

BOROUGHBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

<http://www.boroughbridgehistory.co.uk>



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2019

CONTENTS

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN	2
MY CRIMINAL ANCESTORS	3
AGM AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES	4-5
GUY FAWKES AND THE GUNPOWDER	6-7
OUT OF NIDDERDALE AND OVER THE HILL	8-9
BOOK UPDATE	10
ARCHIVIST'S NOTES	11
BOROUGHBRIDGE IN WW1	11

SPRING PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, 8TH JANUARY

ANNA GREENWOOD: TALES FROM THE UPPER DALE

TUESDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY

LINDA DOOKS

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES OF BOROUGHBRIDGE

TUESDAY, 12TH MARCH

TONY LEE

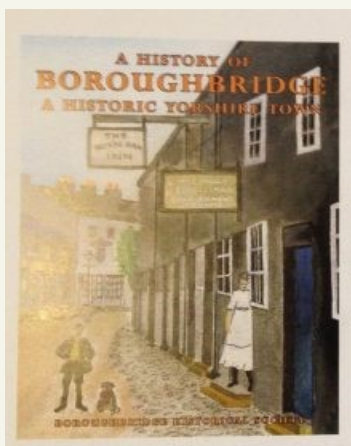
ST JAMES: BOROUGHBRIDGE AND SANTIAGO, IS RICHARD MAULEVERER THE CONNECTION?

TUESDAY, 9TH APRIL

KATE GILES: THE MIDDLEHAM JEWEL

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN BOROUGHBRIDGE LIBRARY JUBILEE SUITE AT 7.30

ALL WELCOME: MEMBERS FREE; VISITORS AND GUESTS £3.00



A HISTORY OF BOROUGHBRIDGE

NOW AVAILABLE FROM TOURIST INFORMATION, PYBUS, AND OTHER SHOPS IN BOROUGHBRIDGE.

COPIES CAN ALSO BE BOUGHT AT MONTHLY BDHS MEETINGS

N O T E S F R O M T H E C H A I R M A N

Well here we are at the start of 2019. I cannot help but think the years really do fly by more quickly as you get older!

What a fantastic year 2018 was for us. The hard work done by so many people in the society and beyond came to fruition with the publication of 'A History of Boroughbridge'. This project would never have been possible without the hard work and determination of Mike Tasker, who spent many hours researching, coordinating, cajoling and doing whatever was needed to see the venture through to completion. I understand sales are already in excess of 600; a remarkable achievement. No rest for Mike, as he and Peter Audsley are now researching the people of the town who served in the Great War (see p.12).

The society has an excellent programme

of guest speakers organised for the Spring season, thanks once again to David Barley. His choice of speakers seems to be 'spot on' as we continue to get very good numbers attending each meeting. If you know of speakers you think would go down well please do let David know.

We are in the fortunate position of having a very capable and hard working committee (and other volunteers) who ensure the society continues to be well publicised, financially sound and that events run smoothly. I have listed our current committee below so that society members know who to approach with particular issues.

Happy New Year to all our members.

Peter Fleming (chair)

Committee Members 2019

Jackie Akers: Treasurer

Peter Audsley: Committee member

David Barley: Speakers' Secretary

David Bellwood: Website Manager

Linda Dooks: Vice Chair and Archivist

Peter Fleming: Chairman, Newsletter

Christine Tasker: Annual Excursion

Margaret Tasker: Publicity, Newsletter Distribution, Room Bookings, General Enquiries, Annual Excursion

Mike Tasker: Book project

John Winn: Minutes



My Criminal Ancestors

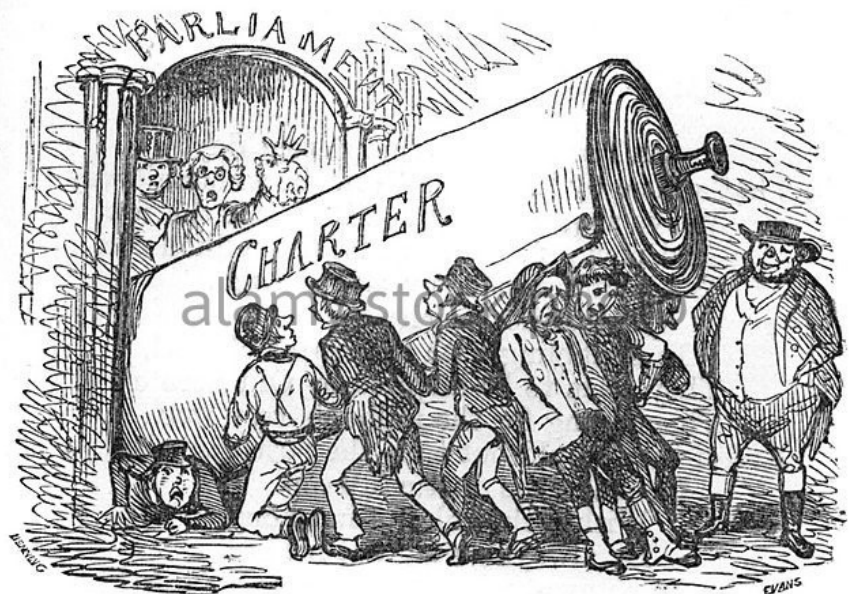
Barbara Dixon

In September Barbara treated us to a talk covering 200 years of her ancestors' misdoings! Covering the period 1700-1900 she entertained us with the antics of George Bishop, Charles Dodd, John Rawson, Richard Dodd and Jonathan Graham among others. The talk helped us to reflect on how attitudes to crime have changed over the years and especially how punishments have evolved. Given the extent of poverty in previous centuries it is highly likely that many of us would have had ancestors who turned to petty crime to survive, possibly with severe punishments as a result.

It seems some of Barbara's ancestors were more determined criminals however. For example, George Bishop of Blackpool issued false cheques; Edward Bowley broke into a house in Cirencester and was punished with six months hard labour in Gloucester prison; Charles Dodd served a prison sentence for larceny (he then emigrated to South Africa); Richard Dodd was transported to Bermuda for seven years for stealing a silver watch; and Jonathan Graham was sentenced to hanging for attempted murder (his grave is in Masham).

Her relative who appeared most in court records was Lancelot Bishop. He was charged with twenty crimes in Skipton between 1708 and 1720, including meat and drink not being paid for and failure to pay people for work they had done for him.

There is one ancestor we probably have great sympathy for. He was accused of violence against the state and summoned to appear at Liverpool Assizes. He skipped bail and fled to America. John Rawson was a chartist, one of many people campaigning at the time for greater democracy and thus regarded as by the government of the day.



AGM October 2018

At our AGM committee membership for 2018-2019 was agreed and thanks were given to Pat Smith and John Whitehouse for their services to the society over the years. Following reports given by society officers, Mike Tasker shared with us some interesting information about Boroughbridge uncovered in the course of his research for the society's book. Peter Fleming then gave a short talk on the Foresters' Friendly Society.

Friendly Societies

Friendly societies were a product of the conditions created by the Industrial Revolution. E. P. Thompson describes C19 conditions in *The Making of the English Working Class*: "Conditions for the 'huddled masses' were severe in the extreme and the Industrial Revolution was accompanied by widespread poverty and insecurity among the wage-earning classes." Although Poor Law Acts were certainly in existence, indeed they had originated in Elizabethan times, they were intended to deal only with complete destitution' and, as readers of *Oliver Twist* will remember, they were often administered in a spirit which was anything but humane.

Many social reformers and some industrialists made great strides to improve the lot of the working classes in the absence of any form of welfare state, old age pensions, death benefits and sickness benefits but for most people life was grim. Hours of work were long, mortality was high, food was often provided by employers from company stores and was frequently adulterated, sometimes with fatal consequences. People survived because they worked, if they couldn't work due to illness or injury they starved.

To counter this situation friendly societies of all kinds were created. They embraced a wide range of activity: building societies, retail and whole-sale co-operatives, savings banks, trade unions, and welfare clubs.

At its very simplest, a friendly society was a club. The members shared an agreed risk by each paying a fee. The club could last for as little as one year or in perpetuity. The agreed risk could take many forms. It could be the cost of a funeral, periodic sickness payments, an annuity or even a regular old age pension.

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The fee might be a once-and-only entry payment or a regular weekly, monthly or quarterly subscription. It might be pennies or pounds. It might vary according to the age or sex of the member.

state. But only after world War 2 did the Labour Party finish the job.

So important were friendly societies that from 1910 to 1947, they administered the state sickness benefit scheme.



The Ancient Order of Foresters

The Ancient Order of Foresters is one of the oldest friendly societies, with its origins in Yorkshire in the 1790s. Philanthropy and virtue featured prominently in the principles and ritual of the Society. 'The object of Forestry is to unite the virtuous

At the end of the nineteenth century friendly societies provided most insurance, benefits and pensions in the UK. Their members could be counted in the millions. Thousands of different societies were spread right across the land.

A few generations ago almost everybody was a member or at least knew a member of a friendly society. Today there are only a few survivors beyond the great mutual insurance companies and building societies.

Why? The Welfare State took away the reason for most friendly societies. Under the Liberal Government of 1906-1914 the foundations of the modern welfare state were laid. The National Insurance Act 1911 represents a massive shift in the relationship between the state and the individual. The Act required compulsory contributions from employers and employees so that assistance was there in times of ill health. It was the first step towards funding a universal welfare

and good in all sects and denominations of man in the sacred bonds of brotherhood so that while wandering through the Forest of this World they may render mutual aid and assistance to each other'. It was open to anyone believing in a Creator. Just as its lodges were called Courts, the officers of the society used the titles of officials of the medieval forest courts, such as Ranger and Woodward. However, the order blended this mediaeval idea with the notion of Adam as the first Forester.

In the late 19th Century Forestry spread over the world, particularly to the British colonies but also to the USA. In 1892 a proposal was put forward to open the Foresters to women by allowing the formation of female Courts. This resulted in an alteration to the emblem of the order to include the figure of a female forester.

In December 2016 there were 75000 members of what is now the Foresters Friendly Society, head office now in Southampton and still providing savings plans.

Guy Fawkes—Local Connections

Tony Morgan

In November Tony gave us a presentation on Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. This much told story was made especially interesting through Tony's thorough research and the many local connections he explained to us.

Guy Fawkes was born in 1570. His father was Protestant and his mother was Catholic. When his father died his mother married a Catholic and moved to Scotton to live. Guy attended St. Peter's School in York with education strongly influenced by the Catholic headmaster. After leaving school Guy went to Sussex to work for a leading Catholic, Viscount Montagu. He then lived for a while in the Catholic ruled Netherlands where he learnt his gunpowder skills fighting for the Spanish cause.

In 1603 he changed his name to Guido. When James I began to harden the laws against Catholics the rebel Robert Catesby began to plan for 'regime change'. He persuaded Fawkes to become involved. The plot was to kidnap princess Elizabeth and convert her to Catholicism. Once the king and parliament were destroyed, she could claim the throne. The story of Fawkes planting gunpowder in an under-croft, being captured, tortured and confessing is well known.

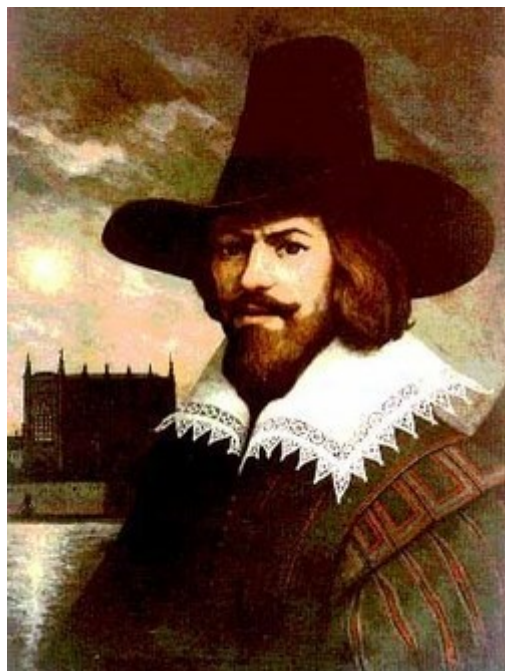
During the presentation it became clear that it is highly likely that spies were well aware of this plot and it is even possible that the whole operation was a massive act of propaganda to ensure Catholics were kept out of parliament for a very long time.



The Guy Fawkes, Scotton



St. Peter's School, York



Guido Fawkes 1570-1606

Guido fawkes
G. fawkes

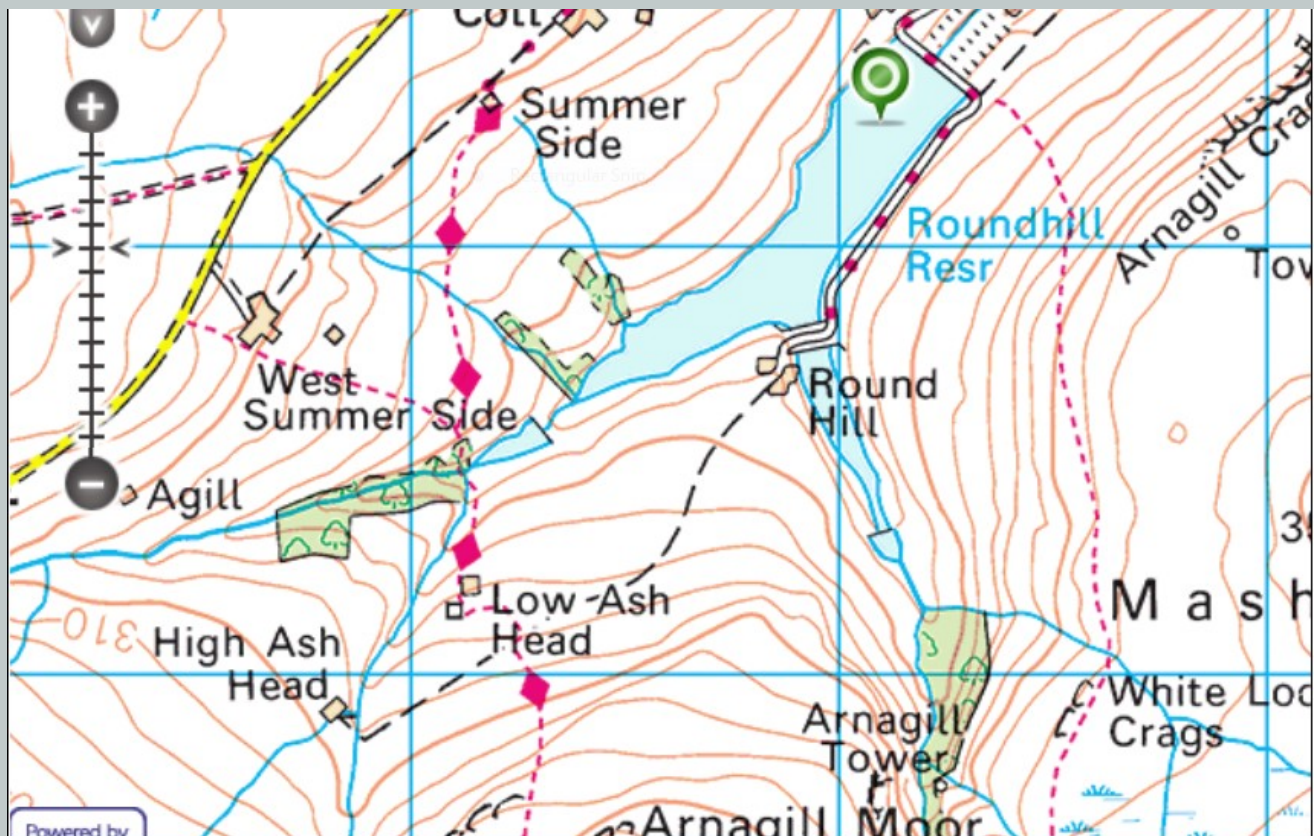
Signature before and after torture

Out of Nidderdale and Over The Hill, A Valley Lost in Time Jen Deadman

Jen Deadman (Historic Buildings Consultant) spoke to the society in December. With the aid of many projected photographs of the Nidderdale landscape and building remains she took us on an exploration of a remote valley which since the Bronze Age has been home to many but now supports just one working farmstead. Here Man has tilled the earth for centuries, a battle hard won and easily lost. Today, the evidence for past habitation is there for those who seek to see in the remains of hut circles and enclosures of early farmers to the carefully planned farmsteads and regular field patterns of the 19th century.

Midway between Masham and Pateley Bridge, on land that is now largely owned by Yorkshire Water, is this 'hidden valley'. The former settlement of Agill was lost when Roundhill dam was built (c.1900) but the remains of scattered farmsteads can be found revealing evidence of a harsh but well organised life. We saw slides that revealed evidence of enclosed fields and housing platforms, well planted sycamore trees for shelter, substantial farm buildings and very large barns and byres. Stone stores built into hillsides or partially underground would have been used for vegetable storage, ventilation being good, and many clear examples remain partially intact.

Jen talked us through the remains of Low Ash Head, High Ash Head, Roundhill, West Summerside, East Summerside and Stott Fold (the only remaining, working farm) during her talk.



This is the area Jennifer made the focus of her talk.



Very well built but now abandoned farm houses, barns and byres



Walls of old buildings and animal enclosures



Bridge to Round Hill farm across an arm of Roundhill Reservoir

Book Launch and Aftermath

Mike Tasker

The three year 'History of Boroughbridge' book project finally reached its conclusion with the launch on 10th November in the Jubilee room above the library. The launch was a great success with some 160 books sold on the day. Proceedings began at 11.00am with a packed Jubilee room. The occasion was opened by BDHS Chairman Peter Fleming and the book was introduced with a short explanation by project coordinator Mike Tasker. A book signing session followed, and refreshments were provided by the Josie and the BDHS team.

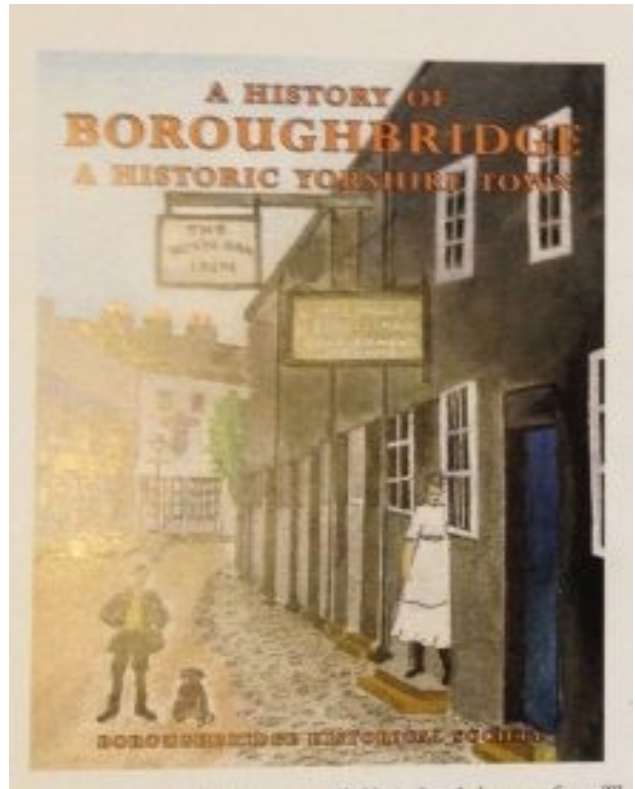
Pre-launch publicity by local printer Terry Nicholson had obviously been very effective, with a queue forming outside, necessitating a repeat performance of the launch half an hour later, when the Jubilee Room was again packed to capacity. Since the launch the book has been on sale in the Boroughbridge shops, the Post Office and the Tourist Information Centre, and sales have continued to be brisk in the pre-Christmas period.

For the Historical Society it is really gratifying to find that there is such interest in the history of the town, it leaves us feeling that our hard work and commitment really has been worthwhile. The sale has prompted many comments from town resi-

dents, mostly complimentary, and a significant bonus has been the offer of further information from residents which will give a valuable enhancement to our knowledge of the town's past. Amongst these Garry Tilburn has a record of the initial setting up of the Reed Boardman organisation which is such an important feature of the town today. There are several other topics which could have been covered had time permitted.

For new and aspiring new residents to the town they will see that Boroughbridge does have an interesting and significant history which does show through in the character of the town today. For the long-standing residents perhaps they may still find surprises and snippets of information they were not aware of. Certainly, for those who assembled the stories there have been plenty.

Overall, if the book helps to stimulate interest in the fascinating story of the town over the years, our hope is that it may prompt rummaging through old papers and pictures perhaps hidden for years in the loft, and that further stories may emerge to fill out the gaps in our story. At some stage in the future, perhaps a new publication may be possible.



Notes from Linda Dooks, Society Archivist

It is 700 years since the Battle of Myton. Boroughbridge Walkers are having a anniversary walk around the battlefield as part of their Easter Walking Festival followed by afternoon tea (although the anniversary is actually in September).

Battle of Boroughbridge 1322

Saturday 16th March 2019

Did Thomas of Lancaster, the classic over-mighty subject, finally overreach himself? Join Louise Whittaker for a ninety minute, 2 mile battle anniversary walk to find out.

Meet at 11:00am at the grassy area to the rear of Back Lane Car Park, Boroughbridge YO51 9AT (Toilet facilities available in car park).

For further information.

Contact name : Louise Whittaker

Contact email : louise.whittaker83@ntlworld.com



WWI in Boroughbridge

As with every other town in the country Boroughbridge commemorated the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War with a special Armistice Day service on November 11th 2018. The casualties of that dreadful war are of course recorded on the cenotaph in Hall Square, along with the casualties of WW2, and these were dutifully read out in the packed commemoration service. As the years have gone by however many of those who lost their lives in WW1 have been forgotten, and we are left with only a name on the memorial which offers little information about the human being who once lived in our town who perished during that dreadful conflict.

Having uncovered information about casualties in WW2 the Boroughbridge Historical Society decided that as a mark of respect for those who took part in WW1 and the many who lost their lives it would be a service to the community to assemble all the information we could gather about the Boroughbridge people who took part in that conflict. BDHS member Peter Audsley has made a very good start in uncovering details of the casualties by diligent and painstaking research of the records on line and in the local newspapers of the time. Bare details of each and every one of the casualties named on the war memorial have now been uncovered, a tremendous effort by Peter. He has even identified two casualties from New Row who do not feature on the war memorial. Also, we now have photographs of several of these casualties, and although some of these are of quite poor quality they do portray the fact that there was a human being behind each name on the memorial, helping enormously to bring some recognition of a Boroughbridge life behind the name.

Important as it is to remember the casualties of this war there were many who took part and survived, but who suffered injury which blighted their lives in the days of peace that followed. The Historical Society will endeavour to record details of anyone who was involved in the conflict, and to build up a picture of the town's total involvement at that time.



Despite the fact that the population of the town has changed dramatically over the last 100 years there may be those who had relatives with stories and photos of their grandparents who took part in the events of those **times**. The Historical Society would welcome any contributions which can add to the story, so that we can piece together a respectful memory of an important period in the history of our town.

Mike Tasker