

THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF
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2005-2006, No 3

The Mourholme Magazine of Local History



*Mourholme Local History Society (Charity Reg. No. 512765)
covers the Old Parish of Warton containing the Townships of
Warton-with-Lindeth, Silverdale, Borwick, Priest Hutton, Carn-
forth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne.*

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SIR ROBERT BINDLOSS OF BORWICK HALL

R.D. Escolme

For anyone familiar with local history in the seventeenth century, the name of Sir Robert Bindloss of Borwick Hall crops up with some frequency - yet he remains a shadowy enigmatic figure. Here was a man who may have switched his allegiance from the winning to the losing side in the Civil War, which is, to say the least, unusual. Although a Justice of the Peace, he was sufficiently opposed to the Quakers to be prepared to take the law into his own hands, and set an armed ambush for George Fox at Capernwray. What if anything can we divine of Bindloss, from the various sources available?

Perhaps a little family background may be helpful. His grandfather, also a Sir Robert, had expanded the family trade in woollens out of Kendal, and substantially enhanced the family fortunes; built Borwick Hall around an old piel tower; and acquired extensive land holdings in Westmorland and Yorkshire as well as Lancashire. Wool and land rental were not the only strings to his wealth. In 1627, Sir Robert was receiving £500 a year 'out of the customs on goods imported into England out of Virginia'. He may have had an interest in the Virginia Company. He and his son Francis both died c 1629 and young Robert came into his inheritance (an annual income in excess of £3200 p.a. or at least £300,000 p.a. at present values). He was a child of five or six as the family tree shows.

The Mourholme Magazine of Local History is issued by the Mourholme Local History Society for the study of the history of the ancient Parish of Warton, with its seven constituent townships; Borwick, Carnforth, Priest Hutton, Silverdale, Warton-with-Lindeth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne.

The Society is named after the Manor of Mourholme, the home of the medieval Lords of Warton. Their seat, the Mourholme Castle, stood on the site now covered by Dockacres.

Yearly subscriptions £9.00 (£17.00 family or school membership) includes evening lectures, copies of the Mourholme Magazine and access to the Society's archival material.

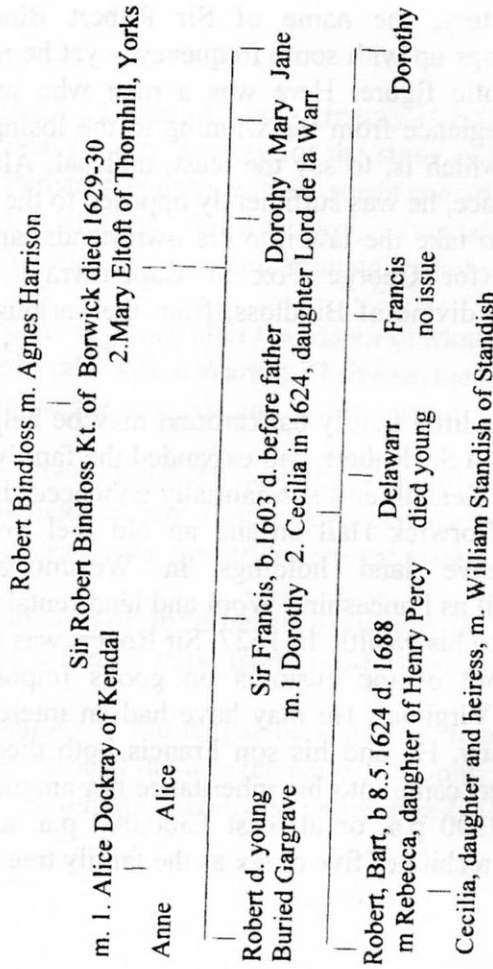
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Contributions to the magazine - articles, letters, notes - are invited. Please send them to the editor, Dr. John Findlater, 13 Lindeth Rd., Silverdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 0TT.

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Bindloss Family Tree



Robert, aged about fourteen, was one of 'six discreet and good men' in 1638 who became a warden and governor of Warton school. He was knighted in 1641, by a king possibly seeking to secure his allegiance in the forthcoming confrontation with Parliament. In the Royalist proclamation of the Commission of Array for Lancashire, dated at York 11 June 1642, Bindloss is sixth on the list, with George Middleton of Leighton, (newly knighted) below him at 11th. This commission was an ancient instrument which allowed local landowners to raise forces for the king.

Bindloss, however, threw in his lot with Parliament, of which he was a member – this at the ripe old age of about eighteen, and was authorised by Militia Ordinance to raise troops for Parliament. Why did he opt for Parliament? We can only guess. Perhaps as an M.P. he was caught up in the demands for political change, rather than from any strong protestant beliefs. Historians are divided on the significance of the religious element as a cause of war nationally, but there is agreement that Lancashire was more deeply divided than much of the rest of the country on that issue. Although some of his namesakes were recusants, (and his daughter later married into a Catholic family), Bindloss's employment of Dr Richard Sherlock in 1648 as personal chaplain, is suggestive that he was a Laudian Anglican. (Sherlock was later ejected from two parishes by Parliament during the Commonwealth.) Lucas writes of Sir Robert having a 'just Esteem for the [Established] Church and her Ministers'. It is unlikely that Robert was sympathetic to some of the Puritan movements – quite the reverse as we shall see later. Bindloss may indeed have been in agreement with Cromwell that 'religion was not the thing [for

him] at first contended for', when war broke out, but may have swayed his actions later. The reforms of the church by Parliament after war broke out – the loss of the Book of Common Prayer, and the religious celebration of Christmas for instance – may well have started Bindloss's drift away from support for Parliament.

Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, in his monumental *The History of the Rebellion and Civil War in England* saw the conflict in terms of social and economic divisions, and Christopher Hill, writing in Trevor Royle's *Civil War: The Wars of the Three Kingdoms 1638-1660*, goes further, and describes the conflict as a class war. The Royalists, he claims were led by people of 'prime quality', with good lineages, and owners of inherited property. On the other hand many of the parliamentary leaders were men who had made their fortunes recently and were jealous of their social superiors, a description that may well have fitted Bindloss. His grandfather had made his fortune 'in trade', less than a hundred years earlier. He had not gained his estates through exploits in battle, or made social advancement by marrying into a wealthy titled family.

This paragraph is a speculative scenario. The youthful Robert on an early expedition to London, is made to feel socially inadequate and inferior in the presence of the other youthful aristocratic blades about court. He overcompensates, hoping to win friendships by flaunting his wealth in conspicuous expenditure, only to be met with haughty contempt from those he seeks to impress. A reference to Bindloss as 'Rich Sir Robert in the North', is a slighting put-down by a supercilious scion of the aristocracy. Our callow

youth leaves the metropolis with a sense of grievance and hostility towards aristocratic courtiers. This impressionable young man is thus ripe to fall in with the parliamentary mood for change. (End of hypothesis, based on a few known facts.)

Whatever his motives, Bindloss was committed to the Parliamentary cause at the war's outbreak, and served on the Lancashire committee that controlled the county. When Charles I was captured Bindloss strongly opposed, along with a mere handful of other MPs, Charles' trial and execution and the setting up of a republic. It is not clear whether he resigned his seat forthwith, or not. (He may nominally have held this until 1653, without attending the House.) He did leave the Lancashire committee.

B.G. Blackwood, in his *The Lancashire Gentry and the Great Rebellion 1640-60*, describes Bindloss as a 'sidechanger', and this would seem to be supported by Lucas, who claimed that the future Charles II was 'heartily entertained' by Bindloss at Borwick in 1651, en route to Worcester, and defeat. Bindloss would have been a bold man indeed to put his estates and possibly life at risk by showing such open support for Charles. This writer leans to the view of Herbert Masterson in *Origins of a Yorkshire Dynasty: the Wilsons of Eshton Hall*, who refers to Charles 'a visitor whom a cautious Sir Robert ensured he was not at home to receive'.

The Bindloss estates were at risk, however, because of the actions of the owner. He was forced to sell Eshton Hall to the Wilsons in 1648, having been in financial difficulties for some years before that. His promiscuous hospitality 'had him in

Love with (some of it wicked) Company ...which proved the ruin of his vast Estate'. He continued to sell off his lands in the 1660s and '70s.

We next hear of Bindloss in connection with the visit of the Quaker, George Fox, to Robert Wither, at the latter's house at Over Kellet. The two went to address a meeting at Capernwray, after which they returned through the fields to Kellet. However, Bindloss's servants and 'some Frenchmen (?)' having missed their intended victims on the road, went to those remaining at the meeting, attacked them violently, bound them, and carried them off to the fields, where they were dumped. This was mid-winter. What was Bindloss's motive? He evidently held the then common belief among many law abiding people that the Quakers were a militant threat. (The Friends' pacifism was only to emerge later.) We have the situation in those troubled times, of a magistrate using unwonted and illegal force to maintain the peace!

Our subject cannot have been wholly out of favour with his Commonwealth masters, because he became Sheriff of Lancashire 1657-59. Sir Robert successfully transferred his allegiance after the Restoration in 1660 by joining the royal address sent by Lancaster that year. Michael Mullet has written of how Bindloss 'became obsessed with the danger of a "second rebellion"'. He was now prominent in local politics, becoming a 'capital burgess' of Lancaster in 1661, bailiff in 1664, mayor and coroner in '65 and again in 1672, Steward of Lonsdale from 1660 until his death in 1688, and a Deputy Lieutenant of the county.

Although Bindloss and Sir George Middleton had been on opposite sides during the Civil War, they seem to have resolved any differences with the Restoration. Bindloss saw Middleton installed as a Burgess in 1664, when it may have been possible to blackball the latter. More positively, Warton church was provided with a font '1661 RBGM', with the initials, as William Farrer has written 'probably Bindloss with Middleton'. The two also combined to run the local militia for the annual muster through the 1660s.

In his long career in public life, was Bindloss moved by every shift in the political wind, or can we detect some common thread in his actions? For this writer, it is the latter. To protect his own interests, Bindloss, as a wealthy landed gentleman, was firmly on the side of law and stability. When he saw that Charles I was not to be trusted, and the nation was in danger of descending into anarchy, he looked to Parliament for fixity, even if it meant going to war. The trial and execution of his king must have shaken his belief in that, and the confusion and chaos that followed Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658, confirmed in his mind the need for a stable monarchy. Bindloss's treatment of Fox's followers follows the pattern. For the first fifteen - twenty years of its existence the Quaker movement was a militant sect, and Bindloss was not alone in wanting to see it suppressed.

In old age, and with much of his fortune squandered, Sir Robert may have wavered. He supported James II when others were demanding his removal, allegedly because 'he [Bindloss] is certain to continue in his employments'. Like other gentry, he enjoyed the honour of employment and hated the dishonour of

losing it. Perhaps fortunately he died shortly before James himself fled the country, ignominiously.

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A NEW IRON AGE BEGAN IN THE HEART OF OUR COUNTRYSIDE

T.Pape

(Extracts from His Article in the Lancaster Guardian by kind permission of the editor)

The iron industry entered upon a new era when the Backbarrow Company, in October 1711, started to build the first smelting furnace and refinery on a site by the River Leven, where James Mitchell, in 1635 had set up his iron forge. Most of the cast iron used in the building came from Ireland, but some of it, including a sun-dial, was provided by William Stout of Lancaster and the sandstone came from Heysham. On June 7, 1712 the improved smelting of iron was put into operation at Backbarrow.

In the following year the Backbarrow proprietors, whose dated initials are still to be seen on the original lintel, leased part of the waste of the Manor of Yealand for building a new furnace under a steep bank bordering on Leighton Beck. When customary tenements in the Manor of Yealand were enfranchised in 1718 the Lord of the Manor reserved 'the lands and grounds demised unto William Rawlinson (he became a Freeman of Lancaster in 1717) and others, proprietors of the Furnace now erected at or near Leighton Beck whereon the said Furnace is built and assigned.' The only remains of the furnace are a cottage built on the transformed base of the furnace and the unroofed walls of a storehouse on the banks above.

Account by John Lucas

John Lucas in his 'History of Warton' compiled between 1710 and 1744, describes the furnace at Leighton Beck as *'of square form, the sides descending obliquely about six yards and drawing nearer one another towards the bottom, like the hopper of a mill'*. The sides lined with the best fire-stone terminated in a substantial hearth. Iron ore and fuel after treatment in a kiln, were put in the furnace which had been fired up for two or three days before the bellows began their blast. When the fire had become intense and the furnace was fit to run, a long furrow called the sow was made in the middle of a level bed of sand, opposite the base of the furnace, and on each side of the sow about a dozen smaller furrows were made for the pigs. A long iron poker was used to break out a lump of clay at the base and out came 'a torrent of liquid fire' according to Lucas.

Water-wheel and fuel.

The power for driving the blast was obtained from a water-wheel turned by a race drawn from Leighton Beck. The diameter of the wheel, which worked the bellows was 10 yards within the rim, while each pair of bellows measured seven and a half yards in length and their noses met at a little hole near the base of the furnace. The race, with the head or pool formed by damming up the beck, is clearly marked on the map attached to the Yealand Inclosure Award and is shown running between the sheds below the barn and through the garden in front of the existing cottage to the furnace. Peat from Arnside Moss half a mile away was used as fuel, along with charcoal.

Leighton Wood, bought in 1713 for £2,300 from Albert Hodgson of Leighton Hall, for many years provided not only the charcoal but also the timber for all sorts of purposes including the building of coasting vessels at Arnside. Also in the year 1713 no less than 600 tons of iron ore for smelting at the Backbarrow and Leighton Furnaces were purchased from the Earl of Derby.

The small vessels which brought the ore from the Furness district, used to land their cargoes at Knowhill, Silverdale and from the shipping-house on the shore the ore was carted up Mine Lane to the furnace. Sometimes the heavily-laden ships got into difficulties. James Noble on his first voyage in 1716 managed to strand his vessel on a sandbank in Morecambe Bay and the iron ore had to be unloaded into carts at low tide: on another occasion the vessel 'Leighton' in 1727 was refloated after it had run aground at the back of Walney Island.

Balance Sheet

A typical annual balance sheet shows that from November 1717 until the end of October in 1718 the wages amounted to £207, charcoal £1,343, 5000 cartloads of peat £181, iron ore weighing 1,383 tons £1,099, limestone £24, sundries £302, making a total cost of £2,956. As the sales amounted to £4,921 there was a profit of £1,965 on the year's workings. At that time the weekly wages paid at Leighton Furnace were a guinea for the founder, 12 shillings for the keeper, seven shillings for the furnace filler, five shillings and five pence for the filler of charcoal and peat and five shillings for the ore breaker. By the side of Lower Kellet Green footpath,

nearly midway between Slack Head and the furnace at Leighton Beck, a stone was set up by the workmen in memory of their founder, Richard Roper.

How the Iron Age ended at Leighton Beck and Halton

In his autobiography in 1717 William Stout mentions that owing to the capture by Sweden of all our ships trading in the Baltic, Swedish iron had advanced in price from £16 to £24 a ton, action *'which has induced this country to build furnaces here to run iron, which makes it as good as Swedish iron and brings a great benefit to the north part of this county where mines and coals are plentiful and labour cheap'*. Also in 1725 Stout has this note *'Iron £20 a ton, or upwards, gives great encouragement to the country and from furnaces lately erected'*.

In this early period of its history Leighton Furnace was noted for its cast iron wares. Prior to 1721 boilers, kettles, pans and similar utensils were bought from Bristol to be distributed locally by 'potters' of the Backbarrow Company. Very large kettles were made at Leighton foundry in its first year and the potters' rate of pay was 3d per gallon. Trade so increased that in 1744 the sales of all the various box-irons, firegrates, heaters, cast iron balusters, loom stoves and pans ?guinea kettles etc amounted to £5,500.

The most noted of the ironworkers who dealt in this cast iron work was Isaac Wilkinson, who specialised the making boxirons and firegrates. He was chiefly associated with Backbarrow and lived at Bare Syke, near the ironworks: but, in a Backbarrow ledger account in 1744 which shows that of a

sum of £770 due to him, two-thirds were for foundry work at Leighton Furnace and one-third was returned as value of articles taken by him for sale. Under the heading of 'Isaac Wilkinson, Potfounder' in 1747 two folio pages list twenty four items of cast iron ware valued at £51. In the same year 52 tons of shot were sent from Leighton Furnace to Portsmouth.

Halton Furnace Founded

At the end of their 41-year term the proprietors of Backbarrow in 1754 gave up their renewals of Leighton Furnace lease, chiefly owing to keen competition in the purchase of wood and charcoal and mining rights.

As early as 1746 Abraham Rawlinson and Myles Birkett, both of Lancaster, ironmasters and James Stockdale of Cartmel, partners in the Halton Furnace Company had obtained mining rights in Lindal and Dalton; and before they could lease the site and buy the plant of Leighton Furnace they had built a new furnace at Halton on the banks of the Foundry Beck. Richard Turner, the Parish Clerk, made this entry in the parish church register of Halton:

'In the year of our Lord 1752 Halton Furnace was erected, and they used the building thereof nigh fifteen thousand cartloads of stones; at 2 ½ d per cart. R.T.'

In the following year an agreement was made at Lancaster between Myles Postlethwaite for the proprietors of Leighton Furnace and Myles Birkett for the proprietors of Halton Furnace to bid for and buy parcels of woods which were sold at the house of Thomas Spencer in Lancaster and if bought they were to go halves. Many years later in a letter by James

Barrow dated 1772 he announced that now Meathop Woods were to be sold and they were safe to go to Leighton, so it would be hard to get woods for Backbarrow.

Iron ore was obtained not only from the Furness district but also locally from Yealand Redmayne Common near the round top of Cringlebarrow. At this time the cost of transport of the ore from Thwaite Flat to Louzey Point on the Duddon estuary was at the rate of two shillings per ton, from Conishead Bank to Knowhill, Silverdale, also two shillings per ton, and on by carts from Silverdale to Leighton Furnace three shillings per ton.

End of Leighton Furnace

Mr Thomas Warbrick, one of the partners in the Halton Foundry on October 15, 1803, was drowned in crossing the sands from Hest Bank to Allithwaite. The gig missed the ford of the Kent and was overturned. Mr. Warbrick's companion saved himself by swimming.

The advertisement in February 1811 in the Lancaster Gazette announced that at John Bagot's, the Sun Inn, Lancaster, Leighton Iron Furnace with cottages, mine-houses, charcoal house, stable and other buildings, also ten acres of arable, meadow and pasture land, to be let by ticket for the term of three years.

Among the properties, sold by auction at the King's Arms, Lancaster, on September 20, 1821, of the heirs of Thomas Rawlinson, deceased was Lot 5, Leighton Furnace and three dwelling houses and other buildings, heretofore used for the making of pig iron and two closes of land: 1. Furnace Field,

garden etc. 13 acres and five poles 2. Furnace Meadow, 12 acres, one rood and three poles – all lying in the township of Yealand Redmayne.

Halton Company Dissolved

Prior to the abandonment of the ironworks at Leighton Furnace the sixteen proprietors of the Halton Iron Company in July 1808 had dissolved partnership and stopped work at the foundry. In their advertisement in the Lancaster Gazette they stated that John Sanderson and George Beardsworth of Lancaster were authorised to collect and pay all debts of the Halton Iron Company and:

'to manage the works thereof until the present stock is wrought up and disposed of. Merchants and Dealers may be supplied as usual with charcoal, bar iron of every description, cast iron work to any pattern: likewise Bills, Hoes, Spades and Edge-tools of all sorts for exportation and home use'

Eventually Mr. Thomas Butler Cole of Beaumont Cote purchased the ruined furnace and, for a time, established a mill on the site; but after that had failed, he pulled down most of the old buildings, enclosed the ground and set up a gateway with the intention of making a private road to the Cote. On November 6, 1862, at a meeting of Halton Parish and Vestry, it was stated that a footpath could be made from the site of the foundry to Beaumont Cote if Mr Butler Cole paid £100 and Mr Swainson of Halton Cotton Mill paid £50.

Finally when there was a fire at the foundry site on August 8, 1889, the old furnace barn and two cottages were destroyed.

ORAL HISTORY: MARY GREGSON (nee Dearden)
John Findlater

Mrs. Mary Gregson, always known as 'Marie' was interviewed at her home, 2 Borwick Hall Cottages, Borwick on 18.7. 1995.

Marie, an only child, was born, 1.2.25 at Accrington; her family moved to Carnforth when she was 2 years old. Her father was a master butcher, bought a business at 13 New Street, Carnforth. The family lived above the shop; Marie's father died in 1945 but her mother kept the shop on for a further 12 years; she died in 1961.

Mr Dearden had two assistants (Wilf Ghorst was one) and had his own slaughterhouse in Highfield Terrace. Meat was delivered round the countryside in an old Austin 7 van, as Marie remembers. She remembers going to Silverdale in it 'over the switchbacks' at Yealand. Meat was delivered to several places in Silverdale. She remembers when they got a refrigerator in the shop, which was considered a great event.

At the age of five, Marie went to the North Road School in Carnforth. Her teachers were Miss Rowbotham, who lived in Scotland Rd., Miss Farrer who became Mrs. Hampson living in Bolton-le-Sands and Miss Butcher who lived at a farm near where Steamtown was set up. Classes usually numbered 25-30 children. Marie's family were Congregationalists, though most of her friends were Church of England. The minister was a Mr Bonnell, who lived at the Manse on North Rd.. Ministers did not stay long but perhaps longer than Methodist ministers; she thinks Mr. Bonnell was followed by a Mr Priestley.

Childhood in 30s Carnforth, was a happy time, with friends – Margaret Bibby (later Ratcliffe), the Farrers, Norah and Betty Bristow (daughters of the Co-op butcher), the Gardners (Colin and Jean) , Norman Rigg, and Margaret Shaw (grand-daughter of 'Butcher' Williams). She does not remember the period as one of hard times, as some have done. They used to gather blackberries on Warton Crag, hazel nuts on Arnside Knott; they walked down North Road to Netherbeck and to New England, along the canal to Borwick for ice cream. They went on railway trips; one well-remembered trip was to Port Sunlight at the time of the Jubilee and coming home with what else? – a bar of soap. Another vivid memory was of a big fire at Dockray's [agricultural] warehouse, near Himsworth's, the grocers.

Marie went on from North Road school to Lancaster Girls' Grammar School at 11, along with Margaret Bibby and the Bristow girls. She did not have any special new friends at school and had no special ambitions to direct her studies but she was exceptionally good at mental arithmetic. She did not want to be a teacher and left school at 16 for a job in the District Bank in Church Street, in Lancaster.

By this time, of course the war was on and she felt almost guilty about being in a 'reserved occupation' (for women) and not experiencing any real hardship. Marie was not in the ARP but helped her mother at the WVS canteen on Carnforth Station. The town was full of soldiers. Her father was very strict and did not permit any associations with them. She did, with friends, go dancing Saturday nights on Morecambe Pier, coming home together in a taxi – it cost 2/6d. She also

joined the drama group in the town. Marie remembered 'old' Dr Jackson at Robin Hill well; when she had ringworm she was terrified he was going to cut her hair off. She liked Dr Edward –the old doctor's son; Harry Gill, the grocer, and 'Butcher' Williams were town characters she remembers well.

In 1946 or 1947 she met her future husband, Harry Gregson, through a friend Joan Martin, daughter of Arthur Martin, bank manager at Carnforth. Harry, born in Blackburn had come to Morecambe at 11 and attended Morecambe Grammar School. He had been called up in 1940, took part in the D Day landings, fought through into Germany, after that he was in Palestine and ended the war a Captain.. Returning to civvy street, Harry joined the bank. Marie and Harry married in 1948.

Marie and Harry had a few months in Sedbergh before Harry was moved to Trafford Park and then Oldham. Marie remembers all the chimneys all around in Oldham, the dirt, how very poor folk slept on palliasses and women gossiped all day on dorresteps. Then they moved to Knutsford and back to Morecambe in the early 50s. Elizabeth was born in 1949, John in 1953. Dr Berry of Carnforth attended at first birth then the Drs. Goodall of Morecambe.

In 1960 Harry went to Salisbury and then became manager in Ulverston in 1965, then at Frodsham and then Nantwich. He had a mild heart attack and took early retirement on health grounds in 1978. They then returned to this area living at Borwick Hall cottages. (Harry was a valued Mourholme member: he died 1992)

HENRY BODDINGTON

Ann Bond

[The appearance of an article about Henry Boddington in *Keer to Kent*, No. 59. Spring 2006, magazine prompts me to write this further note.]

It is well known that Boddington was largely responsible for the cost of building the new St. John's Church in Silverdale, which was consecrated in 1886, a few weeks before his death.. The Friends of St. John's was formed in 1991 with the object of raising funds for the preservation of the church fabric, and when I was Secretary I contacted a number of members of the family for possible donations. One of these was a Mr. Williams, a descendant in the female line, who lives in Herefordshire but who had visited Silverdale in search of family details, and who gave to the fund.

Some time later I was approached by Mr. Roger Wood of Silverdale, who said that he had a book of memoirs written by Henry Boddington which had come into his possession via the late Miss Bindloss. As he understood that I had had contact with the Boddington family, he wondered if I could return this book to them. I thought of Mr. Williams, and after consultation, returned it to him. Before this was done, however, the then Vicar of Silverdale, Richard Masheder, took a photocopy of its contents, having obtained Mr. Williams' permission. This photocopy is stored in the church archives.

Boddington was born in 1813 at Thame, in Oxfordshire; it was not until much later that he came to live in Silverdale, at

Cove House. His death, in 1886, is the second entry in the new burials register of St. John's. The dubious distinction of being the first was denied to him by a poor little three-month-old baby.

The memoirs were written by hand in a book of quality lined paper with elegant marbled end-papers. I would say that they were written within a short time, probably near the end of Boddington's life. They are fascinating, not so much for any local knowledge they may offer (which is not particularly extensive), as for the general picture of life and thought then current. The author grew up at a time when children were frightened by their nurse with threats of, 'If you're not good, Boney [Napoleon] will get you!' and even near the end of the nineteenth century he was not above repeating (with every appearance of belief) the old superstition of the hare who is wounded by hounds and takes refuge in a cottage, from whence an old witch-like woman emerges with a wounded leg. This from a wealthy man who ran a large Manchester brewery!

MOURHOLME LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY ARCHIVE

Jane Parsons (Keeper of the Archive)

Progress report

As you all know, the Archive has been moved from John Findlater's cellar, to the cellar at the Vicarage in Warton. We [Jane is assisted by a committee] are very grateful to Dr Findlater for looking after it all these years, and also to the Vicar, Canon John Hall, who made its present location available to us. The room is not large, but we can secure it, and there is enough space (just). We are able to use this room on the understanding it is with the permission of the present incumbent, and that we shall have to renegotiate the arrangement with future incumbents.

We have spent the intervening months having a grand clearout, getting rid of material which was either duplicated, or did not seem relevant to research in this area, and sorting as we went. We have made lists of some of what we have sorted, and, in due course, hope to complete this listing, and consolidate the lists into a more comprehensive catalogue. We are attempting to group documents, as far as possible, according to township, though some, of course, concern several or all of the townships and are better classified under type of document. Some are difficult to find a classification for ("Miscellaneous" is a very useful heading).

We intend to establish, if possible, a colour coding system, so that one colour represents one township, which we

hope will make retrieving documents, as well as cross-referencing, easier.

We have tried to establish a pattern of meeting at the Archive room on a Tuesday afternoon. Initially it was every week, but now it is every two weeks (anyone interested in joining us, or who can offer their expertise, is welcome). We have also in store two display boards from the Church, which were going to be disposed of, and which we thought might come in useful in the future.

If you would like access to the Archive, several members of the Committee have keys, but Jane Parsons (16 Borwick Lane, Warton, Tel: 01524 734223) is the nearest, and can let you in by appointment. We share the premises with three goats and several chickens (only outside in the paddock), and the cellar itself with the Youth Club. This means that we have to be careful about shutting and locking the gate (for the goats), but the Youth Club's table tennis table allows us a convenient large surface to look at documents on, since the Archive room itself is rather small.

2006.

January 12th

Mourholme Local History Society members and guests began the New Year with a gallop through the history of goods' transport, *From Horses to Brake Horse Power*. Dr Rob Vickers, now a director with the transport firm Tibbett and Britten, used both his experience with various transport companies and his academic work to expand on this somewhat neglected subject.

From the mid-eighteenth century until the First World War, horses played an increasingly important part in transporting raw materials and manufactured goods around the country. First pack horse trains, collecting and delivering goods inland from the ships which sailed around the coast; then horses pulling the new wide wheeled wagons on turnpike roads; canal horses pulling barges and taking and collecting loads for the canals and later the railways. Horses were also needed for the carrier services which ran regular trips between both large and small towns. The huge numbers of horses needed in the First World War caused a shortage in this country and pressurised vehicle manufacturers to improve the reliability of mechanised transport suitable for carrying heavy loads. Today horse-drawn brewers' drays recall the days when those magnificent animals provided the power to move goods and people around the country.

February 9th

Local people looking for a trip out may well have visited the Rheged visitor centre near Penrith, the grass covered building in a hill, but what would the members of the

Mourholme Local History Society find out in their February talk, "*King Arthur and the Lost Kingdom of Rheged*"? Tom Clare, previously Cumbria County Archaeologist and now Senior Lecturer in Environmental Archaeology at Liverpool John Moore's University, attempted to put some historical substance on local stories and legends.

We heard of archaeological finds of pottery, enamelled brooch moulds and imposing houses with circular feasting halls; poems and stories from Welsh bards; accounts of battles; historical writings by Jocelyn, Bishop of Glasgow and Geoffrey of Monmouth in the 12th century and more recently by Leslie Alcock, whose book *Arthur's Britain* was published in 1973.

There is evidence to suggest that Arthur could have been a chief or war leader, and local names and stories may link him to the ancient Kingdom of Rhedged, the area now covered by North West England and South West Scotland, during the 5th and 6th centuries, the so called Dark Ages, after the Romans left Britain. Did Tarn Wadling, near Penrith have magical properties associated with Arthur, or were the tales adapted to fit local places and legends? We will probably never know for sure, but it is fascinating to speculate and hear how the various pieces of evidence are being used to provide a historical basis to this endlessly intriguing story.

March 9th

The March meeting prompted a great deal of interest. Dr Keith Malcolm Petyt's previous experience, as lecturer in linguistics at Reading University, enabled him to demonstrate

extensive knowledge of his subject, "Dialect and Accent in Britain".

Dr Petyt explained that someone who speaks with an accent, pronounces words differently from what is usually called "Received Pronunciation"; *pillar* for *pillow* or *'edge* for *hedge* for example. Someone who speaks in dialect uses different words and may put the words together in a different way; *them as is 'ere* rather than *those who are here*, *it snew on Sunday* rather than *it snowed on Sunday*. Whether you call a stream a *burn*, a *beck* or a *brook* depends on where you live, but your level of education, social class and the formality of a situation also affect your use of accents and of dialect. Some dialect words and grammar are probably more historically accurate than some Standard English usages, for example *childer* is a more logical way of forming the plural word for *child* than *children*.

The talk gave the audience much to think about and less certainty about being pedantic about what is the "right" way to speak, language has changed and is changing all the time. Dr Petyt's book "The Study of Dialect", published in 1980, can give more information to anyone who wants to find out more about this fascinating subject.

PROGRAMME 2006-2007

(Indoor Meetings at the Yealand Village Hall, at 7.30 p.m. 2nd Thursday of the month*, September to April.)**

Subscription - £9 for individual members, £17 for family or school members. Visitors are welcome at a fee of £2 each meeting.

Autumn 2006

September 14th Lord Burghley's Maps of Elizabethan Lancashire A fascinating tale. Dr. Michael Winstanley

October 12th 'From Rags to Riches' - The Industrial Revolution in Cumbria. Mike Davis-Shiel.

November 9th 'The Eden - A Glorious River' - an illustrated history. Mr. W.M. Johnstone.

December 14th Christmas Buffet (must book) followed by The History of Cartoons with Colin Shelbourn, the wickedly perceptive cartoonist of the Westmorland Gazette.

Spring 2007

January 11th Holy Wells and Spas of NW England & Yorkshire. Rod Ireland.

February 8th The Parris of Kendal & The Bellinghams of Burneside. Martha Bates.

March 8th Inn Signs & their historical raison d'etre.
Dr. K.M. Petyt.

April 12th AGM followed by 'The Slave Traders of Lancaster and Area'. Janet Nelson.

***Meeting Day** - Change of meeting day is still under review. We've been round this difficult course before. For now, the meeting day remains as it has been.

****Change of venue** - for a number of reasons, which will be reported at the AGM, the committee has decided that we move back to Yealand Village Hall, where extensive renovation work will have been carried out. We meet there on September 14th.

AT HOME TO THE COUNTY

Under our programme no summer outings have been arranged. However, the society was invited by the Lancashire Local History Federation to host their annual County 'At Home Day' and the committee agreed. It will take place on Saturday 7th October 2006 in Borwick Village Hall when we hope to entertain in excess of sixty members from all over the county from 9.30 am to 4.00 pm. The publicity for the event and the programme is in the hands of the LFLHS.