



NEWS REVIEW

Lincoln Record Society



THE COUNCIL AND OFFICERS WOULD LIKE TO

welcome you to the twenty-fifth edition of the News Review!

As I emerge from a sodden winter, Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* comes to mind,

Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly little house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing.

At long last we might all feel suddenly compelled to bolt outside without even waiting to put on our coats. Yet, as I welcome you to this edition of the News Review, there are good memories to be had of this last winter. So far as those I have of the Society's work in 2025, a few hours' reading *Land and God: The City, County and Diocese of Lincoln over Nine Centuries*, the volume of excellent essays in honour of Nicholas Bennett edited by Paul Dryburgh and Philippa Hoskin (LRS 114), whilst holding a mug of hot chocolate, certainly comes to the fore. Nicholas's generosity, suggesting a manuscript to me that began my PhD journey and continues to reveal more as I work at my postdoctoral project, has been long-appreciated by members and by past and present colleagues at the University of Lincoln. 2025 was a good year for LRS publications. I can say confidently that Brian Hodgkinson's edition of *The Louth St James Churchwardens' Accounts 1527-1570* (LRS 113) is an exceptional addition to scholarship undertaken on some of Lincolnshire's most comprehensive sixteenth-century parish records and, as Brian acknowledges, we can once again thank Nicholas for his inspiration and invaluable advice.

My own project has now entered its second year. I spent the first largely transcribing more audience court records. Shortly before Christmas I completed my first, undoubtedly imperfect, draft of the 200 folios from periods between 1525 and 1562 at the heart of my research. Now deep into translation (as well as perfecting that transcription!) I look forward to the time I can analyse what I have uncovered and work out precisely what to say about it. As well as working towards eventual publication of those records, I have written other things. An essay ('Meeting the

Challenges Head-On: Confronting Obstacles to Effective Administration of Justice in an Early Sixteenth-Century Diocese'), developed from a paper at a LRS-sponsored session of the 2025 Leeds International Medieval Congress, is published this coming summer in the second volume of *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Sources* edited by Graham Barrett and our own Louise Wilkinson. Hannah Boston has contributed another chapter containing an edition of, and commentary on, nine charters from the Cistercian abbey of Vaudey near Bourne.

This News Review shows that other fabulous work is being undertaken by the Society and its members. So, whilst we will all soon be able, like Mole, to pop our snouts out into the sunlight, we can still indulge our passion for historical research knowing that others are doing so too.

Dr Martin Roberts





LINCOLN CATHEDRAL LIBRARY JOINT VENTURE

Lincoln Cathedral's librarian retired last summer and since then we have been discussing with the Dean our involvement in finding a replacement. As support for the position did not fit into either our small or large grants schemes our conclusion was that this should be a Memorandum of Agreement signed by both parties. In February Council agreed that we should

pay 50% of the costs for five years and the agreement was signed in March. It was agreed that officers of the society will sit on the Project Board and from time to time there will be special event offers to members of the society.

Ken Hollamby



UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN MA PRIZES

The University of Lincoln joint winners of the best MA Dissertation (across both MA Medieval Studies and MA History cohorts) for the academic year 2024-2025 were:

- Erin Lintott - 'Bodily, emotional, and theological perspectives: The role and significance of gender within late medieval English mysticism' (mark: 78)
- Jean Suszko - 'Burning Boundaries: Negotiating Gender, Sanctity, and Authority Through Joan of Arc's Identity' (mark: 77)

These students received £200 plus three years free membership of the LRS. Jean Suszko's research is described below.

Burning Boundaries: Negotiating Gender, Sanctity, and Authority Through Joan of Arc's Identity

This past autumn, I completed my MA in Medieval Studies at the University of Lincoln. As one of two recipients of the Lincoln Record Society Award for Best Dissertation, I was asked to write a short piece about my research for this publication. I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Renée Ward, for her help and guidance, and Dr Hannah Boston for reaching out and giving me the opportunity to write this and share my research.

At the centre of my dissertation, 'Burning Boundaries: Negotiating Gender, Sanctity, and Authority Through Joan of Arc's Identity', is the argument that Joan of Arc consistently resists the rigid categories through which she has previously been understood. To explore this, I examined a range of medieval sources: the Rouen trial transcripts, Jean Gerson's political tract *De mirabili victoria*, Alain Chartier's 'Epistola de puella', and Christine de Pizan's *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*. Across these texts, Joan emerges as a figure who cannot be easily contained within the pre-established frameworks of masculine and feminine, saintly and heretical, and ordinary and extraordinary. Whilst the Rouen trial transcripts and Gerson attempt to situate her within familiar binaries, Chartier and Pizan, in contrast, foreground and celebrate the very qualities that mark her as exceptional. In attempting to explain her, these writers reveal the limitations of the categories available to them, highlighting the extent to which such distinctions are constructed rather than fixed.



Clément de Fauquembergue, *Sketch of Joan of Arc* (1429). French National Archives. © Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Joan_Parliament_of_Paris.png

My approach to this material was informed by Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and Karen Barad's concept of 'intra-action'. Butler's work emphasises that gender is not a stable identity, but is instead something produced through repeated social acts. Barad argues that identity and agency emerge through ongoing relationships between matter, discourse, and the environment, rather than existing independently. Together, these perspectives let Joan be understood not as a fixed historical figure, but as one whose identity is continually reshaped within the texts that construct her literary image.

Ultimately, my dissertation argues that Joan's enduring significance lies in her resistance to categorisation. In doing so, she not only challenges contemporary assumptions about gender, sanctity, and authority but also exposes the fragility of the binary systems through which such concepts are understood.

Jean Suszko





BOOK LAUNCH

Land and God: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Bennett

On 23rd January 2026, more than 80 people gathered in the Chapter House of Lincoln Cathedral, with the Dean, the Very Revd Simon Jones, to celebrate the launch of the latest Lincoln Record Society volume, *Land and God: the City, County, and Diocese of Lincoln over Nine Centuries: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Bennett*. As the name suggests, this volume is a Festschrift to pay tribute to Dr Nicholas Bennett, who has been a lynchpin of Lincolnshire history for over 50 years. 13 contributors, all of them long-standing colleagues and friends of Nicholas, contributed papers to the volume that cover the medieval period to the twentieth century, brought together and edited by Dr Paul Dryburgh and Professor Philippa Hoskin.

The event began with an introduction by LRS President Professor David Stocker, who praised Nicholas' long-standing work both in researching and in encouraging the research of others: 'I would like to think that my paper has some intrinsic academic merit but, if I'm honest, it is just as likely to become known as one of many examples of the high aspirations behind some of the excellent conferences and day-schools that Nicholas (and Carol) organised during their time at the Cathedral Library during the first two decades of this millennium.' Next, Professor Philippa Hoskin spoke of the process of producing the

volume. The idea for the volume was first suggested by Dr Marianne Wilson, and met with widespread enthusiasm. 'In fact, I think Marianne and then Paul and I found the opposite problem it was easy to know where to begin but hard to know where to stop. And as the finished volume shows it demonstrates that it isn't just medievalists who benefit from Nicholas's expertise, and not just historians either.' Philippa praised the impact of Nicholas' work and knowledge on the region's historical research, for several generations: 'Somehow Nicholas always knows of an interesting example, or something which provides a new way of looking at a process or an event or a person or a piece of land. His knowledge has made so many people's work better and he has inspired so many academics to work in local history, in ecclesiastical history, in editing and in archives.'

Carol Bennett, Nicholas' wife and fellow historian, gave a tribute to Nicholas' encouragement and help that he gave to her and many other researchers, calling him a 'true educator' who freely gives of his time, 'taking great pains to answer queries, suggest sources, untangle passages of medieval Latin, and take students under your wing.' She gave a précis of her article, focused on the Cathedral library which lay near to the Chapter House, and which →





was the focus of many of their co-organised events. Dr Marianne Wilson next took the stand, and praised the volume as ‘testament to the many intellectual lives that Nicholas has shaped’. It was, she said, a reflection of Nicholas’ view that ‘archival work is not something to be guarded, but something to be opened up and shared.’

The book was then presented to Nicholas, to warm applause by the audience. Nicholas made a speech expressing his gratitude to the book’s editors and contributors, and to all of the event’s attendees. He was pleased, he said, to see the LRS in such a flourishing state, and to see the renewal of the Lincoln Cathedral Library, which is due to reopen this year. The evening ended with a reception in the Chapter House, and a request from several attendees for Nicholas to sign their copies of the book.

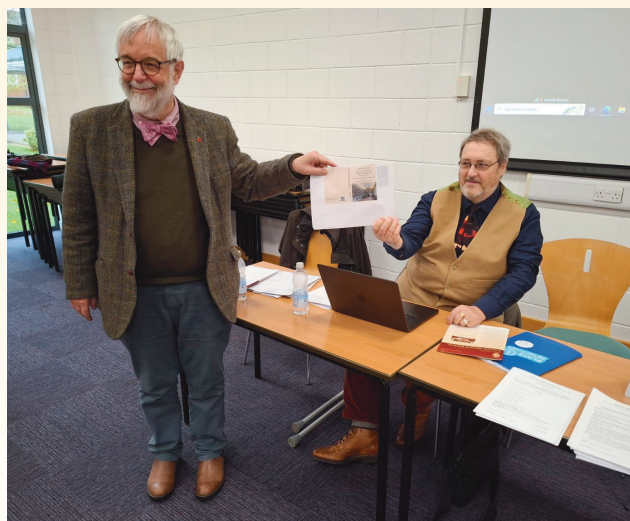
Copies of this volume have been circulated to members of the LRS.

LRS AGM 2025

On 15 November last, a small but select band of members gathered at Lincoln Bishop University for the Society’s Annual General Meeting. For the first time in our history we also hosted the AGM online. Along with the usual election of officers and members of Council, the meeting received reports on progress with priority areas under the Nigel Burn Bequest. Most notable is progress with the contracting of a new provider for the Society’s website, which will hopefully provide a dynamic new experience for members and non-members while retaining access to the portal of digitised volumes. The reporting year had seen a number of events, many of which have featured in these pages, including the online research seminar, book launches, collaborative seminar with the University of Lincoln’s Medieval and Early Modern Research Group and support for the Thirteenth-Century conference in Lincoln. The Society is now firmly rooted within the local and national grant-making landscape. Our Small Grants scheme (for projects up to £10,000) has supported wide-

ranging publication projects and workshops as well as (conditionally) a new Historic Towns Trust map of Boston. The Large Grants scheme supported new Nigel Burn Postdoctoral Research scholarships for Dr Martin Roberts (Bishop Longland’s Court of Audience) and Dr Matthew Hammond (Acta of the earls and countesses of Lincoln), as well as a new postgraduate scholarship for Jordan Seymour on the charters of Revesby Abbey. Newly approved research and editorial projects on the Stixwold and Bardney cartularies (Dr Kathryn Dutton and Professor Louise Wilkinson) and the Crowland Abbey cartulary (Dr Hannah Boston) further expand our recent editorial focus on editions of cartularies and charters, all of which will appear in our vibrant Main Series or Kathleen Major Series of Medieval Records.

At the conclusion of the main business the President, Professor David Stocker, made a brief presentation to Dr Nicholas Bennett of the dust cover for the festschrift in his honour (for which a full report appears above).



Dr Nicholas Bennett is presented with his Festschrift book cover. © Paul Dryburgh



Dr Brian Hodgkinson © Paul Dryburgh

The meeting was followed by a superbly stimulating lecture from Dr Brian Hodgkinson on his recently published volume in our Main Series: *The Louth St James Churchwardens' Accounts, 1527–1570*. This showcased one of the county's richest sets of local ecclesiastical records, giving intimate detail of the rupture brought about by the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the waves of Reformation and Counter-Reformation that

swept mid-Tudor Britain and Ireland. These records document changes to pious practice, church architecture and fabric as well as the fate of internal monuments, plate and vestments, and are a truly wonderful source for local religious history at a time of momentous change.

Paul Dryburgh



COUNTING CHIMNEYS CONFERENCE

There is nothing like a good title to attract attention to a conference and Rob Wheeler's 'Counting Chimneys' did just that. Although the late seventeenth century Hearth Tax was really about counting hearths. The conference, held on 25th October 2025, was a joint venture between the Lincoln Record Society and the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology's Building Recording Team, appropriately called RUBL (Recording and Understanding Buildings in Lincolnshire). When we planned the conference, we would have been happy with forty delegates but in the event we attracted over seventy. The aim of the conferences was to publicise and support our joint work on the planned publication of the Lincolnshire Hearth Tax volume as part of the British Records Society long-running series of county volumes.

There were two themes to the conference. In the morning we looked at the national picture and after lunch at the progress made on the Lincolnshire volume which we plan to publish in 2027. We were welcomed by our President David Stocker who was followed with an introduction to the project by Adrian Green, the recently appointed General Editor of the BRS Hearth Tax Series. The opening speaker was Catherine Ferguson, previous General Editor of the series, talking about the series as a whole. She was

followed by Andrew Wareham, Director of the British Academy Hearth Tax Project, who described the work on the Norfolk volume. The morning ended with a talk by David Neave one of the editors of the East Riding of Yorkshire volume.

The afternoon session started with a talk by Nicholas Bennett who was formerly our General Editor who gave an overview of the Hearth Tax in Lincolnshire in the 1660s that will form part of his chapter in the volume. Rob Wheeler got to the heart of the matter with a talk about Hearth Tax statistics and what they can tell us about the economy and society of the period. 'No Smoke without Fire. No Hearths without Buildings' was the title of Naomi Field's and Jenne Papes' contribution. They are researching links between Lincolnshire Hearth Tax entries, buildings on early maps and buildings identified in the Hearth Tax returns that still survive.

Everyone we spoke to said how much they had enjoyed the conference, some much more than they had expected to. Look out for the book. It will be more fun than the title suggests.

Ken Hollamby

ONGOING RESEARCH



NIGEL BURN MEMORIAL FUND PROJECT

'The Lincoln School and Its Milieu: Canon Law and Common Law'

'The Lincoln School and Its Milieu: Canon Law and Common Law' consists of the publication of two key medieval legal sources connected to Lincolnshire, with the aim of advancing a wider intellectual argument that ecclesiastical and secular law in the Middle Ages were deeply interconnected. One edition will be a publication of MS121 (Lincoln Cathedral Archives), a thirteenth-century compilation of canonical works produced in Lincoln. The other will be a publication of the 1245 Lincolnshire eyre plea rolls (National Archives JUST1/482 and JUST1/1581), a record of the royal justices' visitation to the county. Together, these sources highlight

Lincolnshire's central role in the legal transformations of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when both canon law and the English common law were developing at remarkable pace.

On the ecclesiastical side, Lincoln was one of the most important centres of canon law and theology in the period c.1180–1250. It was home to some of the most influential legal thinkers of the age, including Walter de Coutances, Ricardus Anglicus, and Honorius, whose works circulated widely across Europe and shaped subsequent legal scholarship. Their commentaries, decretal collections, and procedural treatises show the sophistication of legal study →

at Lincoln and its role in the broader Romano-canonical tradition. Yet despite their significance, Lincoln's canon lawyers have been comparatively neglected by modern scholarship. By editing MS121—a rich collection of canonical texts tied directly to this milieu—the project will re-establish Lincoln's canonists as central figures in the history of medieval legal thought and provide scholars with an accessible foundation for future study.

On the secular side, Lincolnshire offers some of the richest surviving records of the early English common law. The thirteenth-century plea rolls from general eyres are invaluable for understanding the development of procedure, litigation, and royal justice. The 1245 visitation is especially significant for Lincoln Record Society publications, as it sits chronologically between the assize rolls of 1202–1209 and 1298 already published by the Lincoln Record Society (LRS vols. 22 and 36 respectively). Publishing these records will not only fill a gap in the series of printed Lincolnshire eyre rolls but also shed new light on the conduct of litigation in the mid-thirteenth century, complementing both local studies and broader histories of the common law.

The intellectual ambition of the project lies in drawing these ecclesiastical and secular strands together. Historians have often treated canon law and common law as separate traditions, overlooking the fact that the same individuals and ideas often moved between both spheres. Lincoln's canonists may have acted as litigants, administrators, or judges within the royal courts, while royal justices and clerks were themselves steeped in canonical and theological learning. By editing and contextualising both MS121 and the 1245 plea rolls, the project will provide the materials needed to explore this interaction more fully. The outcome will benefit not only local historians of Lincolnshire but also scholars of legal, ecclesiastical, and intellectual history. By making these important sources accessible, the project will contribute to a more integrated understanding of the 'legal revolution' of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, demonstrating how canon law, theology, and common law intersected in shaping the legal and cultural world of medieval England.

Sarah White and Will Eves



NIGEL BURN MEMORIAL FUND PROJECT

'The Crowland Abbey Cartulary and Other Materials'

This new project will produce an edition of the Crowland Abbey cartulary known as the Wrest Park Cartulary (now owned by the Spalding Gentlemen's Society) and associated Crowland registers. Crowland Abbey is primarily known for its associated early medieval saint, St. Guthlac, but also for its infamously forged early charters and historical narrative known as the *Historia Croylandensis*. The house's texts were largely trusted by the first age of antiquarians, but qualms began to be expressed by the eighteenth century. Henry Riley and W.G. Searle in the later nineteenth century dealt the final verdict of forgery. Although attention has been paid to the early history of St. Guthlac and the abbey, and its material culture, the house's medieval documents have received comparatively little study by modern historians.

The Crowland forgeries seem to have been primarily concerned with protection and control of the house's lands, particularly those immediately surrounding the abbey. The house stands in an important area of fenland, within a significant prehistoric landscape, and is likely to have been close to the site of St. Guthlac's original hermitage. This fenland was, however, undergoing environmental changes thanks to twelfth-century fen drainage, and threat from encroaching neighbours who were losing common lands to expanding arable fields. Understanding the house's relationship with its lands seems to be the key, then, to understanding the impetus and different stages of the house's forgeries.



Photo caption: Crowland Abbey. Credit: Hannah Boston

This project will therefore produce a transcription or register for all of Crowland's extant charters concerning its land-holdings, as an essential foundation for study of the house's forgeries and as important insights into the house's history in their own right. The documents under study include Spalding Gentlemen's Society, Wrest Park Cartulary and Charter 80; Oxford, All Souls College,

32; London, British Library Add. MS. 15302 and 5845. These records will be studied as historical narratives of the house, to examine the cultures of memory and attitudes towards the lands operating at Crowland across the medieval period. The material documents themselves will also be studied to understand when they were created and why, and how they were subsequently used. Brought

together, these dimensions will seek to illuminate a new understanding of an important but relatively understudied religious house, shed new light on the creation of forgery and memory in medieval religious houses, and provide an essential foundation for further work.

Hannah Boston



NIGEL BURN MEMORIAL FUND PROJECT

'The Lincoln Diocesan Training College'

The transformation of the teaching profession into one that is dominated by professionally-qualified women has a history that dates back to the rapid expansion of female teacher training colleges from the middle of the 19th century. These colleges, designed to train those who would teach the rapidly growing population of boys and girls from the lower classes, were at the heart of one of the biggest social transformations in British history.

The years of teacher education transformed the lives and social trajectories of these trainees who in turn impacted the lives of millions. Over a few generations these women transformed the nature of the teaching profession and contributed to far-reaching changes in communities across the country and changing attitudes towards women right across society. Yet, who these women were, their social origins, what they experienced at the colleges, and what they went on to do has not been the subject of systematic academic study beyond a few excellent but ultimately incomplete survey works that give only a fraction of the national picture, e.g. Larsen, *The Making and Shaping of the Victorian Teacher* (2011); Widdowson, *Women and Elementary Teacher Training, 1840-1914* (1980).

At the beginning of August 2023, a three-year project began looking to add a Lincoln case study to this area of research. The 'Lincoln Diocesan Training College project' marked a collaboration between Lincoln Bishop University (formerly Bishop Grosseteste University) and Lincoln Record Society (LRS), made possible by the Nigel Burn



The Diocesan Training College Magazine © W. Jack Rhoden

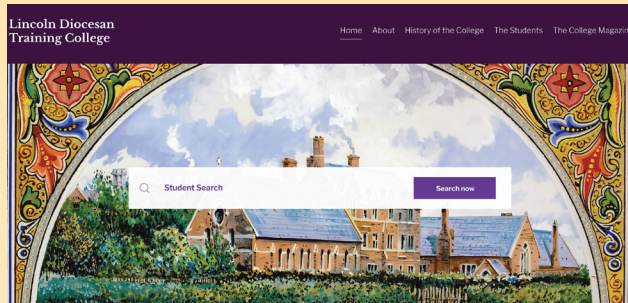
Atkinson Emma
 b. 1862
 D. of Alfred and Elizabeth, stove grate fitter, 93 Allen St Sheffield.
 P. Teacher at St Mary's National School Sheffield. Her
 clergyman was Rev. W. Wilkinson, gained 1st class certificate.
 Her first post was Convent St Central School Sheffield.
 She was clever, & like most Sheffield girls, a good
 singer, some considerable power, somewhat anaemic.
 Now 10/10/104 mistress at Crook suburb of Sheffield, mixed.
 Clergyman Mr. Coombe Good. She is now Mrs. Parker,
 he a schoolmaster & she a mistress with him,
 near Leeds. She has come with her husband
 to take the school at Blinton, Herts (May 08)
 Parchment 12 Sep 05
 Married
 "Where (June 09) she still is & is
 doing good work."

A student record card from 1862 © W. Jack Rhoden

Memorial Research Support Grant and the University itself. Dr W. Jack Rhoden (Programme Leader of History and Military History) is the project lead and employs two Research Assistants and former History students: Abigail White, MA, and Elaine Johnson, MA.

The focus of this project is the history of Lincoln Diocesan Training College (LDTTC), as it was then known, between its foundation in 1862 and the end of the First World War. The core outcomes of the project are twofold: the publication (by LRS) of a multi-volume 'biographical register' of the female teacher-trainees who attended LDTTC in these years and the creation of a free-to-access website that will host digitised versions of expanded biographical entries and digitised archival material that is salient to register.





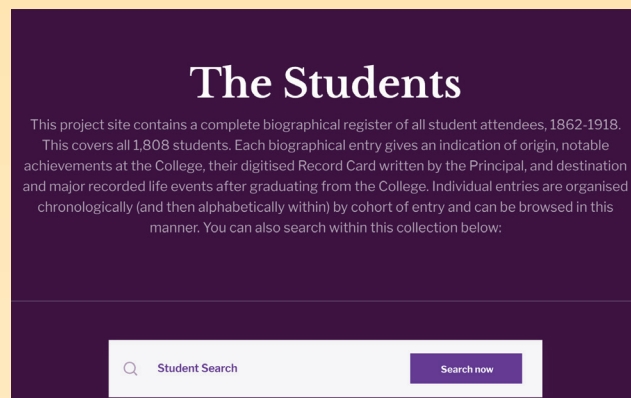
Above: The project website; Right: The student search function on the project website. Both © W. Jack Rhoden

It is a multi-faceted project that has involved several research and data compilation stages and which is now entering, what is hoped to be the final stage, the analysis, editing and publication of outcomes.

The first key outcome relates to the website. This contains biographical entries for all 1,808 students who attended the institution during these years. Where they have survived, each entry is accompanied by a digitised 'Student Record Card', originally handwritten by the Principal and currently held in the University archive. There is potential, in future, for the website to be further populated with photographs and other archival material via a collaborative, community-led process.

Alongside this biographical information, the website has a digitised and keyword searchable run of 'Student Magazines', written and produced by the female teacher trainees, running from 1895 through to 1918. These fascinating documents give a unique insight into the experiences and thoughts of the students, the intellectual ideas they were exposed to and the more banal, yet equally fascinating, daily life of the close-knit College with its religious ceremonies, plays, musical performances, lectures, debates, fund-raising activities, sporting events, exams and prize-giving ceremonies. The date for the website to 'go live', and its address, will be circulated amongst LRS members and publicised widely in advance.

The second major outcome of the project is the physical LRS publication. As well as serving as a biographical register of all known students, with notable individuals highlighted for expanded entries, this publication will be concerned with the history of an institution which



has never been utilised as a case study in the academic literature on teacher training. At the core of our academic interest is this question of social mobility and the opportunities provided by teaching as a profession for female social mobility in Lincolnshire and beyond. Students at the College were pupil-teachers from working-class (rural and urban) and lower middle-class backgrounds. We will clearly establish, through research into the social origins of the girls, what the proportion of different social origins were and how it changed over time.

Similarly, there is the question of who was responsible for the social transformations the 'girls' underwent to become teachers – a solidly lower-middle class profession by the early twentieth century. College leaders liked to take credit for civilising them (as did the government) but this project will give both voice and credit to the women themselves. Any 'transformation' was ultimately one that they owned. Furthermore, by documenting the physical origins of the girls and their destinations upon leaving with their teaching certificate we will be able to catalogue and identify patterns of physical mobility, alongside patterns of social mobility.

In amongst this data-driven social and cultural history are many astonishing case studies which will feature in the publication (and which can be traced back to original documents online) that further illustrate this 'transformation'. We hope to feature so of these in upcoming versions of this newsletter, by way of a teaser and taster for the publication itself.

W. Jack Rhoden



C.W. AND W.E. FOSTER. WERE THEY RELATED?

It's surprising where a book picked up at the recent Central Library sale can lead you. In a pile of local history books I spotted, for 10p, a nicely bound copy of 'A Plea for the Preservation of Manorial Court Rolls' by W.E. Foster published in 1899. Ah ha I thought, at the time, a hidden gem by our founder. Back home when I looked closer I found a tipped in printed plate. 'Lindsey Education Committee County Library. Presented by Canon C.W. Foster M.A. F.S.A. Timberland Vicarage'. This got me thinking. Who was W.E. and was he related to C.W? W.E.

was born in the Manor House at Moulton in September 1846 and attended Moulton Grammar School. He was articled to his uncle Mr E.G. Aycliff of Holbeach and was admitted as a solicitor in Trinity Term 1869. After some time in Yorkshire he bought a legal practice in Aldershot where he was Town Clerk, Coroner of Aldershot and District and President of the Hampshire Law Society. He was also a member of the Council of the Law Society. In September 1872 he was elected as an Honorary member of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society. In March 1876 he was

elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He joined the LRS in 1914 and died in July 1921. In 'Fenland Churches and People between Spalding and Long Sutton' by John Bowers published in 1988 he is referred to as Sir William E. Foster F.S.A. but I cannot find any confirmation of his knighthood. None of this told me whether C.W. and W.E. were related but I suspected that they were. In what he describes as a remarkable coincidence, Dr Nicholas Bennett researching other matters came across W.E.'s 1912

book 'The Royal Descents of the Fosters of Moulton', which in the preface W.E. refers to an earlier work, 'Notes on the Foster Family of Dowsby and Moulton'. As Dr Bennett says 'it looks almost certain that he was related to Canon Foster'. My thanks to Dr. Bennett, Sue Viveash of S.G.S., Kat Petersen of The Society of Antiquaries and of course Google for aiding my researches in preparing this piece.

Ken Hollamby

THE DIARIES OF GEORGE LANGTON (1647-1727)

George Langton was a Lincolnshire landowner whose family had owned and farmed their estate at Langton by Spilsby since medieval times. He was the grandfather of one of the most distinguished members of the Langton family, Bennet Langton (1736-1801), the close friend and companion of the celebrated man of letters Samuel Johnson.

In 1684 George married Mary Tyndale; together they had thirteen children, nine of whom survived to adulthood. A successful farmer and businessman, he was also a prolific diarist. He began keeping a diary in 1670 and continued until his death in 1727. Over fifty-seven years he created a remarkable continuous record of life in Lincolnshire, spanning the reigns from Charles II to George I and documenting a period of significant political, social and religious change.

Langton wrote in notebooks and in the blank spaces of the printed almanacs, widely available in the seventeenth century. These publications combined calendars with practical advice and left space for personal notes. He used a variety of

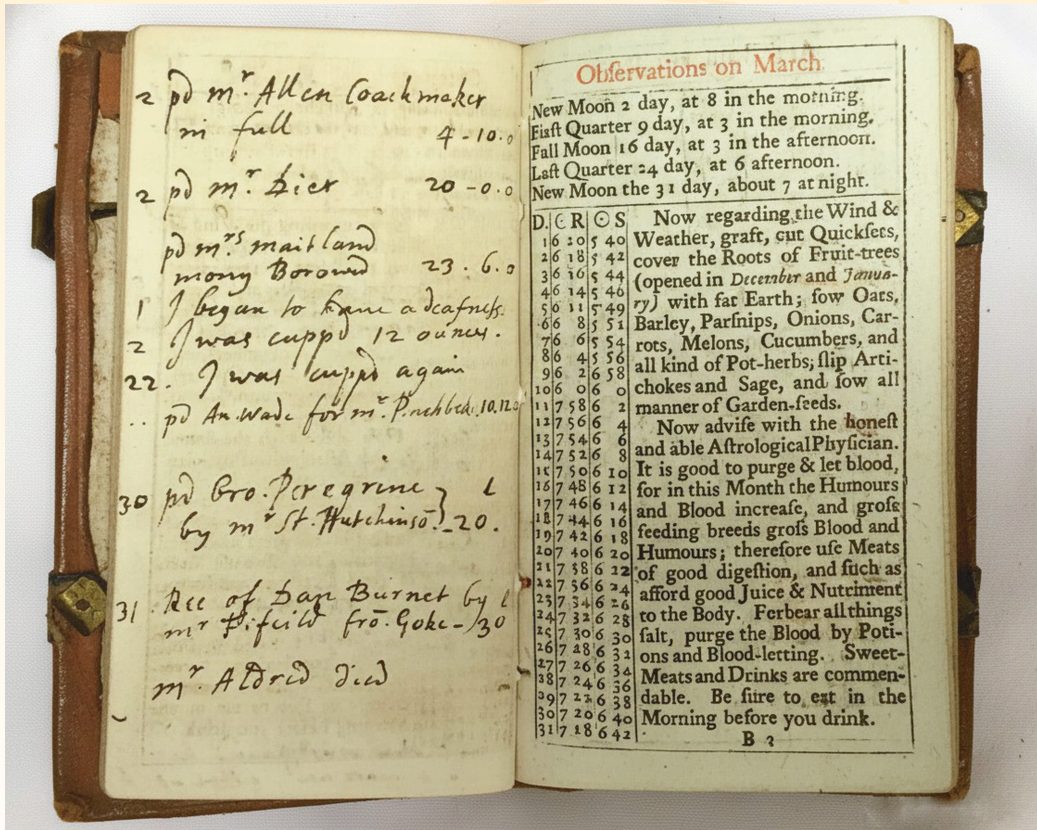
almanacs, including *Goldsmiths', Rider's British Merlin, and The New Memorandum Book Improvd.*

Within their modest pages he recorded an extraordinary range of subjects: family and social networks, travel, medicine, farming practice, land management, and responses to national and international events. The diaries provide a fascinating insight into the world of a late seventeenth-century gentleman-farmer and demonstrate how one provincial observer interpreted the wider world through the lens

of local and personal experience. They are of considerable value to social and cultural historians.

Following their sale at auction in 1861, the almanacs and notebooks became dispersed. The majority (twenty-two volumes) eventually returned to Langton and are now preserved within the Langton family archive. The earliest diaries (1670-1680) were written in notebooks, now bound together as a single volume, and are held by the National Library of Wales. Three almanacs (1690, 1696 and 1725) are preserved at Lincolnshire Archives and have formed the basis of an earlier publication, while the 1701 almanac is held by the University of Glasgow.

The Spirit of Sutterby group (SoS) is a community heritage organisation founded in 2013 to research the deserted medieval village of Sutterby, the parish adjacent to – and since 1935 combined with – Langton by Spilsby. The group has undertaken extensive historical and archaeological investigation in the area and, under the guidance of Dr Paul Dryburgh, has developed expertise



Part of one of George Langton's almanacs (for March 1698); © Spirit of Sutterby Group

in palaeographic transcription through work on inventories, wills and terriers relating to Sutterby and its neighbouring parishes.

During this research the significance of the Langton diaries became increasingly apparent, and the value of producing a full scholarly transcription of the complete surviving corpus was recognised. Access to the National Library of Wales volume presented practical challenges; however, the generous support of the Lincoln Record Society, through a small grant, has enabled a complete digital copy to be made. This digital facsimile is now

available, and members of the Spirit of Sutterby are actively engaged in transcribing the whole set of George Langton's diaries.

It is hoped that, once completed, the transcription might form the basis of a future volume for the Lincoln Record Society, making this exceptional long-term personal record accessible to a far wider scholarly audience.

For more information about the ongoing work by the Spirit of Sutterby group, please see spiritofsutterby.com.

Dave Start



WILLIAM STUKELEY'S STAMFORD

In 2023 Lincoln Record Society published *Stukeley and Stamford, Part II: Tribulations of an Antiquarian Clergyman, 1730-1738*. The volume was edited by John F E Smith, architectural historian, erstwhile curator of Stamford Museum and founder member of the Stamford Mercury Archive Trust (SMAT). Constituted in 2005 with the object of conserving the historic print collection of the Mercury, SMAT has published a concise version of the LRS volume under the title *William Stukeley's Stamford: Stamford in the 1730s*. Also written by John Smith and aimed at bringing Stukeley's achievements to a wider audience, it gives an indication of Stamford's architecture in the early 18th century and highlights the antiquarian vicar's contribution to the life of the town, including his part in the 1734 general election.

The booklet was launched at a ceremony at Stamford Town Hall in May 2025. Publication was made possible by grants and donations, especially a generous Small Grant Award from LRS. Other sponsors were Stamford Town Council, Stamford Civic Society and Stamford Local History Society.

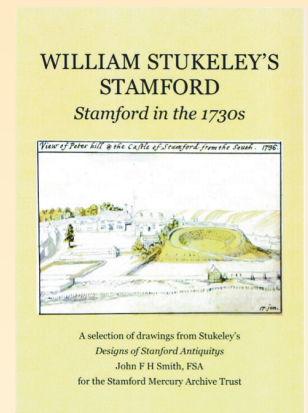
The B5-size booklet features sixteen of Stukeley's drawings reproduced from SMAT's manuscript volume of *Designs of Stamford Antiquity*. Mostly illustrations of medieval buildings, many of which have now disappeared, each drawing is accompanied by a commentary and, where applicable, a comparative photograph of the present property occupying the site. The centrefold consists of

Speed's map of Stamford of c.1600, annotated to show the positions of the buildings described.

As well as being distributed to local and national libraries, copies of the booklet have been donated to the library collections of towns and institutions associated with different periods of Stukeley's life, amongst them Holbeach where he was born, Corpus Christi College where he graduated in Physic, the Royal College of Physicians where he was elected Fellow and Grantham where he practised medicine before becoming Vicar of All Saints in Stamford.

The booklet will be promoted by Stamford Library at their Local History Month event in May. It is obtainable from St Mary's Books in Stamford (info@stmarysbooks.com) or direct from the SMAT office (enquiries@smarchive.org.uk). Priced at £10, copies are available to LRS members via the office for £7.50. Proceeds from its sale will go towards securing new premises for the Mercury archive when the present lease expires in 2030.

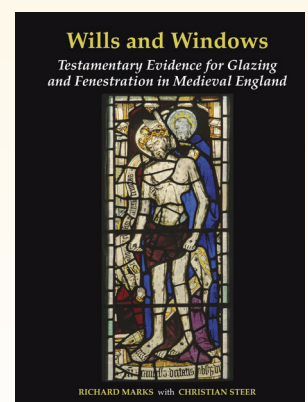
Nicholas J Sheehan



WILLS AND WINDOWS

Nearly all major studies of contemporary documentation for medieval art in England fail to take into account the vast body of testamentary evidence. This study brings together for the first time a large corpus of wills relating to windows and their glazing, using a wide range of published and unpublished wills and benefitting from fieldwork undertaken to relate bequests to existing fabric and glazing. Most of the wills relate to parish churches, but there is also much evidence concerning cathedrals and religious

houses; the last category is particularly important, as so little glazing has survived from such foundations. Testators span almost the entire social spectrum: monarchs and magnates, prelates and parish priests, gentry, lawyers, merchants, and (especially from the late



15th century) the more prosperous husbandmen and yeomen. The wills of a score or so of glass-painters also feature. Women are represented, not only as testators, but as executors and heiresses. Dates range from the late 13th century to the Reformation. The result is a treasure trove of information concerning patronage, iconography, commemorative strategies, costs, techniques, processes, and dating, which will be of value to historians of art, religion, culture, society at a local level, as well as architectural scholars.

This book, by one of the doyens of stained-glass studies, is scheduled to be published in late May. It will inaugurate the new Studies series of the British Corpus Vitrearum, the national survey of stained glass. Part of an international body, the Corpus works under the aegis of the British Academy, and its publications are distributed by Liverpool University Press. The volume will be available to LRS member at a 30% discount and details will be circulated in due course.

Joseph Spooner



MY FAVOURITE VOLUME

The second of this new series celebrating past editions of the LRS volumes, available to members of the Society on Pastview: <https://archive.lincoln-record-society.org.uk>.

Volume 18, *Transcripts of Charters relating to Gilbertine Houses*, ed. F.M. Stenton (1920)

Sir Frank Merry Stenton is a figure that needs no introduction to historians of medieval eastern England, or the Lincoln Record Society whose President he was from 1942 to 1967. Alongside his magisterial *Anglo-Saxon England* (1943, rev. 1971), he published *Types of Manorial Structure in the Northern Danelaw* (1910) and a collection of charters in *Documents Illustrative of the Social and Economic History of the Danelaw* (1920). This volume fits squarely into these interests: a collection of the charters relating to five Lincolnshire monasteries of the Gilbertine Order (Catley, Ormsby, Alvingham, Sixle, now Sixhills, and Bullington). This order was founded in 1130 by Gilbert of Sempringham, at the Lincolnshire village of the same name, for religious women to pursue a contemplative life. Lay brothers were attached to houses to carry out the work, and canons to celebrate mass, both groups being kept carefully separate from the nuns. The order became popular, and by the Dissolution there were 26 houses across the country. The majority of them remained, however, relatively poor throughout their lifespan.

The charters in this volume were those copied into the Exchequer Memoranda Rolls of the early fifteenth century as part of the houses' claims to be exempt from Henry IV's taxations, so represent 'a mass of material which otherwise would have vanished without a trace' (p. x). They represent a valuable insight into the accumulation of lands by these houses. The five houses in the volume were all founded in the mid-twelfth century, by relatively minor landholders, and some with quite scattered accumulations of lands. Although not grand, it forms part of the boom in the foundation of religious houses in post-Conquest Lincolnshire.

The charters printed by Stenton also give us glimpses into the social and tenurial history of Lincolnshire. Many of the grants of land given to the houses are peasant tenements, sometimes with the peasants themselves— although, as Stenton notes, in the twelfth century this did not necessary

mean that these individuals were unfree, but could be a transfer of the service which this person owed. Many grants were given on the entry of a grantor's female relative into the priory. Fractions of parish churches are granted, often reflecting villages that were divided between several lords. Glimpses of local struggles are visible beneath some charters: Roger de Clere acquired the fee of the endearingly named Hugh de Twit by battle in the king's court, and dedicated a holding from this to Ormsby Priory. Another notes that a grant has been made for the soul of William son of Warin by Oliver of Wendover, and that William's and Oliver's kin are now to be reconciled. Some charters mention that a donor has pledged their faith to maintain the gift in the hand of a third party, which Stenton argued is a survival of an old Danelaw practice. Some women seem to have pledged their faith in this way to a female third party, and before female witnesses.

We also see grants of arable with attached waste or meadow for grazing, and mentions of large numbers of sheep whose impact on the large Lincolnshire common lands were beginning to be felt: flocks of 200 sheep are mentioned several times, and one flock of 1000 in Coningsby. The Scandinavian influence is noticeable still in these charters: alongside distinctly Danish-sounding place-names, there are Danish terms such as *car* for meadow, and, most strikingly, large numbers of Danish personal names still present by the late thirteenth century. Stenton argued that this reflects not an élite Danish settlement, but 'the settlement of an entire army, comprising men of every rank.' (p. xxxvi). Although the charters contain many English names, they are outnumbered by Danish ones— and there is, Stenton thought, a persisting Danish accent in the region, with some English names such as Eadric turned into Jadric.

In his preface, Stenton noted that no county but Lincolnshire has a history 'illustrated by a greater number of early, and as yet unpublished, documents.' Some have subsequently been published as later volumes in this series; it is to be hoped that still more will be.

Hannah Boston





THE REVOLT OF THE PROVINCES: LOCAL DIMENSIONS OF THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

A one-day conference, organised by the Lincoln Record Society, to be held at the National Civil War Centre, Newark on Saturday 17 October 2026.

In 1976, John Morrill's seminal work *The Revolt of the Provinces* energised local studies of the English Civil War. Rather than focus on constitutional clashes at Westminster, it shifted attention to the shires, boroughs and localities in which civil war allegiances were forged, negotiated and contested. For most living in England at the time, the county rather than the country was their main frame of reference: when war came, the forces of localism and neutralism were often as strong as ideological attachment to parliamentarianism or royalism. Fifty years on, Morrill's view of a conflict that was defined by local perspectives remains vital, stimulating ongoing debates about the dynamic and complex relationship between centre and locality in the early modern period.

This conference, hosted by the Lincoln Record Society at the National Civil War Centre in Newark will seek to explore

and reassess the local and regional perspective of the English Civil War. In the spirit of Morrill's work, papers will engage with the core theme of the local dimensions of the conflict.

The call for papers closes on Monday 20 April. Please contact Dr Jon Fitzgibbons for more details at: jfitzgibbons@lincoln.ac.uk.

Full details of the conference will be posted on the Lincoln Record Society's website and members will be informed of details by email.

For more information, please contact Andrew Walker on andrewwalker1163@gmail.com.

Jon Fitzgibbons/Andrew Walker



FORTHCOMING LRS WEBINAR

Plans are currently under way for another Lincoln Record Society webinar, which will be scheduled later this spring. Watch out for details on the LRS website and by email.

We are always keen to hear from researchers regarding their current research on any aspect of the history of the historic diocese or a part of it. If you would be willing to present a

paper of about 25-30 minutes on your research in the future, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

Please let me know if you'd like to be added to the webinar email distribution list.

Andrew Walker, Outreach Co-ordinator
andrewwalker1163@gmail.com



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 17 October 2026 'Revolt of the Provinces: Local Dimensions of the English Civil War', LRS conference, National Civil War Centre, Newark.

Saturday 14 November 2026 LRS AGM, location to be confirmed. Afternoon tea will be provided.

