by; only one textile mill (Lincoln) was built in the county, though the Handley brothers of Sleaford and others set up mills in Newark and other places. Some sacking and linen manufactories, rope-works and worsted weaving plants were put up but none grew into a stable industry. Only engineering became significant. Grantham and Lincoln relied on it; Howden's foundries at Boston produced one of the first steam threshing machines (1803), the steam river packet (1827) and the portable steam engine (1839). Marshalls of Gainsborough (founded in 1842) produced new lines of farm engines.

William Cobbett's Rural Rides

Rural Rides is the book for which the English journalist, agriculturist and political reformer William Cobbett is best known. At the time of writing in the early 1820s, Cobbett was a radical anti-Corn Law campaigner. He made up his mind to see rural conditions for himself, and to 'enforce by actual observation of rural conditions' the statements he had made in answer to the arguments of the landlords before the Parliamentary Agricultural Committee. He embarked on a series of journeys by horseback through the countryside of Southeast England and the English Midlands. He wrote down what he saw from the points of view both of a farmer and a social reformer. The result documents the early 19th-century countryside and its people. Source: Wikipedia (edited)

The towns depended on the prosperity of the countryside. Louth with its canal trade based on wool and coal flourished as farming on the Wolds flourished and declined with it. They remained small: in some respects, they resembled open villages in their poverty and popular disturbances. Boston, the home of the radical John Wilks, expanded in the early 19th century but declined with the coming of the railways; as elsewhere the town came to be full of 'courts', back yards built up with poor 'hutches', primitive cottages or hovels. Horncastle, in an attempt to gain 'an air of respectability' saw a good deal of new building, but the crowded town and annual horse fair were reputed to have led to crime, violence and disease. The popular festivities of the towns, like the bull baiting at Stamford, were rural in character and suppressed by their social superiors.

Lincoln and Urban Centres

Lincoln did not differ markedly from this general pattern. Although the county town, it had never become the capital of its region in the way Leicester, York or Nottingham had. It did not even influence the culture of other towns like Louth or Grantham. After the decline in the 16th century which made its name a by-word for 'decay'd towns' in general, the city began to recover from the end of the 17th century, when gentry from the surrounding countryside moved into the town. Population grew, from about 3000 in the 1670s to 5000 in the 1750s and more than 7000 in 1800. The medieval walls were removed, the main roads improved by the turnpike trusts (1756) and New Road was built to ease access to the upper city (1785). The city gained new markets (1736), a race course (moved in 1771 to Carholme), assembly rooms (1757, moved to the upper city in 1774), a hospital (1769) and County Hall in the castle (1776). A coach ran to London, weekly until 1784 and daily from 1791; by 1837 some 30 coaches plied to the capital each week carrying 13,500 passengers each year. Daily services ran to Hull, Rotherham, Nottingham, and other places.

In 1741 Richard Ellison of Boultham leased the Fosse Dyke from the city for £175 p.a. and increased the value of the tolls to more than £7000 p.a. From 1762 the Witham was developed, and a steam packet ran regularly to Boston from 1826. The enclosure of the heathlands north and south of Lincoln led to increased affluence in the region, and an expansion of the town's marketing services and industrial activities. Tanneries, mills and makings grew up along the Witham and round Brayford Pool. It remained the centre of the county's religious and secular life. At first smaller than Boston, its growth was sluggish until the railways boosted its industrial life and gave a new focus to the town's factories. Links with Nottingham (1846), Peterborough and London (1848), Grantham (1867), Sheffield, and other centres made it a focal point; the network was completed by 1896. As early as 1846 the railways bought up the Fosse and Witham Navigations.

The population of the city doubled twice, from 7000 (1800) to 13,800 (1840) and to nearly 27,000 (1870). 'The increase in the population of the city of Lincoln is mainly attributable to the extension of the Iron manufactures', wrote the 1871 census officers; 18 per cent of the working population was engaged in Lincoln's iron-working industries which grew to international significance. Clayton and Shuttleworth, founded in 1842, employed 1300 people. Burton and Proctor (later Rustons) built their Sheaf Works at Stamp Lock, where they produced and exported threshing machines and steam engines. Although there was some flour milling (Charles Seeley) and some chemical plants, by the early 20th century Lincoln was largely a one-industry town. Most of the new factories and engineering sheds grew up near the railway stations and marshalling yards.

The Decline of Agriculture

The period from the 1870s through to the 1940s was one of steady decline and transformation. Historian Robert Ensor wrote that these years witnessed the ruin of British agriculture, "which till then had almost as conspicuously led the world, [and which] was thrown overboard in a storm like an unwanted cargo" due to "the sudden and overwhelming invasion...by American prairie-wheat in the late seventies." [Previously, agriculture had employed more people in Britain than any other industry and until 1880 its technology was far ahead of most European farming, its cattle breeds superior, its cropping the most scientific and its yields the highest, with high wages leading to higher standard of living for agricultural workers than in comparable European countries.

After 1877 wages declined and 'farmers themselves sank into ever increasing embarrassments; bankruptcies and auctions followed each other; the countryside lost its most respected figures, with those who tended the land with greatest pride and conscience suffering most as the only chance of survival came in lowering standards.' The decline of agriculture also led to a fall in rural rents, especially in areas with arable land. Consequently, landowners, who until 1880 had been the richest class in the nation, were dethroned from this position. After they lost their economic leadership, the loss of their political leadership followed.

The sale of land and property in the village in 1918 (see pages 24-25) must be seen in this context.

Source: Wikipedia (edited)

Lincoln outstripped Boston by the mid-Victorian period, but it was still not the largest town in the region; that role was now occupied by Grimsby which became one of the most important fishing ports in the country, especially after the development of the steam trawler in the 1880s. As the town grew, the neighbouring resort of Cleethorpes came to be less attractive to the genteel visitor, and from 1863, when Cleethorpes and Grimsby were linked by railway, it became a holiday centre for the industrial towns of the north. Skegness was promoted jointly by Lord Scarborough and the railway companies after the village had been linked to the Boston-Grimsby line in 1873. It too became a resort, its pier (1881) and gardens laid out after the building of the sea wall in 1878. Other resorts on the coast followed, so that by 1903 the area had become 'the great summer playground of the working-classes in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire, besides drawing in many from Yorkshire and even Lancashire ... conveyed by the ... northern railways in express excursion trains, every day through the summer, at fares for which, south of London, one could hardly get to the suburbs'.

Industrial growth took place in some newer centres. Iron ore was extracted at Frodingham from the 1860s and in south-west Kesteven, and Scunthorpe iron works developed from 1875, for a time one of the largest producers of steel in England. Rowland Winn of Appleby promoted railway links with Sheffield in the 1860s. But the growth of Scunthorpe, Grimsby and Skegness meant the decline of the older centres like Stamford and Boston, and the death of smaller markets like Folkingham and Wragby.

Landscape History of the Wolds

Source: *'The Historic Character of The County of Lincolnshire' English Heritage Project No. 4661 Main Report John Lord and Alastair MacIntosh Lincolnshire County Council With contributions from Adam Partington*

North Thorseby is sited at the junction of two landscape types – the marsh flat lands and the rolling hills of the Wolds.

The present landscape of the Wolds is primarily the result of the enclosure of a largely typical open field farming regime, and the subsequent changes to the associated nucleated settlement pattern. However, the manner in which the landscape was enclosed is quite different to similar landscapes, such as the Northern Cliff, with particular regard to the date and purpose of enclosure. The earliest enclosures are to be found in close proximity to historic settlements, whether deserted or surviving. This is quite common in Lincolnshire and represents an historic trend from arable farming to livestock rearing. Typically, this was undertaken in order to raise sheep for wool production, which could then be sold. However, in the Wolds, these ancient enclosures are both more extensive than in the county as a whole, and more widespread, indicating that livestock made a proportionally larger contribution to the medieval economy.

Later enclosure typically follows the same planned form as elsewhere in the county. The pastoral history of the area has historically been closely allied to the fortunes of the neighbouring marshes and fens. In the later medieval period, and in the post medieval period, wealthy Wold's farmers would rent grazing land on the marshes in order to fatten their stock on the rich grasslands close to the sea. The many east-west aligned roads and tracks, perhaps initially intended to provide access to the coastal salt industry, would have served as drove roads taking livestock between the two areas.

The remaining settlements in the area, small villages for the most part, tend to be found in former river valleys, perhaps as these would have been good places to sink wells. As well as the existing settlements, there are a large number of deserted or shrunken settlements which are identifiable from remaining earthworks.

The visibility of the past is one reason why the area is popular with visitors and sought-after as a place to retire. In certain areas, former open field strips have been fossilised, either in the form of ridge and furrow earthworks or in the boundaries of ancient enclosures, which typically reflect the sinuous shapes produced by strip farming.

Landscape History of the Northern Marshes

Source: *'The Historic Character of The County of Lincolnshire'* English Heritage Project No. 4661 Main Report John Lord and Alastair MacIntosh Lincolnshire County Council With contributions from Adam Partington

Page
| 104

The nucleated settlement pattern of the area constitutes its earliest landscape feature. With the exception of New Holland and New Waltham, each settlement in the area was already in existence by the time of the Domesday survey [although not necessarily in a nucleated form], and there is a notable prevalence of Danish place-names. Each of these medieval settlements was set within the typical arrangement of two or three large, open fields, in which a set amount of land was allocated to each farmer within the larger unenclosed field. The arable land was supplemented by the common grazing land on the marshes. Interestingly, those parishes which were landlocked, such as Habrough, had their own marshland holdings in neighbouring coastal parishes, such as South Killingholme.

The medieval open-field farming system was in use before the Norman Conquest [although not necessarily in existence in 1086 in all or most 'vills'] and continued largely unchanged until the Enclosure Awards of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The early enclosures were probably undertaken to increase the area of land upon which sheep or cattle could be grazed.

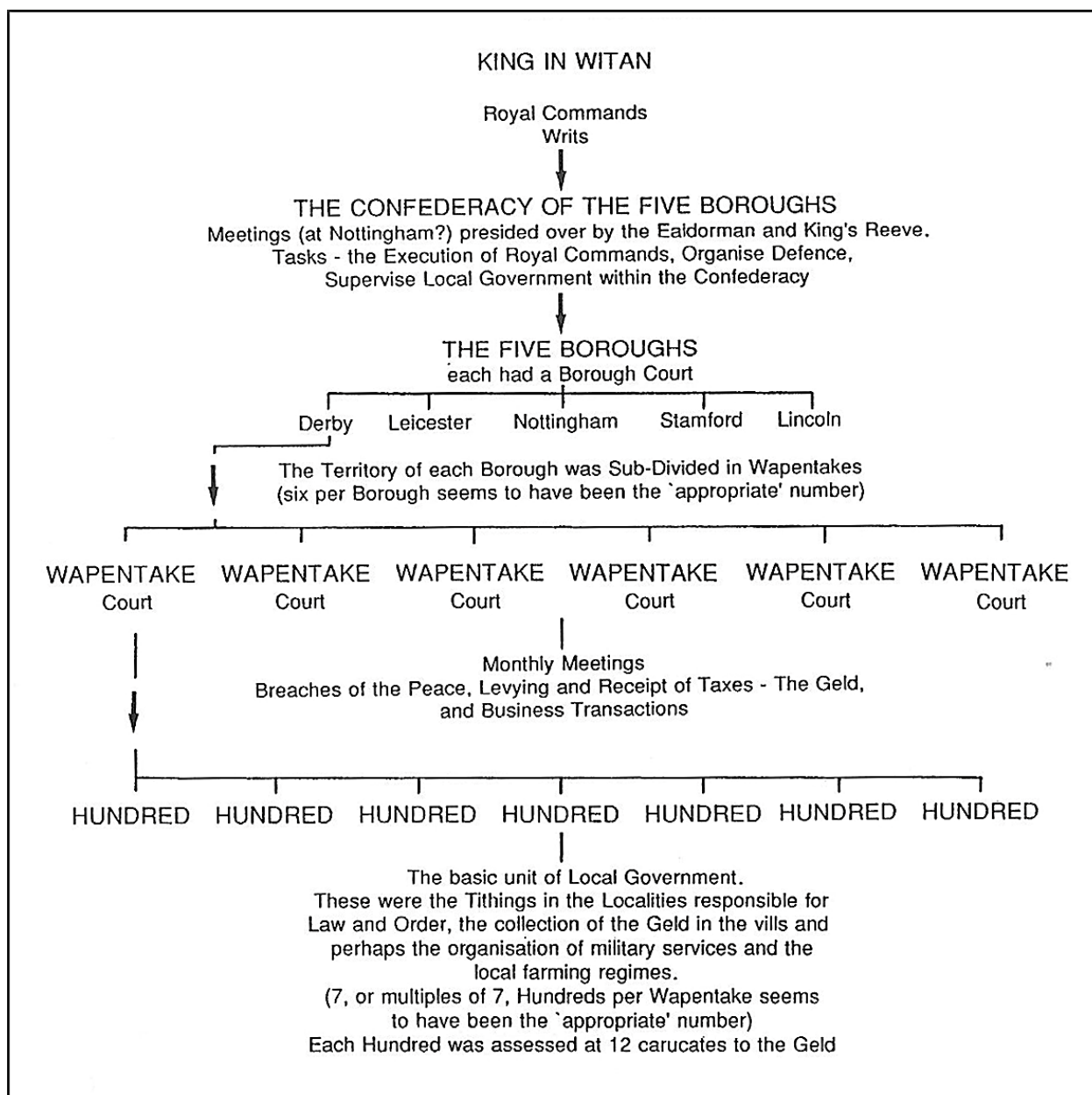
The Enclosure Awards resulted in radical change to the landscape, sweeping away the former open-field farming system and the unenclosed common grazing land across virtually the whole county. In this area, the vast majority of parishes were subject to this process and the resulting landscape of planned, rectilinear fields is very well preserved. As well as creating a new pattern of fields, the Enclosure Commissioners also laid out new straight roads which can be seen running at right angles to the older roads linking the historic settlements of the area.

Another feature of the new landscape was the establishment of new farm complexes away from the villages, from which farmers could more easily exploit their new holdings. This has created a secondary dispersed settlement pattern in areas that would previously have had no permanent inhabitants. The enclosure of the land paved the way for new uses of the landscape.

The trend from agricultural to industrial land-use began in earnest in the middle of the nineteenth century, with the construction of the Great Grimsby and Sheffield Junction Railway in 1848. This provided access to inland markets for goods produced in the region, initially for fish from Grimsby, but later for other products. The area around Barton-upon-Humber became known for brick and tile making. This industry had a profound impact on the landscape as it required the extraction of large quantities of clay from land immediately adjacent to the river Humber, leaving many large open pits. Once extracted the clay was fired using coal imported by boat, and the finished product was exported the same way. This process necessitated the expansion of Barton's port facilities, and the town expanded accordingly. As new construction materials came into use in the twentieth century the industry at Barton gradually declined, leaving only one active brickworks open today.

In 1913 the new deep-water dock at Immingham was opened, having been conceived and financed by the Great Central Railway Company. This enabled the large-scale import of coal to service the ironworks at Scunthorpe. This was an entirely new facility constructed in an area that had, until that time, been purely agricultural. The dock at Grimsby was also owned by the Great Central Railway Company, and together these facilities provided the framework for the future prosperity of the area. The area has been subject to many changes since the Second World War.

Rural landscape has been subject to the same processes of field consolidation and enlargement as the rest of the county, along with the associated dereliction of defunct isolated farms. Many of the larger villages of the area have expanded to accommodate commuters from the nearby cities. This process has been accelerated by the opening of the Humber Bridge in 1981. The bridge itself is a major local landmark, and is visible from much of the south bank of the River Humber.



Wapentakes : The Government System Imposed by the Vikings and in place in 1066. See page 106 for an explanation

Name Derivations of some Haverstoe Wapentake 'vills'

Domesday Book 1086. See Map page 72

A wapentake was a unit of local government and taxation. There were 19 in Lindsey in 1086. Toresbi belonged to Haverstoe Wapentake, along with 20 other vills. See page 72.

Cabourne: Old English *Ca* – jackdaw - *burna* – stream

Fulstow: OE possibly Fugol's hermitage – *stow* a place of assembly, holy place

Newton: OE *neowa* – new; *ton* – homestead.

Swinhope: OE *swin* – swine; *hop* – small enclosed valley

Waltham: OE *wald* – woodland; *-ham* - a manor, an estate

Gunnerby, Thoresby, Barnoldby: – Old Norse, a named person's homestead – Gunnarr, Thorir, Bernulf

Ashby: Old Norse *askr* – ash; *bi* - farmstead

Boroughs, Wapentake and Hundred: Where Thoresby fitted into the Government system in 1086

After the death of Eric Bloodaxe in 954 had removed the immediate Scandinavian threat from the East Midlands, kings of Wessex, first Edwy (955 - 959) and then his successor Edgar (959 - 975), were able to address the task of amalgamating the newly-won territory into their expanded state. The villagers of the area would soon learn of the measures taken to organise their defence (whether they liked it or not!) against any further threat from the north, to secure their loyalty to the new authority, govern them, administer law and order, and, last but not least, tax them. A new country – England - had now been created and in the late 10th century this name began to be used for the first time for the whole country and the Kings of Wessex became the Kings of England.

Page
| 106

As there was still the possibility of danger from Northumbrian expansionism, some means of effectively holding the former Danelaw lands, and ultimately defending Wessex, had to be established. Could the king of Wessex trust the Mercian Danes to remain loyal, or would they, at some future date, decide to try for independence again or form an alliance with the Northumbrian Danes? The English strategy seems to have been to use key Viking military bases, or burhs, as the basis of a confederacy or regional council through which to focus the administration and defence of the East Midlands.

These were the five boroughs (as they were referred to in an annal of 942') of Nottingham, Derby, Leicester, Stamford and Lincoln. They were brought together and became the Confederacy of the Five Boroughs. The earliest surviving reference to which is in a law code of c. 997, but it was clearly in being long before with its own ealdorman and king's reeve who presided at its meetings which were probably held at Nottingham. Each of the boroughs was centred on a territory whose citizens were to be responsible for that borough's defence. The Confederacy would 'create a buffer zone between southern England and the unstable North', finally detach the area from the Danes of York and, hopefully, 'foster a sense of identity in the East Midlands'.

What was also involved was the creation of a new local government administrative framework for the region which would provide the king with a means of contacting, and thus ruling, every citizen in his kingdom. The framework of government has been dated to the period 954 - 963, took the form of a pyramid. At the top was the king sitting with his council (Witan) of most intimate supporters and advisers. His decisions were handed down to the meetings of the Confederacy by means of the evolving royal writ:

'.. a letter under seal, a notification to the royal officers in the localities that such and such a thing had to be done, and by implication a royal order to them to see to what executive action as needed to ensure that the royal will was carried out.'

The writ must be obeyed. In the East Midlands of the late 10th century these instructions would then have been passed to the court in each of the Five Boroughs. Each borough acted as a shire, that is, as the authority for their territory. In the case of Thoresby the relevant authority was at Lincoln which must have been 'in charge of' an area approximating to the old Kingdom of Lindsey.

Further sub-divisions within each Borough's large territory were needed, and these involved the creation (again probably in the 950s and 960s) of a number of institutions which were called, over much of the former Danelaw, Wapentakes. Wapentake (or more properly vapnatak) is an Old Norse word meaning 'to brandish a weapon' and presumably reflected the way in which the participants qualified to attend such meetings (weapon-owning men) gave assent to group decisions.

These communal institutions (known in the south of England as Hundreds) were essential for the implementation of royal decisions and justice in a society whose members could not read or write. Six wapentakes per borough seems to have been the ideal. However, Lindsey, being so large, was first sub-divided into three Ridings (a word derived from the Scandinavian 'thridding' or 'third part', and similarly found in use in the massive Yorkshire) each of which, in theory, was further sub-divided into the appropriate six wapentakes. Thoresby was part of Haverstoe Wapentake – see maps pages 72 and 107 for maps.

At the foot of the pyramid, the basic unit of royal administration, with a far-reaching role in the organisation of the community and the royal administration of the shire' - was that sub-division of the wapentake which was called a 'hundred'. They were created throughout the former Danelaw shires. Blocks of 50 hundreds per wapentake seem to have been favoured. The hundred's basic role seems to have been tax collection, with added responsibilities in relation to the fulfilment of military obligations and the preservation of law and order. Adult, free males (that is, over twelve years of age) living within the designated hundred were obliged to belong to a tithing - a body of ten men (led by a 'hundredman') - who were jointly responsible for the good conduct of all its members. Any member involved in a criminal activity must be brought to justice by the other members of the tithing - if they failed to do so the whole tithing would be punished. The boundaries of these hundreds have not been preserved. They did not follow parish boundaries nor take any notice of the 'sokes'.

Source: Geoffrey F. Bryant, 'The Early History of Barton-upon-Humber', (with minor amendments).

Domesday Book: The Freeborn English in Lincolnshire

The historian Michael Wood explains that Lincolnshire had unique characteristics at the time of the Domesday Book – a high degree of freemen smallholders.

One of the most distinctive features of the Domesday survey is the great body of smallholders who individually enjoyed personal independence. In Domesday they are called freemen or sokemen and they are overwhelmingly concentrated in certain eastern areas, Norfolk, Lincolnshire and the Danelaw. In the lands of the Five Boroughs, especially Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, long before the Norman Conquest a free population was established whose essential character continued right through into the Middle Ages.

First, what is meant by 'free' people at this time? It was a principle of English law that every man should have a lord; the question was whether you were free to give or sell your land, or 'go with it to another lord'; the relation was dissoluble; you could seek another lord 'with your land'. Other holdings could not be transferred or sold. There may have been large areas of the country where 'lordship' had no real hold. This is particularly the case in the eastern Danelaw, where Toresbi was situated. In 1086 over 14,000 freemen and over 23,000 sokemen were still holding land, 80 per cent of them in the eastern Danelaw. The distinction between the two is not always evident. Lincolnshire had 11,000 sokemen but no freemen; sometimes one reads of a sokeman who was 'really a freeman'. Sometimes the freeman is called a thegn; whether one is freer or better off than the other cannot be said; most were very small-scale cultivators.

In Lincolnshire Domesday, a really huge proportion of the population is described as free. These non-manorial features of the eastern English economy have never been satisfactorily accounted for. Many historians have thought that the origins of this society lay in the Danish settlement of the ninth century, but certain features seem to crop up elsewhere in isolated cases: could the 'free peasantry' of the Danelaw perhaps be a regional rather than an ethnic phenomenon? Or, if it is ethnic, is it still possible that it could derive from earlier Anglo-Saxon society - in other words that the Danish settlement of the eastern part of the country preserved between the 870s and the 1080s some of the archaic features of earlier English society.

Lincolnshire has always been a conservative society. The essential pre-Conquest structure of shire, parts, ridings and wapentakes survived intact until the local government reforms of 1974. Here, as in the other shires of the Five Boroughs, the main county town is still the one on which the Danish army of the ninth and tenth centuries was based, and from where it ran local organisation. What sets Lincolnshire apart is the enormous proportion of sokemen - half the entire recorded population in the county. Later sources show that these people were bound to a lord by homage and by certain payments of services, but that they were actually their own master in the sense that they could sell their land and go else-where. They had their own place in the courts of wapentake and shire; they could dispose of their land or any portion of it by gift, sale or exchange, and they paid their taxes directly to the officers of the king or the sheriff. In addition, it appears that they were usually free from the customary day work on the lord's land. Domesday figures for Lindsey suggest that over 54 per cent of the population were sokemen; but in some wapentakes the figures go up to amazing proportions - 73.4 per cent in Ludborough.

Domesday's evidence gives us a picture of a society in Lincolnshire which before 1066 had a large and growing population, remarkably densely settled; a society whose ordinary landholders, the sokemen, enjoyed particular freedom; a society which practised an equitable form of inheritance, where siblings shared out their father's land; a society marked by economic growth, rising land values and new building, as instanced in the churches.

For these areas, there survive literally hundreds of twelfth- and thirteenth-century grants of small parcels of land being conveyed by so-called 'peasants' using the charter and a personal seal, and thirteenth- and fourteenth-century surveys reveal large numbers of free smallholders with no relative decline in numbers since Domesday. The grants are particularly interesting evidence; a century after Domesday the sokemen and women of that survey are clearly engaged in a flourishing land market which they themselves control. Here are small-scale 'peasants'

The concentration of freeman/sokemen in Lincolnshire is borne out in the Domesday records in regard to North Thoresby, Grainsby and Waithe. In the population of Thoresby/Autby, 41 sokemen (just over 50%) are recorded, 29 villeins and 7 bordars, altogether 77 heads of household with a total population calculated at almost 400; in Grainsby, 19 sokemen, 12 villeins and 9 bordars (almost 50%); in Waithe, 19 sokemen and 4 villeins (80%). So, in the immediate area 56% were freemen. It is possible that this had a long-lasting impact on the landscape of our village deep into the 19th century and, even today, it explains much about the layout of the village. The relatively large plots of early enclosed land at the centre of the village (see pages 8 and 9) can plausibly be seen as a legacy of the sokemen of 1086 and, most likely, of the Danish origins of the population.

making grants freely, in perpetuity, and unencumbered by earthly services or custom. They are able to warrant the land in the local court of the wapentake or shire: they have other charters to back them up. They have no seigneurial authority over them. A man or woman who could do all these things was as free as anyone could be in the conditions of the early medieval world.

Women must not be forgotten in this discussion. It is likely that Domesday figures - whether for 'freemen', sokemen, or villeins and bordars often conceal women cultivators and smallholders by their constant use of masculine forms in the wording. It is certain, then, that women played a fundamental role in the economy of this 'free' Danelaw society, and that they were an important part of the landowning community. The history of this society is also the product of such as Emma and Mabel of Yarborough; Avina, daughter of Athelstan of Saltfleetby; Christiana of Cockerington; Emma and Maud of Skidbrooke; the sisters Sybil and Juliana of Manby; Gunnhild of Saltfleetby, who has left us her seal, and the many women whose transactions appear in these documents.

Who were these people? Old-fashioned Viking names remained in use in Lincolnshire and the Danelaw long after they ceased to be current in Scandinavia. It must be assumed that such names were a survival from long before the Conquest. In some cases, the charters allow such a connection to be made. In the case of Christiana of Cockerington, who was mentioned above, the names are known of her father Ivo, who probably died in the 1170s; of her grandfather Swan, son of Magnus, whose name is certainly Scandinavian; and of her great-grandfather Magnus himself. As Christiana was of marriageable age (twenty-five?) by 1179, it is not unreasonable to think that Magnus could have been the sokeman of Cockerington, mentioned in the Domesday book.

These were not wealthy people. The holdings of the Lincolnshire sokemen were very small: 20 acres of arable was normal for members of this class. The sokemen have a curious position in English medieval society, then, with marked personal and tenurial independence, but with an economic position often interior to villeins in the south. It is curious, too, that they successfully maintained their position throughout the century after the Conquest. Here and there, of course, individual families can be found increasing their holdings until they passed from peasant to 'thegnly' or 'knightly' class. This is precisely what happened to Ivo, the father of Christiana of Cockerington, who is named in the great return of knights' fees made in 1166 by order of King Henry II.

But these examples are exceptional. In general, the sokemen kept their middling, smallholding position. They were a conservative race, resisting encroachments on their ancient liberties, and many features of the economy in this region in the sixteenth century seem to connect directly with this 'individualist' pre-Conquest past, handed down from the Agmunds, Tovis, Grims and Halfdans who settled these parts in the ninth and tenth century.

Source: Michael Wood, "Domesday : A Search for the Roots of England.



This is a second printing of the second edition – November 2021 – to meet the very pleasing demand for the publication. The opportunity has been taken to correct a small number of typographical errors. IW



Aerial Photograph c1964

