Hereward the Wake
flourished 1070

A Victorian engraving of Hereward leaving home after being outlawed

The exploits of Hereward the Wake continue to delight and intrigue and Bourne has taken him to its bosom. But much of what we know today about this young Saxon outlaw is fiction and comes from the romantic historical novel Hereward the Wake, written in 1866 by the Rev Charles Kingsley (1819-1875), clergyman, novelist and poet, while staying at Edenham vicarage. He embellished the legends of the titular hero by painting him as a reckless gallant who for some time successfully opposed the Norman Conquest.

But although Hereward's story may be mainly fiction, his existence does have a solid core of truth. After the Battle of Hastings in 1066, William the Conqueror had little trouble imposing his rule on the country and most of Lincolnshire capitulated with little effort except in the fens and Kingsley makes great play of his hero's part in ridding Bourne of the Normans with a highly charged account of events that are straight from the realms of fiction.

A similarly colourful account of Hereward's exploits was written in 1926 by Christopher Marlowe (not to be confused with the 16th century dramatist of the same name) in his book Legends of the Fenland People in which he appears to have drawn heavily on Kingsley, and as these works were available in schools for several years afterwards and were used as teaching aids, which was my experience, this would explain why so many of the older generation today firmly believe in our hero's fictional rather than his factual pedigree and background.

The conquest of England by William was bound to have its repercussions in every part of the kingdom but the changes in our county were mainly quite undramatic and peaceable. Two years after the invasion, William took possession of Lincoln, entering the

city from the north. There seems to have been little resistance and the king allowed twelve lawmen to retain their powers in the town but he took the precaution of building a castle to overawe the citizens. Stamford appears to have been treated in much the same way and nine of its twelve lawmen remained and a castle was also erected. It is therefore likely that the arrival of the Normans in Bourne and its immediate neighbourhood was not accompanied by any great disturbance.

Charles Kingsley has done more than anyone else to perpetuate the mythical tales about Hereward the Wake that persist to this day. He wrote his famous book on the Saxon hero while staying at Edenham vicarage during the mid-19th century, inspired by local features such as Bourne Wood which he used as the setting for his death at the hands of the Normans. Kingsley, who was a distinguished classical scholar and graduate of Magdalene College, Cambridge, had access to the great libraries of England and based his book on the romantic tales recounted in certain mediaeval chronicles, making Bourne the scene of his account of the resistance lead by Hereward and his supporters. According to these tales, Hereward was the son of the Earl Leofric of Mercia and his wife Lady Godiva who owned the manor of Bourne and the castle that reputedly stood in the Wellhead field which was Hereward's birthplace. After being outlawed for the rough treatment of certain monks at Peterborough, young Hereward is alleged to have had numerous incredible adventures in Britain and the Low Countries before returning home to challenge the Normans and clearing them from Bourne.

In May 1070, a Danish fleet had sailed up the River Ouse to Ely and the men of fenland joined it there to help in the Danish re-conquest of England. Hereward, the leader of this revolt, was then a Lincolnshire thane, the Anglo-Saxon title given to a member of the aristocratic classes who held land from the king or other noblemen in return for services rendered. He set up camp in the Isle of Ely and from there, with the help of the Danes, his men plundered and burned the abbey at Peterborough. He was joined by Morcar and Ethelwin, Bishop of Durham, and continued to lead a futile resistance against the Normans until 1071 after the Danes had withdrawn and sailed for home and eventually his supplies were blockaded by the Normans who laid siege to his camp of refuge which they overran three months later. Morcar and Ethelwin surrendered but Hereward managed to escape with some of his followers. He eventually made peace with William, an action that has somewhat lessened his reputation.

This was the great age of forged charters, bulls and decrees. Early mediaeval men did not share our squeamish understanding of the nature of historical evidence. These documents did not always begin as deliberate forgeries but as the careful collection and expansion of remembered tradition, usually in the pursuit of proving ownership of land and chattels because the security of any community in Norman England depended on the possession of documentary evidence and when documents were lost or destroyed, they were replaced and as a result many have been found to have a large fictional content. The Chronicle of Crowland, a history of the monastery from the time of St Guthlac in 699 A D to the age of the Tudors, and one of the most important surviving mediaeval sources, is an example of such forgeries.

Hereward's life came under close scrutiny by historians in the mid-19th century when the noble lineage assigned to him was shown to be unfounded and it is now clear that there is no firm evidence to assume that he was a native of Bourne, nor to have been the son of Earl Leofric. In fact, in the reign of Edward the Confessor immediately prior to the Conquest, it was Earl Morcar, not Leofric, who was the principal landowner in Bourne.

Hereward's origins and exact identity are shrouded in obscurity but he appeared to have had some connections with the area because the Domesday Book refers to him having held lands under the Peterborough fief at Witham-on-the-Hill, Manthorpe and Toft, as well as at Barholm-with-Stowe, these lands in 1086 having passed into the tenure of a knight called Ansford. Two other places which the Domesday Book connects with Hereward are Rippingale and possibly Laughton and it has been suggested that his attack on the abbey at Peterborough was not simply a buccaneering adventure but one designed to retain his lands after the Normans had appointed a new abbot.

He may therefore have been active in the locality during these years but his title of "the Wake" was bestowed by John of Peterborough and has no connection with the de Wake family who were to claim him as an ancestor. The de Wakes were Lords of Bourne at a later date and tradition suggests that they had a large castle with two moats in the town where Edward III was entertained. This castle that once stood in the Well Head gardens was their stronghold. It consisted of a massive keep with square towers, a moat surrounding its low man-made mound and a second outer moat enclosing a bailey of almost eight acres. The moats were filled with water from Bourne's famous springs at the Wellhead, or St Peter's Pool, issuing from a natural fissure in the limestone, and provided a safeguard against attackers but all that remains today is a maze of mounds. Given the prominence of the Wakes, it is natural that Hugh de Wake should sometimes be credited with founding an abbey at Bourne in 1138 although other accounts give the honour to his son-in-law, Baldwin Fitzgilbert.

The Wake name is perpetuated today by the Northamptonshire Wake baronetcy, created in 1621, but Sir Hereward Wake, the 14th baronet, was known to remark: "We used to be called Charles or Hugh or Baldwin until the family read Charles Kingsley." But what happened to Hereward? The chronicles suggest that he met an untimely death at the hands of the enemy in the woods near Bourne but this is also most unlikely. There is no conclusive evidence about Hereward's activities after his rout by the Normans in 1071 and his fate is unknown although ancient tradition suggests that he was buried in the chancel at Bourne Abbey but there is no evidence of such a tomb existing, any possible remains having been destroyed during demolition and reconstruction work in 1807.

Crowland Abbey also claims him and his wife Torfrida and perhaps his mother Lady Godiva but there is no firm evidence from this location either. It is most likely that he was buried in France because after he was pardoned by William, he accompanied him to Maine where he was murdered by the Normans. The research on Hereward leads us to conclusions very different from the traditional story yet the old legends are well rooted and refuse to die and it is doubtful if they will. An old tale well told is often more acceptable and far more enjoyable than the truth.

The name Hereward is perpetuated in many spheres of local life including the Hereward Group Practice in Exeter Street which caters for almost 10,000 patients.

Oger the Breton
Flourished 1086

The biggest landowner in the history of Bourne was undoubtedly Oger the Breton. He was a Frenchman, also known as Ogerus Briton, who came to Britain with the invading army of William the Conqueror in 1066 and was rewarded for his loyalty with holdings dispossessed from the English. When the Domesday Book was published in 1086 giving the results of the new king's great land survey, he had a total of 19 entries, all in the Bourne area and so the indications are that he was a very important Norman knight.

The Bretons were held in great esteem by the Norman and Plantaganet kings for their faithfulness and were consequently preferred to many offices of trust in the royal household. Oger was the founder of a family which appears to have survived for several generations in Lincolnshire. His lands were mainly in the Bourne area and in the immediate neighbourhood but his descendants extended the family possessions into Lindsey, one of the adjoining divisions of the county, and there are records of Simon, son or grandson of Oger the Breton, exchanging lands with William de Romare.

There is no documentary evidence that he actually lived in Bourne but owning so much land would make supervision almost obligatory and therefore he would have had a home in the locality, most likely a manor house and the most obvious situation for this would be alongside St Peter's Pool, now occupied by the Wellhead Gardens, a site popularly believed to be that of a castle although the solid stone foundations that have been discovered would also fit the proportions of a moated and fortified manor house which is a far more likely explanation.

The total number of peasant or land workers, sokemen, villeins and bordars, living in Bourne at this time as documented by the Domesday survey was 53 and so that would be the approximate number of families. A priest is also mentioned and so if Oger had in fact been resident in Bourne itself, there would almost certainly have been a manor house containing him and his household. The Lord of the Manor immediately before the Norman Conquest was Earl Morcar but the coming of the Normans to England involved the transfer of much land from its previous owners to the new men, largely the compatriots of William, and within a few years of his conquest, Oger had became the principal landowner. Land areas at that time were calculated in carucates and bovates, a carucate being eight times larger than a bovate and assessed as the amount of land that could be cultivated by an eight-ox plough. The actual area of a bovate differed throughout the country but in Lincolnshire was reckoned to be around 20 acres and this would make a carucate 160 aces. Oger had 2½ carucates in Bourne alone and his total holdings in the district were 27 bovates or 540 acres including land at Dyke, Cawthorpe, Haconby and Spanby.

There were other Norman landowners in the area, notably Ivo Taillebois who held 58 manors in Lincolnshire and who had 100 entries in the Domesday Book. He owned three bovates in the Bourne area and these were let out to a tenant called Odo, a normal procedure, and a similar arrangement was practised by other landowners such as Alfred of Lincoln and Robert of Stafford who also had tenants in the Bourne area although the sum total of their lands was still far less than that owned by Oger although there is evidence that his interests extended to other parts of Lincolnshire and the neighbouring

counties. The Domesday survey also mentions that he held land at Thrapston in Northamptonshire, then a settlement known as Trapestone together with another Norman knight called Odelin, and that he derived a profit of 40 shillings a year from land he owned at Morton and Hanthorpe in the manor of Edenham that was let to 14 sokemen and three bordars. Oger's land was mainly arable but included a certain amount of meadow although his holdings also extended to water mills, a most important source of revenue for the lord of the manor in Norman times. He had three mills producing an income of thirty shillings a year, a comparatively large sum. He also had two parts of the profits from a fourth mill, producing five shillings a year. Other landowners in Bourne were also recorded as having "parts" of mills but it is impossible to know how many more there were beyond the three owned by Oger.

Baldock's Mill, the last surviving water mill although later rebuilt

The fisheries were also a source of revenue at this time. Ivo Taillebois had three fisheries producing 8d. a year and Alfred of Lincoln had six producing an annual 16d. but the revenue from the six fisheries on Oger's land is not recorded in money but in terms of produce, in this case 2,500 eels a year. Fifteen other fisheries are also mentioned in Bourne at this time.

The amounts of revenue quoted here may seem small in these days of decimal currency but money values 1,000 years ago were totally different to ours and those quoted here were a considerable regular income. For an example of the valuations made in the Domesday survey, we can compare the entry of Earl Morcar's holding in Bourne that passed to Oger the Breton after the Norman Conquest: "In Bourne, Earl Morcar had 2½ carucates of land assessed to the geld. There is land for 2½ teams. Oger the Breton has 2 teams there in demesne, and 4 sokemen on 4 bovates of this land, and 14 villeins and 4 bordars with 5 teams. There is half a church there and a priest, and 3 mills rendering 30 shillings, and 6 fisheries rendering 2½ thousand eels, and 19 acres of meadow. There is woodland for pannage [feeding and pasturing for swine], 1 league and 8 furlongs in length and 1 furlong in breadth. In the time of King Edward [the Confessor], it was worth 100 shillings; now it is worth 8 pounds." It is therefore quite obvious that Oger the Breton was a wealthy and influential man during the Norman period of Bourne's history.

Baldwin Fitzgilbert
1095-1154

The monastery that existed in Bourne almost a thousand years ago was founded by Baldwin Fitzgilbert, Lord of the Manor. It was neither large nor wealthy but it was Norman and impressive and dates from circa 1138.

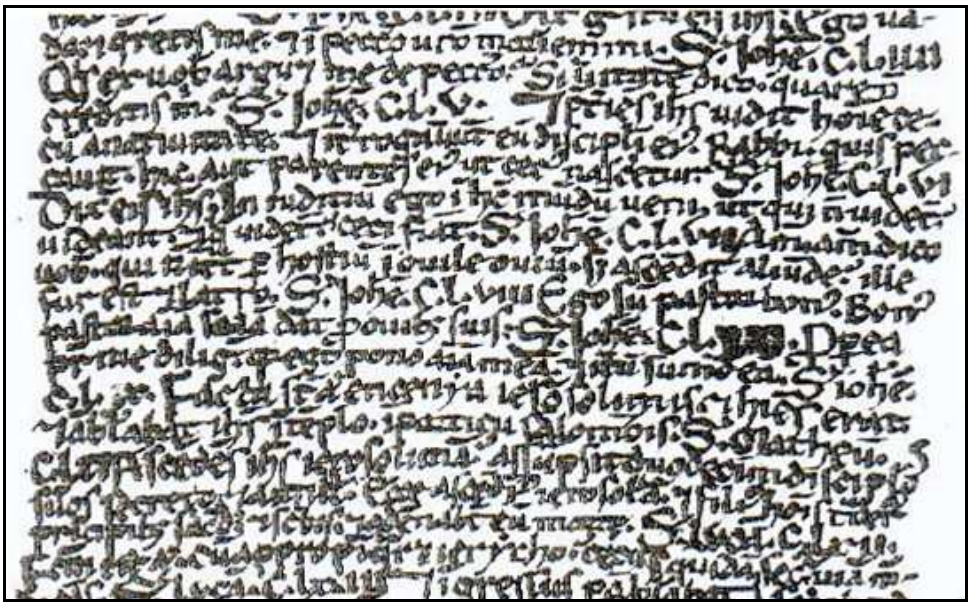
Baldwin's Abbey was one of the five English monastic houses attached to the Arrouaisian congregation that was a sub-division of the Augustinian order. They took their name from the French village of Arrouaise in Artois where in 1090, three hermits had combined to build a cell or oratory in honour of the Holy Trinity and St Nicholas and there were eventually 28 houses, mainly in France and Flanders. The Arrouaisian canons were not very different from other Augustinians and the distinction between them tended to fade out as time went on and soon after 1470, the order became extinct. However, the abbots of Bourne always retained some of their independence and kept up their connection with the abbey at Missenden in Buckinghamshire that had similar origins.

The foundation charter of Bourne Abbey was granted to Gervase, Abbot of St Nicholas of Arrouaise, but the house at Bourne was not merely intended as a cell of that abbey. It was independent from the start with its own abbot and the first to hold that office of which we have any record was David about 1156. Baldwin also gave him several tracts of land in the vicinity, fisheries in Bourne marsh, the nearby fish pond, various rents from other properties and the tithes of mills and of deer hides killed in hunting and wool to make garments for the canons. When Baldwin's daughter married Hugh Wake, the patronage of the house passed into the hands of the Wake family and they retained it until the 14th century but twice, in 1311 and again in 1324, the king's escheastor tried to claim Bourne Abbey as a royal foundation but the Wakes managed to uphold their rights and when Edward III subsequently visited the town, these were confirmed.

The origins of the abbey began during the great revival in religious thought and action in England during the early part of the 12th century as a result of the preaching by Bernhard of Clairvaux. The revival took many forms, expressed by many in preaching and in prayer, or by entering monasteries; others, in their enthusiasm and fervour, anxious to do something to further their faith, built churches and Baldwin, wishing to demonstrate his devotion, decided to erect a new church on the site of the old Saxon building which was then showing signs of decay. He started the task in 1138 but owing to political troubles, he never completed the work as he intended. He was also wounded and taken prisoner at the Battle of Lincoln on 2nd February 1141 and, according to the custom of the time, had to pay a large ransom for his release and this seriously depleted his financial resources.

The building programme was therefore cut back and it is safe to assume that the church was not finished at this time, only the nave, with a low roof, and the bottom portion of the tower being completed. The west front, the upper part of the tower and the clerestory were not finished until the 14th century and it would be another 200 years before the building was finally completed and after centuries of change, extension and refurbishment, serves today as the parish church of St Peter and St Paul, better known locally as Bourne Abbey.

Orm the Preacher
Flourished 1180



An extract from the original text

An Augustinian monk and preacher called Orm is now thought to have been working at Bourne Abbey in the early 12th century and that manuscripts of major historical significance in the Bodleian Library at Oxford were written by him. This important revelation now gives the abbey a second mediaeval scribe of international prominence alongside Robert Manning, the poet and chronicler who was resident there a century later (1264-1338 or 1340).

The name Orm (or Orrm, as he himself spells it in the dedication), is Scandinavian in origin and its variant Ormin may have been formed by analogy with names such as Austin. He is known by only one work, the homily collection known as The Ormulum in which he dedicates it to the order of which he was a member. The dialect of English has been localised in South Lincolnshire and although the Augustinian house to which he belonged cannot be specifically identified, scholars have come to accept that it was written in the Arrouaisian abbey at Bourne, a house of Augustinian canons founded in 1138.

Work on translating The Ormulum has been going on for several years and Professor Nils-Lennart Johannesson, a language historian from the Department of English at Stockholm University, is currently working on a new edition. He has been in Oxford for the past few months examining the document anew and last week, before returning to Sweden, he visited Bourne to see the church where Orm worshipped and expressed his confidence that this was indeed the place where the work was compiled.

The manuscript in the Bodleian is made up of large and irregularly shaped sheets of parchment, each roughly 23 inches high and 9 inches across, and gathered in eight numbered quires. It is only a fragment of the total work and contains homilies, or explications of gospel texts intended to be used for preaching, dealing with the life of

Christ and particularly the lives and works of St Peter and St Paul, the saints to whom the Abbey Church is dedicated. "This would make sense only if Orm belonged to a monastery dedicated to these saints", said Professor Johannesson. "The dialect in which they are written has long been recognised by experts as East Midland and the only Augustinian house in the East Midland areas with that dedication was the Abbey of Bourne."

The manuscript has been well known to linguists and language historians ever since the 17th century but its source has never been established although Professor Malcolm Parkes, of Keble College, Oxford, argued convincingly for Bourne Abbey in 1983. Orm's language provides a glimpse of the English vernacular of the time and before it was strongly influenced by the French. It is assumed that the manuscript remained at Bourne Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries between 1536 and 1540. It subsequently came into the possession of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, a collector of manuscripts and rare books. He was a Royalist who died in exile at Breda in the Netherlands in 1657 but had managed to smuggle out his library when he left England after the execution of Charles I in 1649.

After Sir Thomas's death, the manuscript was acquired from his library by the Dutch scholar Jan van Vliet who signed the flyleaf at Breda on 6th February 1659. He took a great interest in the text and started preparing a glossary for it but when he died, the manuscript came into the possession of the librarian Francis Junius and after his death in 1677, it became the property of the Bodleian Library in Oxford where it has been ever since and is now known as MS Junius 1.

Professor Johannesson said: "During my stay in Oxford this spring, I managed to identify nearly two dozen books that Orm must have had access to, by authors ranging from St Augustine in the 4th century and the Venerable Bede in the 7th century to near contemporaries such as Anselm of Laon and Honorius Augustodunensis. It may also be noted that Orm is the first known spelling reformer, devising a spelling system that provides valuable information about the pronunciation of his variety of English."

But what of Orm's comparison with Robert Manning, the man who gave our English language its present shape because he was the first to write it as we read it now, popularising religious and historical material in an early Middle English dialect of great importance in linguistic history? "Orm's style is at best dignified", said Professor Johannesson. "His main theme, an explanation of God's purpose with mankind, is too serious to admit of entertaining or light-hearted writing. When he writes about sins, he refrains from illustrative anecdotes which makes his presentation somewhat abstract. Manning, by contrast, uses the illustrative anecdotes as his chief presentational device, which makes his text more immediately attractive to a modern reader."

The association of the preacher Orm with the Abbey Church was unknown to church officials and came as a complete surprise. Their records go back to 1562 and there is no mention of him in subsequent documentation or church guides. Mr David Tabor, the churchwarden, whose family has been associated with the church for more than 100 years, said: "This was the first I had heard of him. But we are pleased to have him as part of our history especially if it attracts more visitors and stimulates more interest in our building in the future."

Robert Manning
1264-1340

The most noteworthy of all Bourne's citizens was Robert Manning, the Lincolnshire monk who was instrumental in putting the ordinary speech of the English people of his time into a written form that is still recognisable. What we know of him today is largely told in his own writings.

Robert Manning (1264-1338 or 1340), poet and chronicler, is best known as Robert de Brunne from his long residence in Bourne Abbey, founded in 1138 for Arroasian canons, a branch of the Augustinians, and he became their most famous member. His accepted birthplace is Bourne, although some sources suggest that it was Malton in Yorkshire, and he spent some time at Sixhills Priory near Market Rasen before moving to Sempringham Priory, six miles north of Bourne, in 1288 when, according to the rules of the order, he was 24 years old. He then moved to Bourne Abbey in 1303 where he remained for almost forty years and until his death served as Magister, the mediaeval academic rank known in universities today as Master.

It was Robert Manning who gave our English language its present shape because he was the first man to write it as we read it now. He popularised religious and historical material in an early Middle English dialect of great importance in linguistic history although nothing he wrote was ever quite original for he translated the writings of other men into English rhyme from the French but whenever he found a subject on which he was more erudite than the author, he would add his own words to illustrate a point with the result that his judicious omissions and additions made his version far more entertaining than the original. Today, we would call his work doggerel but it was easily understood by the people of his day. The language he used was his own native tongue and as he knew that rhyme was the most easily remembered form of literary output, he therefore used it to give simple, uneducated people knowledge, advice and above all, amusement and he hoped that his writings would provide "solace in their fellowship as they sat together".

His first and best known work was called Handlyng Synne, a translation of Manuel des Pechiez, a poem in bad French by William of Wadington whose writings were far inferior to those of Manning. In it, the results of pride, envy, anger, idleness and other sins are illustrated by sixty-five stories and he discusses a wide variety of subjects which reflect life at that period such as witchcraft, tournaments, games and dress. The preface includes the following lines:

For men unlearned I undertook
In English speech to write this book,
For many be of such mannere
That tales and rhymes will gladly hear.
On games and feasts and at the ale
Men love to hear a gossip's tale
That leads perhaps to villainy
Or deadly sin, or dull folly.

For such men have I made this rhyme
That they may better spend their time.
To all true Christians under sun,
To good and loyal men of Brunn,
And specially all by name
O' the Brotherhood of Sempringhame,
Robert of Brunn now greeteth ye,
And prays for your prosperity.

The great value of this book is that it gives glimpses into the ways and thoughts of our countrymen 600 years ago and even more, shows us the language then in common use. Robert Manning's influence in standardising the language was very considerable for the

East Midlands dialect in which he wrote took the lead of others and eventually became national.

He finished the book in 1303 and he then began to write The Chronicle of England, a new Saxon or English metrical version, the first part an adaption in octosyllabic couplets of the Norman-French translation of Brut d'Angleterre by the Norman poet Robert Wace (1100-1175) and added to it a second part comprising a translation in rhyming alexandrines from a history written in French by the English chronicler Peter of Langtoft. This chronicle has no historical benefit except where it touches the reign of Edward I and so overlaps his own experience. It is a collection of legendary records and so its value is much less than the writings that picture contemporary life but from the point of view of English as it was used, it remains deeply interesting. He finished this work in 1338, on the 200th anniversary of the founding of the abbey.

Robert Manning was a translator and not an original composer but he was the first after Layamon, the Worcestershire monk who lived just before him, to write English in its present form. Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400) followed him and then Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), after which the task was easier and he is acknowledged today as the pioneer who created standard English by giving the language of the people who lived here a literary expression. Little is known about his personal life and there are no records that show whether he was ever married although he wrote kindly of matrimony, saying that there was no solace under heaven comparable with the love of a good woman and he wrote this at a time when it was fashionable to preach the attitudes of St Jerome and St Paul on the desirability of celibacy. We know that he had a good education and spent some time at Cambridge for he speaks of having met Robert the Bruce, the future King of Scotland, there, and his brothers Thomas and Alexander. He also loved the community in which he lived at Bourne Abbey where life and dress were simple.

The canons had three tunics, a cassock, a long white cloak with a hood lined with lamb's wool, two pairs of long stockings reaching above the knees and day and night shoes of red leather. The daily routine was one of work and worship and both followed a set pattern. They rose at midnight for the service of matins after which they were able to slip back to bed until the great bell summoned them for more services. Close to the monastery was the grange or farm producing butter, cheese and honey and craftsmen such as weavers, leather workers and smiths were employed here. The house was run in a very business-like way and made money for profitable causes such as the Crusades but provision was also made for small grants of food or money to assist monks and servants in their old age.

Manning died in 1340, about the time that Geoffrey Chaucer was born and because of its associations with this remarkable man, Bourne has been described as "the cradle of the English language". The old grammar school that stands in the grounds of the Abbey Church was built in 1678 but is believed to have replaced an earlier school dating back to the days when the monastery existed and may have been the very building where Robert de Brunne taught when magister at the abbey at the beginning of the 14th century.

Historians have judged that Robert Manning was an earnest man, intent on doing good through a rather narrow piety, as might be expected then. But he had a sound knowledge of the people and in his own way was one of the most practical of popular educators. He tried to give the people material for talk and thought and while adopting

their own language, he sought to extend its scope. He wrote, as he said, "in simple speech for love of simple men".

Remarkably, there is no memorial or even a plaque to Robert Manning in Bourne Abbey but he is remembered by the Robert Manning College that has been named after him as is Manning Road that runs through the east of the town. There is also a statue to him of dubious merit, erected with the help of public money in Bourne Woods as part of a woodland sculpture project launched in 1991 by the Forestry Commission in conjunction with the local authorities.

The woodland sculpture commemorating Robert Manning and the signs around the town that remember his name.

This curious contribution purporting to represent Robert Manning is by the artist John Fortnum and is described by the Forestry Commission as follows: "The sculpture is most impressively approached by a gravelled path from the main track, at the beginning of which a giant footprint gives our first intimation of the sculpture's presence. The path winds through dark pines, emerging at the rear of this gigantic piece. A vertical cone of pine logs soars 30 feet, broken only by the cast concrete head which gazes with remarkable presence across an open area with ponds over the trees beyond towards Sempringham Abbey, the home of Robert's Gilbertine monks. This work with internal ladder and viewing platform, is believed to be the largest work completed by a British sculptor working alone".

The statue has been badly damaged over the years and on one occasion attempts were made to set it on fire although it is not known whether vandals or art lovers were to blame. For a man whose life's work has brought honour to our town, Robert Manning deserves better.

Geoffrey of Bourne
Flourished 1292-1303

Although we know a fair amount about the aristocrats who were lords of Bourne in the Middle Ages, we are not so well informed about members of the class which came just below them in the social scale. In 1303, there were 449 knights' fees in the whole of Lincolnshire, but sub-infeudation makes it impossible to ascertain how many persons held land by knight service. Yet there must have been such men, knights or local gentry, men of moderate wealth and considerable influence, who played a big part in the affairs of a town like Bourne.

We do have a few facts about one man of this type, who is referred to as Geoffrey of Bourne in a late 13th century Assize Roll. His name appears first in 1292 in a list of those having £40 worth of land and rents who ought to be knights but are not. It appears, however, that by 1298, he had assumed his knighthood. Geoffrey seems to have been a man of some standing because in 1295 and up to 1298 at least, he was chief constable of Kesteven.

One of his duties is clearly evident in this Assize Roll: there had just been a rebellion in Wales (it was at a time when King Edward I was occupied in a war against France) and troops had been levied from different parts of the country to go and subdue the rebels. Some of these soldiers had been raised in Lincolnshire and the chief constable of Kesteven, Geoffrey of Bourne, was responsible for summoning and equipping them in his part of the county. Thus we find an entry in the Assize Roll to the effect that Geoffrey had received some money from one, William le Wayte, whose duty it had been to levy funds in Grantham to support foot soldiers going to Wales. Another entry shows Geoffrey going to Stamford, still on the business of troops for Wales: "Memorandum that on Sunday on the morrow of St. Lucia the virgin (14th December 1298) came to Stamford Geoffrey of Bourne, chief constable of Kesteven, about money levied for foot-soldiers going to Wales . . ."

As a knight, Geoffrey was also liable for military service with the king, when required, and in 1300, when the monarch was contemplating calling out the feudal army to fight against Scotland, Geoffrey's name was on the list by virtue of having at least £40 worth of land but it appears that he was not eager to leave his Bourne lands for adventures in the distant north because his name was also on the list of those who might be prepared to take service with the king in Scotland.

As to the extent of Geoffrey's lands, our only clue lies in an entry of the Assize Roll which says that in 1303, he held "a third part of one knight's fee in Bourne, of the fees of John de Baiocis; half a fee in Lobthorpe, with Nicholas de Eton, of the fees of the Archbishop of York, and a fourth part of one fee in Thurlby, in chief and other honours". A knight's fee varied in size and in 13th century documents, it ranged from two to as many as 48 carucates and was sometimes divisible into fractions as small as one-sixtieth. Therefore a whole fee would probably be a considerable amount of land.

From the fragments of information which the Assize Roll affords us, we can see that Geoffrey was a person of some consequence in his own locality and was probably typical of others of his class who lived at Bourne during the mediaeval period, but whose existence is not known to us.

William Cecil
1520-98

The Burghley Arms in the town centre at Bourne is traditionally regarded as the birthplace of the illustrious English statesman William Cecil, trusted chief adviser to Queen Elizabeth I and the first Lord Burghley. Burghley, also spelled Burghleigh, was known as Sir William Cecil from 1551 to 1571. He was a pillar of state through three reigns and for forty years was the main architect of the successful policies of the Elizabethan era, earning a reputation as a master of renaissance statecraft whose talents as a diplomat, politician and administrator won him high office and a peerage. He was created the 1st Baron Burghley in 1571 and the following year he became a Knight of the Garter and Lord High Treasurer, an office he held until his death.

The Burghley Arms was formerly a private residence until the 18th century when it became a coaching inn, first known as the Bull and Swan and then in the 19th century, the Bull, but the name was changed to the Burghley Arms during the mid-20th century to associate it with the town's famous son and in recent years a plaque was installed on the front bearing an appropriate inscription.

Cecil's family had acquired wealth, office and the status of gentry through their service to the Tudors and the marriage of his father Richard Cecil, of Burghley in Northamptonshire, to a local heiress. He married Jane Heckington, daughter of William Heckington, owner of the Manor of Bourne, which eventually passed into the Cecil family and remained in the hands of successive earls of Exeter until modern times. In his childhood, William served as a page at court where his father was a Groom of the Wardrobe. He was educated at Stamford and Grantham and in 1535, he entered St John's College, Cambridge, where he studied classics under the humanist Sir John Cheke and came under Protestant influence. He fell in love at the age of 20 with Cheke's sister Mary, and they were married in 1541, a few months after he had entered Gray's Inn, but she died in 1543, leaving him a son, Thomas.

In 1542, for defending royal policy, Cecil was rewarded by Henry VIII with a place in the Court of Common Pleas and a year later he first entered Parliament. Through his second marriage to the learned and pious Mildred Cooke in 1545, he joined an influential Protestant circle at court and when Edward VI succeeded to the throne, Cecil joined the household of the protector, the Duke of Somerset, and in 1548 became his secretary.

On Somerset's fall from power, Cecil shared in his disgrace and was imprisoned in the Tower of London for two months in 1549 but his pre-eminent abilities soon regained him royal favour and in 1550 he became one of two secretaries to the king who granted him the honour of a knighthood the following year. He had little scope under Edward

VI but nevertheless established himself as an able bureaucrat and although offered employment on Mary's accession, preferred to withdraw from the Catholic court. But on Elizabeth's accession in 1558, Cecil became her principal secretary and his illustrious career blossomed. They sought to improve the economic footing of England, among other measures adopting a new coinage. To heal the religious division of the country, they prepared a compromise settlement that resulted in the establishment of the Anglican Church in 1559. Cecil also ended a costly war with France, strengthened the army and navy, and organised an efficient secret service.

Cecil's close scrutiny of the activities of Elizabeth's cousin, Mary Stuart of Scotland, led to her trial for treason and her execution in 1587. His insight into the intentions of Spain and his preparations for resistance, especially by sea, culminated in the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. He exploited victory with propaganda and his fame as principal councillor of Elizabeth spread throughout Europe.

As Chancellor of the University of Cambridge from 1559, Cecil influenced discipline rather than the curriculum but he made his household a resort of scholars and an educational centre for the Queen's wards and the young aristocracy. His intellectual interests, like his italic handwriting that had been developed for popular use in the early part of the century by the Vatican chancery scribe Ludovico degli Arrighi, were formed in the advanced humanist circle of Sir John Cheke while his eclecticism was revealed in his personal vision of three grand houses, Burghley House at Stamford, Cecil House in the Strand and Theobalds in Hertfordshire and his spending was lavish in the building and beautifying of these mansions. He supervised their planning and decoration, furnishings, collections of pictures, coins and "things of workmanship", and their gardens supervised by the botanist John Gerard, won universal admiration. In fact, Cecil made a creative contribution to the Elizabethan architectural achievement.

There is also some evidence that he remembered his birthplace by bestowing a new Town Hall on Bourne. William Camden, the scholar, antiquary and historian (1551-1623), who undertook a survey of the British Isles and subsequently published his findings in Britannia, published in 1586, wrote: "In the centre of the market place is an ancient Town Hall, said to have been built by the Wake family. The Cecil arms are carved in basso-relievo over the centre of the east front and this Town Hall was probably rebuilt by the Lord Treasurer Burghleigh."

It stood on a site near the junction of South Street and West Street and underneath the building would have been a shambles and stalls which formed part of the weekly market while the Quarter Sessions were held in the Town Hall itself which also became the meeting place of the court of the Manor of Bourne of which the Lord was then the Marquess of Exeter. By the beginning of the 19th century, this building was in a dilapidated condition and so it was decided to build a new Town Hall, which was erected in 1821 and still serves the town today.

After the failure of the Armada, Cecil survived to preside over the politics of a new generation. He coached his son Robert, born in 1563, for the secretaryship which he obtained for him in 1596 but despite ill health, Cecil remained active, performing his official duties, writing memorandums and dealing with suits but he devised no new policies to check declining prosperity. Instead, he intensified a programme of retrenchment and pressed the Commons for grants. In foreign affairs he supported campaigns waged against Spain in France and the Netherlands and naval expeditions by

Drake and Essex but finally urged peace with Spain, fearing a Franco-Spanish settlement and the strain of prolonged war.

He died in London on 5th August 1598 at the age of 77 before the negotiations were concluded and was buried at St Martin's Church, Stamford, which contains the Burghley Chapel, richly decked with monuments of the Cecil family, including his own effigy, lying on his marble and alabaster tomb, richly carved and painted and filling the arch dividing the chapel from the chancel. William Cecil may have seen it for it was designed before his death. It shows him in his armour wearing the gorgeous scarlet mantle of the Garter, a noble figure nobly arrayed, his head on a pillow of gold brocade, his wand of office in his right hand and a lion at his feet. His father and mother, Richard and Jane Cecil, kneel at a prayer desk on the wall close by and have three children with them.

The father died in 1552, little dreaming of the eminence his son was to attain. There is no memorial to William Cecil in Bourne apart from the tiny plaque on the front of the Burghley Arms public house. Several other locations around the town bear the family names including the Burghley Centre, Burghley Street and Burghley Court, together with Exeter Street, Close, Court, Gardens and Row, but he is better remembered in Stamford than in Bourne.

Burghley House is the largest and grandest house of the first Elizabethan age and was built between 1565 and 1587 and the house remains a family home for his descendants. It is set in a picturesque deer park designed by Capability Brown and is open to the public from April to October when visitors are invited to see this most spectacular of houses and the treasures within it, a fitting tribute to one of England's foremost statesmen and the trusted and able adviser to Queen Elizabeth I.

The Burghley Arms and the commemorative plaque

Job Hartop
1550-95

Bourne is an unlikely place to produce a seafaring adventurer but that was to become the life of Job Hartop who was born in the town in 1550. He had a roving spirit and, tired of the monotony of life in a small farming community, ran away to London when he was 12 years old and became apprenticed to Francis Lee, the Queen's gunpowder manufacturer, and it was the experience that he acquired in this job that fitted him for a career with the navy.

He left London when he was 17 years old and headed for the south coast hoping to find a ship and in the autumn of 1567, arrived at Plymouth where Sir John Hawkins, the English admiral, was preparing for his third voyage. He joined the crew of one of the ships in his small fleet but little realised that he was to spend ten years as a galley slave and thirteen in a Spanish prison before he would see family and friends in his home town again. Hartop probably had no idea when he signed on of the reputation of his admiral.

Hawkins was the son of William Hawkins, Mayor of Plymouth and the cousin of Sir Francis Drake. The Hawkins family had traded with West Africa for some years before John, on his first voyage to Hispaniola (Haiti) in 1562, extended trade to the transport of slaves between Africa and the Spanish West Indies, a practice already well established by the Portugese and later the Spanish, neither of whom wanted their monopoly infringed by Hawkins who had become England's first slave trader. Backed by a syndicate of merchants and by Queen Elizabeth, who lent him a royal ship for his second voyage in 1564-65, he succeeded in selling slaves to the Spanish colonists at a great profit.

His third voyage however, the one for which young Job enlisted, was disastrous. Hawkins sailed from Plymouth on 2nd October 1567 with a fleet of six ships. They included the 700-ton Jesus of Lubeck and the Minion which had been loaned by Queen Elizabeth, and four other vessels which were part of Hawkins' private venture, the William and John, the Judith, a bark of 50 tons commanded by the young Francis Drake, the Angel and the Swallow of 30 tons.

The fleet was caught in a severe storm a few days out of Plymouth in which they lost all of their large boats and the ships were separated but they met again at the Canary islands and from there sailed to the Cape Verde Islands arriving on 18th November. A contingent of 150 men was landed to procure slaves but they were attacked by natives armed with bows and poisoned arrows. Hawkins wrote afterwards: "Although in the beginning, they seemed to be but small hurts, yet there hardly escaped any that had blood drawen of them, but died in a strange sort, with their mouths shut, some ten days before he died, and after their wounds were whole, where I myself had one of the greatest wounds, yet thanks be to God, escaped."

Despite the hostility, they obtained a few Negro slaves and the fleet then sailed on to the coast of Guinea and Myne and by various means obtained 500 more before setting sail for the West Indies. Here, Hawkins experienced some difficulties in exchanging them for merchandise because Spain had forbidden dealings with the English but they eventually had a reasonable trade and were entertained courteously, finishing their calls at

Cartagena and then departed for home on 24th July before the onset of the hurricane season.

Towards the coast of Florida they were overtaken by a powerful storm that lasted for four days and badly damaged the Jesus which sprang a leak and was on the point of being abandoned but on 16th September managed to reach San Juan de Ulloa, the port which served New Spain (Mexico). The following day, the Spanish fleet arrived and although there were promises of friendly relations on both sides, the Spanish turned treacherous and attacked the English ships. There was fierce fighting and both sides suffered several hundred casualties. The Jesus was disabled and the William and John, the Angel and the Swallow sunk. Hawkins escaped in the Minion and Drake in the Judith, leaving 100 men who had been put ashore to the mercy of the Spaniards. Both ships returned home safely to England, arriving at Mount's Bay, Cornwall, on 25th January 1568 when Hawkins wrote to Sir William Cecil, the Principal Secretary to Queen Elizabeth I: "Our voyage was, although very hardly, well achieved and brought to reasonable passe, but now a great part of our treasure, merchandyze, shippinge and men devoured by the treason of the Spanyards."

The disaster in the harbour of Ulloa was the subject of an inquiry in the English Admiralty Court with a view to assessing the amount of damage. The loss was very heavy and estimated at £29,000. The Spanish treachery also marked the beginning of the long quarrel with Spain which later led to open war and the attempted invasion of England by the Spanish Armada in 1588.

The fate of the 100 men left in the Bay of Mexico was most cruel and caused deep concern to Hawkins who had great affection for his seamen. "He promised", wrote Hartop later, "if God sent him safe home, he would do what he could, that as many of us as lived should by some means be brought back to England". Hawkins certainly intended to go out again but the news soon became known that most of his men were in the hands of the Inquisition, where entreaty was hopeless and force impossible. What could be done? Hawkins could not rest until they were rescued and so he resorted to a complicated subterfuge with the Spaniards but although this ruse had some success in its planning, it failed to rescue his unfortunate men.

Some were killed by the natives, others were sent to the capital where they suffered in the most inhuman way at the hands of the Inquisition. Robert Barrett, the master of the Jesus, was burnt at the stake in Seville together with a number of other crewmen while others were left to die of hunger in the dungeons. Three men out of the 100 escaped: David Ingram who managed to secure a passage on a French ship the following year, Miles Philips, who returned to England after sixteen years and his mess mate Job Hartop who came home to Bourne after 23 years.

Hartop's fate during those years after he and his shipmates had been left ashore has been recorded by John T Swift in his book Bourne and People Associated with Bourne published in 1920 although the accuracy of his account is questionable: "They hid themselves in the forest and then wandered into the interior, concealing themselves and hiding from the Indians, whom they knew would have no mercy on them. They forded or swam rivers, living on fish or fruit. After many months of this life, being thoroughly depressed, tired out, their powder and shot spent, they decided to surrender themselves to the Spaniards, and hoped they would have pity on them. But they soon found they had made a big mistake. The Spaniards had no pity for the hated Englishmen; the

wicked heretics must receive no mercy. They were sent to work on the plantations as slaves, or as oarsmen on the Spanish ships.

Job Hartop was assigned to a galleon to work at the oars and this was to be his fate for more than a decade, chained to a bench, rarely allowed to go on land, and only then as a prisoner shackled to another slave. He lived on a meagre diet of black bread and water, slept on hard boards and was lashed unmercifully. After 12 years at the oars he was taken into the Spanish governor's house, where he worked as a drudge, doing all the mean and base work of the establishment. Fortunately for him, a Flemish ship called at their port, and being short handed, asked for some men. The governor, knowing that Job was a sailor, gave him to the captain, and so once more he went to sea. On the voyage home they were pursued by an English ship that followed them for many leagues, caught them, and summoned the Flemish ship to haul down its flag. Job Hartop making himself known to the captain, was taken on board the English ship, and in a few weeks was safely landed by the Dudley at Portsmouth."

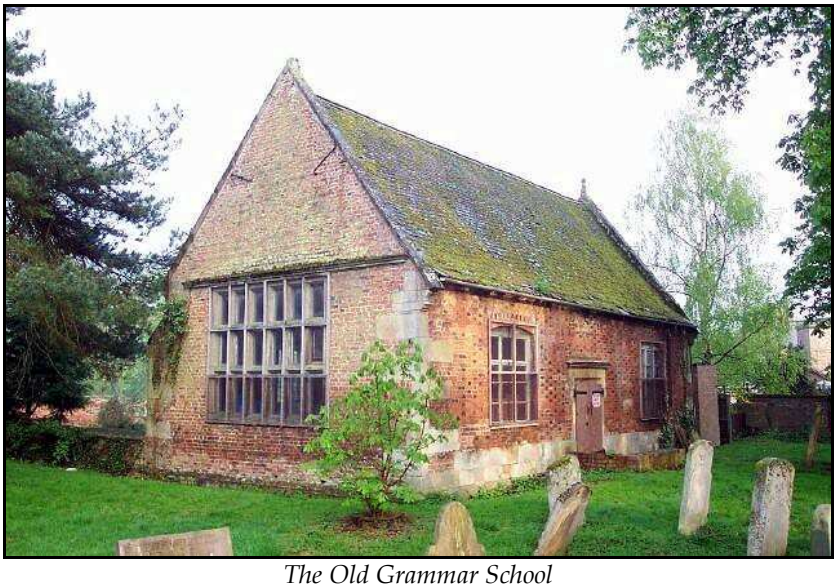
Another brief mention of Hartop is made by J J Davies in his book Historic Bourne, published in 1909. He describes Hartop as "an honourable even if not eminent man, with the maritime greatness and enterprise of the age of Elizabeth" and adds: "These spacious times showed few braver men than the valiant sailor Job Hartop. He fought like a true British sailor against Spaniards who captured and imprisoned him for 23 years. What long-drawn agony that meant, what faith and manly fortitude it demanded."

On returning from his disastrous third voyage, Hawkins resided at Plymouth and was twice elected to represent the town in Parliament in 1571 and 1572. He survived an assassination attempt in 1573 and eventually became responsible for the Elizabethan navy, introducing fast ships that were better armed and improving pay and conditions for seamen. He commanded the Victory in the campaign against the Spanish Armada in 1588 and was knighted the same year and in 1595, he and Drake were appointed to the joint command of an expedition to the West Indies which was to be his last.

At the age of 63, he was undoubtedly too old for a sea command and there was much dissension between the two. Off Puerto Rico on 12th November 1595, he succumbed to dysentery and was buried at sea. Drake too fell ill and died a few weeks later. He left a reputation as the architect of the new Elizabethan navy. Though his financial honesty was impugned on occasions, he defended himself convincingly and maintained a comparatively high standard of administrative integrity. He is well remembered for his ship's order: "Serve God daily, love one another, preserve your victuals, beware of fire, and keep good company."

Hartop meanwhile, had lived to tell the tale of his startling adventures and according to Swift, after being landed at Portsmouth "was very glad after all his troubles and trials to make his way to the old town of Bourne again" where he spent the rest of his days. He died here in 1595, at the age of 45, probably through the debility brought on by his long years of privation and suffering.

William Trollope
1562-1637



The Old Grammar School

Influence and power in mediaeval England was in the hands of the men who owned land and among those who achieved fame in this way through their commercial and social life was the Trollope family.

By Tudor times, many of the country gentry were living in reduced circumstances as a direct result of the decline of the manorial system. Farm labourers were getting better wages and yeoman families were often growing rich and rising to the ranks of the gentry. They included the Trollopes, the most prominent of them being Thomas Trollope who is first mentioned as a landowner at Cawthorpe near Bourne in 1543 where he was steadily improving his position by trade as well as farming.

Thomas Trollope submitted a scheme to William Cecil, the Queen's Chief Minister, in 1561 for setting up a mill *to knocke hempe for the making of canvas and other linen clothes*. This was a new enterprise and some foreigners were brought in to practice and teach their skills in the industry. The family continued to prosper and early in the 17th century they had become Lords of the Manor of Bourne Abbots that had passed into secular hands after the dissolution of the Abbey in 1536. The name Trollope subsequently appears in early records at both Bourne and Thurlby where the family had established important holdings. There is a tradition that the name itself is derived from the French *trois loups* as the result of a contest between its founder and three wolves at the time when these animals abounded in England, but it is more probable that it is the name of a place or natural feature of the landscape, such as troll-hope, a dale of elves, that was assumed by some early settler in that place and was thus passed down to his descendants.

The one best remembered today is William Trollope (1562-1637), a grandson of the first known Trollope and he became one of Bourne's philanthropists whose money is still of benefit to the town and administered by Bourne United Charities. He was born in 1562,

son of Mathew Trollope, and baptised at the Abbey Church on February 21st, marrying three times, Agnes Fletcher (1581), Elyn (Eileen) Twekye (1582) and Alse (Alice) Sharpe (1594). They had eight children between them, a daughter and seven sons, Joane (1588, died in childbirth), John (1589), William (1595), Thomas (1596), Mathew (1597), William (1599), Jonas (1602) and James (1605). William, born in 1595, died in infancy in 1598 and so a subsequent son was given the name as was the custom at that time. All of his wives predeceased him because his will stated that he wished to be buried in the churchyard "near to his wives" when he died on 8th June 1637, aged 75.

Trollope had succeeded his father in owning the family estates and land holdings and adding to them whenever possible by helping to drain large tracts around Bourne, thus becoming one of the Adventurers as they were known, men who were prepared to invest their capital in this way. He appears to be have been involved with making a new cut known as the South Forty Foot Drain, then described as a navigable river from Bourne to Boston, a distance of 24 miles, a project which incurred the wrath of fenland inhabitants who suspected that the reclamation was for the private gain of its initiators and sent petitions to Parliament in protest.

There were several incidents of violence on the part of the fenmen when drains, buildings and crops were destroyed and in 1640 a number of arrests were made after riots occurred near Bourne when 23 men from the town and 11 from Donington were arrested and sent to London to appear before the Privy Council and several large landowners were sent to the Fleet prison for their part in the uprising. It has been suggested that William Trollope was among them but as he had been dead for three years, this was most likely his son. The trouble had far reaching effects because so much damage was done that the Adventurers could not restore their drainage works and with the coming of the English Civil War much of the fenland reverted to its former state and it was to be another hundred years before the land was again reclaimed.

William Trollope's will, which was dated 16th November 1636, also marked a new and important phase in local education because he provided an endowment of £30 a year to maintain "an honest, learned and godly schoolmaster" in a school built by himself. He stipulated that it should be a free grammar school incorporated by royal charter and to be called "the Free Grammar School of King Charles in the town of Bourne and the county of Lincoln, the foundation of William Trollope, gentleman". It was erected in the grounds of the Abbey Church and still stands, although rebuilt since his day. He also left sufficient money to found a hospital, that is almshouses, by giving the sum of £33 for the maintenance of "six poor aged men" of the parish on a site near the church in South Street and now known as the Tudor Cottages, although also later rebuilt.

Robert Harrington
1589-1654


Probatum fuit testamentum

In the name of my God Amen

Extract from Robert Harrington's will

Philanthropists of past centuries are the unsung heroes of many community facilities in Bourne that are still in use today. It was through their unselfish acts that education, housing and health took hold at a time when state provision was minimal and many of them who gave time and money are commemorated today in the names of our streets although few who live there are aware of the connection.

Robert Harrington, who was born here in the late 16th century, is one such person whose inheritance from the London area continues to produce an income for the benefit of the town because the investments he made, although they appeared to be quite modest when he died, have grown through the rapid expansion of the capital during the past two centuries.

He was the son of Robert Harrington, a wealthy landowner who had derived his main income from farming and benefited particularly from the rise in land value and rents that took place during the 16th century. His children were baptised in the Abbey Church, including Robert junior in 1589, and it was he who was to become perhaps the most prominent of the town's benefactors in subsequent years and after whom Harrington Street is named. There is no record of why he moved to London but Joseph J Davies speculates in his 1909 book Historic Bourne that he left his home as a youth and "trudged to London to make his fortune and happily he succeeded". He was a self-made man, says Davies, "one of those whose sturdy perseverance and upright life is typical of the British merchant". His business interests were in what is now Leytonstone but towards the end of his life he was living at Gray's Inn, Middlesex, the address that appears on his will made in 1654. This document was proved three years later and in it Robert bequeathed his estate "for the benefit of his own people" in Bourne and although keenly contested at law, it was eventually legally confirmed.

It provided for the "freehold and copyright lands and tenements at Low Leyton and Leyton-stone, in the County of Essex, now let at a yearly rent of Eight pounds, unto the Minister, Churchwardens, and Overseers of the Poor, in Trust, for the use and benefit of the Poor in this Parish of Bourn". At this time, Leytonstone was a rural area but the development of the London suburbs later brought shops and dwelling houses to the district and this, especially in recent years, has greatly added to the value of his charity. Robert's will also provided for "an annuity of Twenty Pounds for ever, issuing out of the Home Woods and Dobbin Woods, in or near the Parish of Witham-on-the-Hill, in this County, to be laid out in Bread to be distributed every Sunday morning amongst the Poor of this Parish by the Minister, Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor".

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 provided for the welfare and relief of the poor with the workhouse as the final destination for those who persistently could not make ends meet but local charities played an important role by making cash grants and even providing homes in the form of almshouses to deserving cases. It was during this period when the welfare state was unheard of, that philanthropic work by individuals or voluntary organisations was greatly esteemed. The charity founded under the will of Robert Harrington was the most important in Bourne. In 1830, it was bringing in £300 a year and this soon increased to £500 a year but by the end of the century, as Harrington's estate at Leytonstone began to be developed, the value of his charity started to increase in a spectacular way and by 1909 it had reached more than £2,000 a year. Some of the income was distributed in quarterly or half-yearly payments to "the deserving poor" who did not receive parish relief, by the provision of clothing and coal at Christmas time while a fraction of it was devoted to educational purposes.

There were also benefits for the occupants of two almshouses in South Street, one for six men and the other for six women, and these persons received payments from Harrington's charity. A further 12 almshouses were built in West Street in 1931 to provide homes for elderly inhabitants and tenancies are still much sought after because these houses are situated in an attractive setting just off the main road and ranged on four sides around lawns and flowers beds. A bronze plaque has been erected at the front of the almshouses to perpetuate the memory of local benefactors whose money helped finance the scheme, among them Robert Harrington. Money from his charity was also used to assist in the furtherance of education in the town and when the National School in North Street was built in 1829, an annual grant of £42 was made from Harrington's charity and this was most likely provided to cover the schoolmaster's salary. The charity continues to produce income and, together with several others, is today administered by Bourne United Charities based in the Red Hall and which is responsible for a large number of facilities in the town and so Robert Harrington's generosity is still being enjoyed 350 years after his death.

Robert Harrington whose money still benefits the people of Bourne in many ways, including the financing of several facilities, is remembered with this street name.

Dr William Dodd
1729-77

The story of the unfortunate Dr William Dodd, Anglican clergyman, man of letters and forger, is a sad one and his career and ultimate fate must have caused a sensation in Bourne during the 18th century. He was born in 1729, the eldest son of the Rev William Dodd who was Vicar of Bourne from 1727 until 1756, and after graduating from Clare Hall, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself, he married and moved to London in 1750. He spent some time as a man about town but his extravagant lifestyle soon landed him in debt and worried his friends who persuaded him to mend his ways and so he decided to take holy orders and was ordained in 1751.

For a time, he worked hard at his new occupation and became a fashionable and popular preacher, attracting large congregations to the Magdalene House of which he was chaplain from its inauguration in 1758. In 1763 he was appointed chaplain to King George III and soon after became tutor to Philip Stanhope, godson and heir to the Earl of Chesterfield. He also held several other ecclesiastical offices including Rector of Hockcliffe in Bedfordshire and Prebendary of Brecon, and having already achieved some success as a writer with a volume of selections entitled The Beauties of Shakespeare (1752), which was reprinted many times, he published a number of theological works including a commentary on the Bible and in 1766, Cambridge University conferred on him the degree Doctor of Laws.

At this stage of his career, living in relative affluence, Dodd gave financial support to several orphanages and charitable institutions and was one of the original promoters of the Royal Humane Society, the organisation founded in London in 1774 to save life from drowning and to promote the use of artificial respiration.

By now he had become a noted person in metropolitan society but was careless about money and living beyond his means. His waywardness in such matters resulted in continual financial difficulties and in 1774, in an attempt to rectify his situation, he tried to obtain the rich living of St George's Church in Hanover Square, London, by offering a bribe of £3,000 in an anonymous letter to Lady Apsley, wife of the Lord Chancellor, asking her to use her influence on his behalf. The letter was traced to Dodd's wife and subsequently shown to the king who was so outraged that he removed his name from the royal list of chaplains.

The incident became the talk of London and Dodd became a target for ridicule in the press and even from the stage of the Haymarket Theatre and so he fled to Geneva in an attempt to escape the gossip. On his return, he was appointed to the living at Wing in Buckinghamshire and in February 1777, still short of money, he offered a stockbroker a forged bond for £4,200 in the name of Lord Chesterfield, his former pupil, but the forgery was immediately detected and he was prosecuted, sent for trial, convicted and sentenced to death. He made an abject appeal to the court but this failed, as did the efforts of influential friends to secure a pardon.

Dodd was committed to Newgate Prison to await execution and among those he appealed to was Dr Samuel Johnson, the lexicographer, author, critic and brilliant conversationalist who was the dominant figure of London literary society in the 18th Century. Johnson had met Dodd only once many years previously, but as James Boswell

recounts in his classic biography The Life of Johnson: "In his distress, he bethought himself of Johnson's persuasive power of writing if haply it might avail to obtain for him the Royal Mercy. He did not apply to him directly, but, extraordinarily as it may seem, through the late Countess of Harrington, who wrote a letter to Johnson, asking him to employ his pen in favour of Dodd." When her letter was delivered, Boswell says that "Johnson read it walking up and down his chamber, and seemed much agitated, after which he said, 'I will do what I can' and certainly he did make extraordinary exertions."

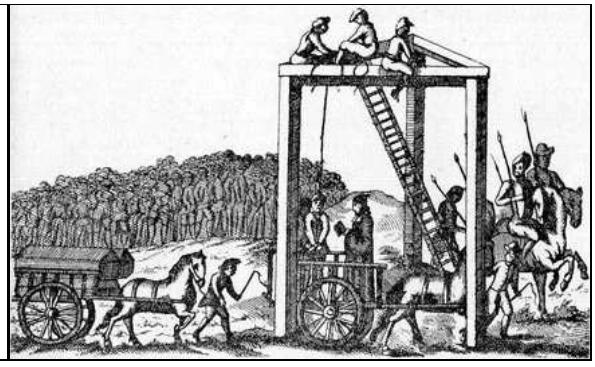
Subsequent exhortations addressed to the King, the Queen and other prominent people of the day, and a petition signed by 23,000 people urging clemency, were all unsuccessful and on 27th June 1777, Dodd was publicly hanged.

The execution took place at Tyburn Tree, the mass gallows at the junction of Oxford Street and Edgware Road in London from the 12th century until 1783, where there were three horizontal beams that could hang eight men at once. It was a most ignominious end for the son of a clergyman and although an attempt was made to revive the corpse afterwards, it was not successful.

Public hangings at that time were a favourite haunt of the resurrection men who supplied surgeons with recently dead bodies for dissection, the practice then being illegal, and Dodd's corpse was delivered to the home of John Hunter, anatomist, collector, surgeon and teacher, who dissected thousands in his search for knowledge, mostly delivered under cover of darkness.

It was a grim trade with body snatchers fighting over the corpses of hanged felons and more than once the victims sprang to life again on the anatomist's slab. When Dodd's body arrived at Hunter's house, the surgeon immediately tried to revive him but he had been dead too long before the surgeon began to pump air into his lungs with a pair of bellows and he could not be brought back to life.

An engraving from circa 1680 showing the permanent gallows at Tyburn which necessitated a three mile cart ride in public from Newgate prison. Huge crowds gathered and followed the accused to Tyburn where the gallows were used from the 16th century until 1759.



Dr Johnson wrote afterwards that Dodd was

". . . a man whom we have seen exulting in popularity, and sunk in shame. For his reputation, which no man can give to himself, those who conferred it are to answer. Of his publick ministry the means of judging were sufficiently attainable. He must be allowed to preach well, whose sermons strike his audience with forcible conviction. Of his life, those who thought it consistent with his doctrine did not originally form false notions. He was at first what he endeavoured to make others; but the world broke down his resolution, and he in time ceased to exemplify his own instructions. Let those who

are tempted to his faults, tremble at his punishment; and those whom he impressed from the pulpit with religious sentiments, endeavour to confirm them, by considering the regret and self-abhorrence with which he reviewed in prison his deviations from rectitude. "

Dodd's life was recorded in several contemporary anonymous memoirs and a biography by P Fitzgerald, published in 1865, A Famous Forgery, being the story of the unfortunate Dr Dodd.

During his time in prison, Dr Dodd began writing poetry in a notebook that has survived although most of his other manuscripts were lost. They were most probably sold when his possessions were auctioned after his death by his creditors who opened and read out items from his private correspondence with his wife for the amusement of the crowd. The notebook was among them but whoever bought it considered it sufficiently important for preservation. The owners since then are unknown but the notebook came up for sale at Sotheby's, the fine art auctioneers, at their salerooms in London in July 2002 when it fetched £14,340, a sum that would ironically have settled all of the unfortunate Dr Dodd's financial problems had it been realised in his day.

One of his poetic works, written in blank verse while he was in Newgate Prison, is an epic of the soul and reveals wonderful powers of reflection and self analysis and it is apparent that during those terrible days of waiting, he had flung aside all pretence and in his suffering, prayed with agony and found peace, assurance and pardon. The thoughts throb with reality. It is the pitiful tragedy of a penitent soul:

Gracious God
How wonderful a compound, mixture strange,
Incongruous, inconsistent, is frail man!
Truly, (to use his own confession) he was one
Who in his little journey through the world
Misled, deluded, oft, mistook his way.

A ledger stone or memorial tablet can be found in the floor at the west end of the Abbey Church to commemorate the burial of the Rev William Dodd who was Vicar of Bourne from 1727 until he died on 6th August 1756, at the age of 54, and of his wife Elizabeth who died on 23rd May 1755, aged 55.

George Pochin
1732-98

The Abbey House

Two families dominated the ownership of land in the Bourne area during the 18th century. The Earl of Exeter was Lord of the Manor of Bourne while George Pochin was Lord of the Manor of Bourne Abbots, although his family did not reside in the town.

George Pochin was born into the landed gentry in 1732 and his family had estates in Leicestershire as well as Lincolnshire and in 1761, he succeeded to the title of Lord of the Manor of Bourne Abbots from his uncle Sir Thomas Trollope. Under the Enclosure Award on 2nd January 1770, he received rather more land than the Earl of Exeter, a total of 876 acres compared with the earl's 831 acres and, like the earl, he too had some old enclosures, in West Field and the Newlands, adjoining his new allotments, while his name also appears as the owner of 36 communable houses and toftsteads.

He is best known for building the Abbey House on the site of a demolished farmstead near the church in 1764 and described in contemporary accounts as "a fine mansion". Ownership passed to the church in a land swap deal in 1849 for use as the vicarage although taken down in 1879 and the materials used in the construction of a new vicarage, now the Cedars retirement and rest home.

George Pochin remained Lord of the Manor for 37 years and when he died in 1798, he was succeeded by his sister Mary Pochin until her death in 1804 when the manorial estates in the town passed to her sister-in-law Eleanor Frances Pochin who was George Pochin's widow. Both are remembered with a marble plaque on the wall of the chancel that records two lives of devotion to public service and Christian charity and the inscription to George Pochin says: "In his public capacity, he was deservedly efficient. A good soldier, faithful, upright and active magistrate of inflexible probity and unwearied attention. His benevolence and uniform integrity gained the respect and love and all who knew him."

There is also a slate headstone over a servant's grave in the churchyard at Bourne, erected in memory of a long-serving family butler who must have been highly valued to have been so remembered. The inscription states: "In memory of James Drew who departed this life June 4th 1816 in the 64th year of his age, 33 years of which he passed as Butler to George Pochin Esq of this town and Eleanor Frances, his widow, who caused this stone to be placed here."

One of the few artefacts remaining in Bourne connected with George Pochin is this date stone for 1783 which was salvaged from the Abbey House stable buildings in Church Walk, later used as a pea factory until demolished in the late 20th century to make way for the block of flats which currently occupies the site. Workmen were about to throw it away when it was spotted by a local councillor, Don Fisher, who rescued it and it is now on display at the Heritage Centre in South Street.

One other thing that we do know about George Pochin is that he liked the occasional tipple, usually a glass or two of good wine. In the grounds of his new house was an Early English blank arcade, probably the south termination of the abbey cloisters, and in the absence of suitable storage facilities he hit upon the perfect solution to keep his bottles at the right temperature. He made a recess in one of these compartments and fitted it with a lock and key to keep it safe were it to be discovered by others.

His secret cellar remained secure for several years but one day, on going for a bottle of this wine to receive a particular friend, to his surprise he found the recess empty, every bottle having been taken away. On the robbery becoming known, the pilferers came forward and acknowledged the offence. They were workmen and while employed in effecting some repairs or alterations to the church, a brick fell from the wall. One of them put his arm into the aperture and brought forth a bottle of wine. It was partaken of by him and his companions and much enjoyed and they at once came to the conclusion that it had been placed there by the monks of the abbey a thousand years before and having made a successful search for more, they took possession of the whole of the hidden treasure and consumed it with some pleasure.

Their fate, unfortunately is unknown, but given the nature of their confession and belief in providence as to the source of their largesse, it is doubtful if any action was taken against them. George Pochin must have sought out another safe place for his wine and perhaps there are many more bottles still intact in a hidden place within the church precincts, having remained undiscovered for more than two centuries after his death.

The church memorial and salvaged date stone

Thomas Rawnsley
1755-1826

The imposing red brick house in South Street on the road into Bourne is so named because the former owner Mr Thomas Rawnsley, a wool stapler of some means and a Deputy Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, raised at his own expense a volunteer cavalry troop among local residents in the late years of the 18th century when Britain was at war with revolutionary France for national defence against a possible invasion threatened by Napoleon. The troop was one of three mounted units known as the Folkingham and Bourne Cavalry, operating within the Bourne and Folkingham Squadron which was raised in June 1794 under the command of Sir Gilbert Heathcote with his son, Captain Robert Heathcote as second in command.

It was the practice of the period for wealthy businessmen to finance military units in times of emergency and as a result of his participation, Rawnsley was gazetted cornet in 1794 and subsequently promoted lieutenant in May 1799. His troop was also known as the Loyal Lincolnshire Light Horse Rangers which was eventually recognised by the War Office as part of its official military strength. By 1803, it consisted of almost 60 officers and men and he had been promoted to captain and appointed both adjutant and paymaster of the Folkingham and Bourne Cavalry and was being paid £146 a year.

Cavalry House is now Grade II listed and is described as early 18th century, of red brick with stone quoins, stone slate roof, two storeys and two dormers, and a central modern "Tudor" door with glazed fanlight.

The volunteers practised military drill regularly on common land in the town and surrounding villages while the emergency lasted but had no chance to display their valour because the invasion never came. In 1808, Rawnsley's service in the cause of national security was recognised when Lady Heathcote presented him with a handsome silver goblet. But by 1816, the unit had been disbanded, along with all other volunteer units which were not revived for more than 30 years.

Rawnsley was a member of a well known Lincolnshire family who settled in the county during the 18th century. He was the great-grandfather of Canon H D Rawnsley, author of Memories of the Tennysons, and of W F Rawnsley, who wrote Highways and Byways in Lincolnshire, and owned land in the town and in Thurlby, the Isle of Ely and Norfolk, but chose to live in Bourne where he married a local girl, Deborah Hardwicke, in 1784. Their fifth son was the Rev Thomas Hardwicke Rawnsley (1789-1861) who became rector of Folkingham, and another of their sons, Charles Rawnsley, a graduate of Emmanuel College, Oxford, died in July 1811 at Futtergurgh in the East Indies while serving as a lieutenant with the 18th Regiment of Native Infantry.

Rawnsley died in 1826, aged 71, and there are memorial tablets in the north arcade of the Abbey Church to him, his wife and six of their children who died in infancy.

Catherine Digby
1773-1836

The Red Hall

The Digby family acquired the Red Hall through marriage. The first owners were Gilbert Fisher and his family who remained in occupation until 1698 when the house was sold first to Richard Dixon and then to Richard Warwick. It subsequently passed into the hands of the Digby family when James Digby (1707-51) married Warwick's daughter and heir, Elizabeth, circa 1730. After James died, his eldest son, John, became tenant and when he died in 1777, ownership passed to his younger brother, James. He achieved some distinction in the county, becoming Deputy Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, clerk to the Turnpike Trust for the south east district of the road between Lincoln Heath and Peterborough and treasurer of the Black Sluice Drainage Commissioners.

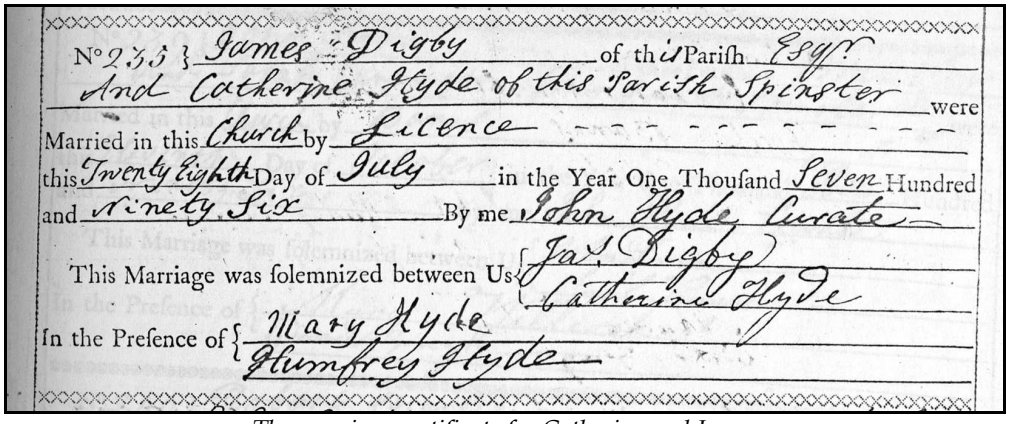
James Digby was twice married, firstly to Mary, daughter of Francis Green, of Dowsby, in 1757 but she died in 1792, and in 1796 when he was 60 years old, he married Catherine, aged 23. She was born at Bourne in May 1773, daughter of the Rev Humphrey Hyde, the Vicar of Bourne and Rector of Dowsby, and his wife Catherine. Three years later, her father built the new vicarage at Brook Lodge and the family moved in during 1776. The couple also had a son, born in July 1767, who became the Rev John Hyde, curate at the Abbey Church and later a minor canon at Peterborough Cathedral, but he died prematurely on 9th February 1803, aged 36.

After their marriage, James brought his young bride who was 37 years his junior to the Red Hall where they seem to have lived in some style and comfort with many servants and a wine cellar stocked with fine wine and port. She also established a magnificent garden around the mansion which attracted much admiration in the locality.

James outlived his two other brothers, George and Richard, and by the time of his death in 1811, he had built up a considerable estate in Bourne and Dyke and a fortune reputed to be around £200,000. There is evidence that he was a man of frugal habits, spending little, and the publication of his will on September 14th that year prompted one newspaper to report that "the penurious manner in which he lived little accorded with

the immense property he has left, which is supposed to be a little short of £200,000" (*The Bristol Mirror*, 17th August 1811). In it, he left the Red Hall and a portion of his lands to his widow and so she was able to retain her home and a comfortable lifestyle with many servants. As a result of his death, Catherine Digby, became one of the longest serving tenants of the Red Hall, remaining in occupation until her death in 1836.

Catherine took over the running of the Red Hall and its associated estates and also played an active part in the life of the Abbey Church where her father remained vicar until his death in 1807 when she was his sole heiress. By this time she had become known throughout the district as Lady Catherine, playing an influential part in the affairs of the town and although she had no right to any official title, she had gathered some prestige as a staunch Anglican, a thoughtful benefactress, both to the general community and to personal acquaintances, and a woman of strong feeling in family matters, and liked to be known as the Lady of the Manor and earning a reputation as a kindly person much given to good works.



N° 233 James Digby of this Parish Esqr.
And Catherine Hyde of this Parish Spinster were
Married in this Church by Licence
this Twenty Eighth Day of July in the Year One Thousand Seven Hundred
and Ninety Six By me John Hyde Curate
This Marriage was solemnized between Us { Jas. Digby / Catherine Hyde
In the Presence of { Mary Hyde / Humfrey Hyde

The marriage certificate for Catherine and James

She died on 29th February 1836, aged 63, and many church officials, including senior bell ringers, were pall bearers for her funeral at the Abbey Church. After her death, the Red Hall and some land passed to her nephew, Philip Pauncefort Duncomb who already owned property inherited from his mother, Mrs Henrietta Pauncefort, who was James Digby's sister. Catherine was not too kindly disposed towards Philip and although she bequeathed him the furniture, plate and linen at the Red Hall, she refused to leave him any other part of her estates "on account of his very illiberal conduct towards me respecting a parcel of land after his mother's death".

There are memorial tablets on the walls of the church to the Digby family who lived at the Red Hall circa 1730-1836. One of the most interesting is dedicated to Catherine who left £500 in trust towards the salary of an organist, the first instrument being installed in the west end gallery in 1830, six years before her death, by John Gray at a cost of £220, and it is therefore a valid assumption that she also financed the installation. This organ gallery was removed in 1870 when a public subscription of £1,200 financed extensions to the north aisle that was widened to provide a vestry and an organ chamber with a newly constructed organ by Gray & Davison.

Bryan Browning
1773-1856

The Town Hall

The architect Bryan Browning is best known as the man who designed Bourne Town Hall that was built in 1821 but he was also a dedicated villager whose family made their mark on Thurlby over a period of at least two centuries.

His father, also Bryan Browning, died in 1803 and is buried in the churchyard at St Firmin's Church. He was a churchwarden and is remembered by an inscription on one of the five bells in the tower, the treble bell 3 that was installed during the late 18th century. This bell has a diameter of 36¾ inches, weighs 8 cwt 91 lbs and the engraving reads: "Bryan Browning, Churchwarden, Edwd. Arnold, Leicester fecit 1790." The inscription on his tombstone reads: "In memory of Bryan Browning who died April 2nd 1803 aged 74 years. Also of Mary his wife who died January 11th 1806 aged 66 years." There are several other members of the Browning family buried in the churchyard but neither his son nor grandson are there.

His son Bryan became an architect of some repute. He worked originally in London from 1819 to 1822 but returned to Lincolnshire and married a local girl, Miss Ruth Snart, in 1826 and practised at Number 16 Broad Street, Stamford, in the early part of the 19th century.

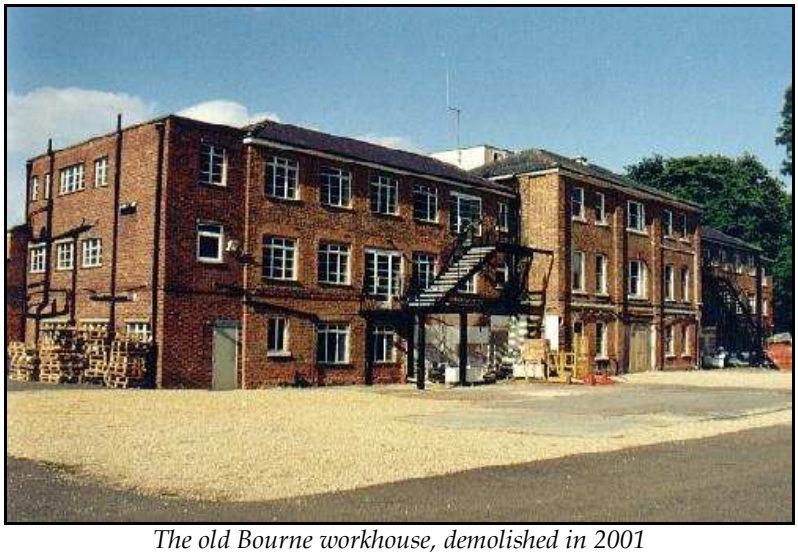
But his reputation was such that he won several prestige commissions, including the design of Bourne Town Hall in 1821, the House of Correction at Folkingham in 1825, the Baptist Chapel in West Street (1835) and the workhouses at Bourne, Spalding and Stamford. He was also responsible for considerable architectural work in Stamford including the layout of the Blackfriars Estate in 1840, the YMCA buildings, the re-modelling of Barn Hill House in 1843 and work on St Mary's Church, Grant's iron foundry and Byard House in St Paul's Street.

In 1840, he was retained by the Marquess of Exeter as architect for the Burghley Estate at a salary of £140 per annum. His son Edward (1816-1882) also trained as an architect and became equally successful, designing the stone bridge erected over the River Welland on the main road into Stamford in 1849, much renovation work on local churches, including Bourne Abbey, the chapels of rest and lodge house in Bourne town cemetery (1854), extensive alterations to the parish church at Uffington in 1866 and the small Victorian apsidal chapel at St Andrew's Church, Sempringham, in 1869. He was also chosen to design the Ostler memorial fountain in 1860 dedicated to a local worthy that once stood in Bourne market place but because of traffic problems was moved in 1962 to the town cemetery where it can still be seen.

But Bourne Town Hall remains Bryan Browning's most important legacy, now a Grade II listed building and the focus of civic activity in the town for almost two centuries. It replaced a small building in the market place that had been in use for many years, for both the petty and quarter sessions, the periodic courts for the dispensation of justice. But by the early 19th century, it had become dilapidated and a site occupied by a house adjoining the Bull Inn, now the Burghley Arms, was chosen for a new town hall.

It was built in 1821 to designs drawn up by Bryan Browning and has been little altered since. He chose an exterior staircase and recessed twin flights of steps within the front of the building that was constructed with Doric columns after the fashion of the Roman baths. The project was financed with money raised through the county rate, from the sale of scrap materials from the previous building on the site and from public subscription, which raised just under £1,400.

Its role over almost two centuries as a magistrates' court until phased out in 2008 but the building remains the centre of civic administration for the town, as the offices of Bourne Town Council and South Kesteven District Council although its future use is currently under review.



The old Bourne workhouse, demolished in 2001

William Bampton
1787-1838

The Baptist Church at Bourne

The command given by Jesus to his disciples to preach the gospel throughout the world has been carried out by Christians in every age and this was responsible for the rapid spread of the faith during the first centuries. Few countries since have escaped the attention of zealous religious organisations anxious to convert an unbelieving population and during the 19th century, the target of many was India where the Hindu were regarded as heathen.

The Baptists have a fine missionary association and a number of colleges for the training of young men for the ministry. During the past two centuries, they had members in every part of the world in which white men were found. One of the early pioneers in this work came from Bourne and he is remembered today in the annals of the Baptist Church. His name was William Bampton and the official history remembers him in these words: "Thanks be to God for people like William Bampton who faced, and still face, the dangers and hard work of the mission field. We remember this young man who first learned about how to love Jesus from his parents and who worshipped at our first meeting house."

William Bampton was born in the town in 1787 and attended the Baptist Church with his parents during the ministry of the Rev Joseph Binns who was pastor from 1796 to 1834. When he was thirteen, William went to work at Boston where he joined the local Baptist church and after a few months, decided that his life was in the ministry and in 1814 he moved to Gosberton, near Spalding, to look after, rather than take over, the village chapel. Apart from his official duties, William was studying hard and four years later he was appointed minister of the Baptist Church at Great Yarmouth. By now, he was intent on becoming a missionary and in 1820, his offer to serve in India was accepted. "This afternoon, I have solemnly devoted myself to the service of God among the heathen", he wrote in his diary.

The Particular Baptist Missionary Society had been established in 1792 by William Carey, a Northamptonshire shoemaker who joined the Baptists in 1783 and devoted himself to evangelism and preaching. His work spread to India, China, Africa and the West Indies and included a considerable impetus towards the abolition of slavery. Gifted in languages, he sailed for India in 1793 where he visited 200 villages and by 1809, had translated the entire bible into Bengali. His initiative was followed in 1816 by the formation of the General Baptist Missionary Society and the two organisations later merged in 1891.

William Bampton offered himself to the Baptist Missionary Society and went to study at the Wisbech Academy, subsequently moving to London for instruction in medicine and surgery, vital training for the missionaries of the time. By 1821, he had married and on May 15th that year, he was ordained at Loughborough in Leicestershire when the General Baptist Missionary Society reported: "The meeting was one of a highly interesting and solemn description. Crowds of friends flocked from the neighbouring churches and some persons from a distance of thirty or forty miles. The chapel filled to excess and was unable to receive all who sought admittance and as numbers were deprived of the pleasure which those enjoyed whom were happy enough to gain a place within its walls. The services were deeply impressive. Mr Bampton, with an unusual degree of firmness and with much propriety, replied to the questions proposed respecting his motives and principles. The people in the congregation were then asked if they would pledge themselves to support the mission and pray for the missionaries, and requested if they gave that pledge, to express it by holding up their hands. Such a show of hands was instantly presented as had not been seen before. Never were so many raised at once before in our connection; and hand and heart seemed to go together."

A minister who preached at the service was William Ward who had himself been working at Serampore in West Bengal and had been the first missionary to return to England from the sub-continent. But he was also destined to return and it was he who accompanied William Bampton and his wife on their voyage to India. They sailed in February 1822, accompanied by another missionary, James Peggs, who had been ordained at Wisbech about the same time, and both had been challenged and inspired by what they had read of Carey's activities in India. The two young men were the very first missionaries to be sent abroad by the General Baptist Missionary Society who described these events as "a new thing in our land".

The voyage to Bombay lasted five months and when the party eventually reached Serampore, the two men consulted with missionaries already working there as to which was the best area for them to undertake their ministry and it was agreed that they go to Orissa where William Bampton began his work late in 1822. He learned the language, went into the bazaars, dressed in Indian costume and spoke to the people, telling them the story of Christianity, of the life and work of Jesus and of the message of God's love for each one of them. But his mission did not last long. The hard work and unhealthy conditions took their toll and he died in 1830. His wife returned to England the following year. Wood's History of the Baptists says: "So far as earnest, faithful, persevering labours for the salvation of the Hindu can render a man worthy of esteem and admiration, William Bampton ranks with the foremost Christian philanthropists and deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance." Peggs subsequently returned safely to England and became minister of the Bourne Baptist Church, serving there from 1834 until 1841 during the period that the present chapel in West Street was being erected.

The Rev Joseph Dodsworth
1797-1877

The Abbey Church

Apart from ministering to the parish of Bourne for 55 years, Joseph Dodsworth is best remembered for his part in bringing the town into the national railway network during the mid-19th century. In August 1857, he was one of the main sponsors of a scheme to connect Bourne with the main line at Essendine, a project similar to that which had already been completed at Stamford, the others behind the project being General William Johnson, a retired army officer, Edward Hardwicke and John Compton Lawrance of Dunsby, who became the first directors of the Bourne and Essendine Railway Company.

The building of the line took more than two years and as the project was nearing completion in 1860, the vicar, accompanied by his wife and daughter, made the first trip, travelling from the station at Bourne to Essendine and back upon the tender of the engine. Dodsworth was obviously an adventurous soul and the *Stamford Mercury* reported: "The whole journey is said to have been performed in first-rate style, some part of it at the rate of 40 miles per hour, and without any casualty. The line is now nearly finished, except the levelling of the station yards, and it is expected that it will be ready for goods and coal traffic in the course of three weeks or a month."

Joseph Dodsworth was born on 26th December 1797 and educated at Oxford University, obtaining his MA degree at Lincoln College and moving to Bourne as curate in February 1822. He also found himself master of the grammar school nearby which was then teaching Latin to twenty boys from the parish free of charge under the terms of the William Trollope bequest although other subjects were also on the curriculum for a quarterly fee. In addition to his payment for these duties, Dodsworth was also given the free use of a garden attached to the school.

The vicar at that time was the Rev Thomas Denys, who had been in office since 1807, and when he died in 1842, Dodsworth succeeded him and took over the old Vicarage House at what is now Brook Lodge, although the church subsequently acquired the Abbey House for use as a vicarage. The living was a good one and in 1876, apart from

his residence, was valued at £650 a year, which is £29,000 at today's values, an income that had enabled him to speculate in the railway company although he had already acquired a taste for business as one of the original investors in the Bourne Gas Light and Coke Company, formed in 1840 to provide a gas supply for Bourne, when he was appointed one of the original five trustees.

Dodsworth was also one of the most enthusiastic supporters of penny readings, a popular form of entertainment during the 19th century before the days of television and the cinema, and for several years he arranged an entire series during the winter evenings at the National School that he had helped to found in North Street. These events consisted of readings from popular books of the period and usually included vocal and instrumental music, performed by local people, and the schoolroom was invariably crowded with an appreciative audience.

As well as giving devoted service to the Abbey Church, Dodsworth also spent much of his time on public work, particularly in the field of education which was his main preoccupation, believing that it should be available to all children and not just to those who could afford to attend the grammar school. The establishment of elementary schools however was left entirely to voluntary bodies and in 1829-30, while still a curate, he was the main inspiration behind the opening of the National School in North Street, helping to raise the necessary finance through subscriptions from wealthy benefactors and various fund-raising activities, including an annual ball at the Town Hall to maintain the flow of funds, and he was also one of the principal guests at the stone-laying ceremony.

He was also concerned about correct speech and manners and was an active member of the Bourne Elocution Society whose members gave regular performances of "popular entertainment" to further this cause, with programmes of songs, recitations and drama, that were always well received and usually in aid of charity. One such gathering was held in the Assembly Rooms at the Angel Hotel in 1870 when the proceeds from the evening went towards the cost of a new organ being installed in the Abbey Church.

During his time as vicar, he was also generous in his personal gifts to the church, donating the stone and marble reredos in 1866 while the east window of stained glass given in the same year commemorates members of his family and the centre panel was installed in his memory. During 1986, the stained glass and stone surround underwent major restoration and repair at a cost of £13,000 which was donated by parishioners through various fund raising events, public donations and grants.

Dodsworth died at the Abbey House on Wednesday 9th May 1877 at the age of 79 after a long and painful illness, although his dedication to public service was such that he was attending meetings of the various organisations to which be belonged until a few days before he died. He had been vicar for 35 years and so, with his curacy, his service to the church at Bourne totalled 55 years. Buried with him are his second wife Ellen, who died on 31st March 1876 at the age of 64, his son, the Rev H J Dodsworth who was Rector of Ingoldmells in Lincolnshire, who died on 25th September 1864 at the age of 40. A third person in the grave is Brownlow Toller Westmoreland Esquire who died on 16th May 1863 at the age of 68 and who is assumed to be Ellen's brother. His first wife Hannah, who died on 28th December 1830, is buried inside the church and an inscribed flagstone, or ledger stone, marks her grave in the nave and that of his brother, the Rev Edmund Dodsworth, who died on 17th July 1813, aged 44.

Jane Redmile

1800-1883

Few people approach the state of grace we have come to know as saintliness and perhaps only one person in the history of Bourne is so remembered. She was Jane Redmile, daughter of a yeoman farmer from Dyke, whose unyielding faith, selfless service and sense of charity singled her out as a special person in her lifetime and her memory shines undimmed today as an example of the perfect life.

In the closing years of the 19th century, her name conjured up the quaint figure in homely garb, often seen on errands of mercy or attending the church she loved so well and which she had served for 65 years, a stooping form because she lived to be old and bent and grey but it had been a life spent in all things good and true. "She could neither strive nor cry", wrote her biographer Benjamin Wyles, "but the unobtrusive, gentle influence of her life was potent for good."

Jane was born at Dyke on 10th May 1800 in the stone cottage that still stands overlooking the village green. Her father, William Redmile (born 1772), had moved there from Ryhall, near Stamford, after marrying a local girl, Ann Campin (born at Bourne in 1776). They had six children, Jane being the eldest to Campain (sic), John, Mary Ann, Elizabeth and Harriet. In November 1817, tragedy struck the family when her father was badly hurt in an accident while blasting for a new well on the farm. He survived his injuries after being nursed by Ann for fourteen weeks but lost his sight and so the breadwinner had been struck down at a time when a vexatious lawsuit threatened the future of their home. Jane, then only 17, took over the responsibilities for home and family, looking after her five brothers and sisters, while her mother opened a shop to raise sufficient money for their needs.

Every avenue to earn a penny was explored, selling sugar at one penny a portion while living themselves on dry bread and Jane even took in additional home employment known as down work, plucking geese for the fine feathers to make quilts, exacting work by candlelight so repetitive that she often fell asleep but dreamed of the task in hand and woke to find that her work of past hours had been plucked to pieces. Eventually, she was forced to abandon this labour for fear of fire if the candle wax burned too low.

Jane's teenage youth was passed in continual labour yet she found time to attend the Baptist Church at Bourne, walking the two miles there and back twice on Sundays for school and service. Meanwhile, the other children were growing up and beginning to leave home and so Jane opened a grocery shop in Eastgate, Bourne, where she soon became known among the neighbours for her charity and goodwill. Most lived in unsanitary conditions and drunkenness was rife but Jane spread the gospel of cleanliness and temperance and then decided that education would also be a benefit. She

added a small circulating library to the business and tried her hand at composition and, still fired by her religious fervour, set herself the task of learning Greek and Hebrew in order that she could read the bible in the languages in which it was originally written. Soon, her reputation spread and both clergy and laymen with widely divergent views sought her company for discussion and debate, always conducted with patience and tolerance and her personal humility could only leave others with a deep feeling of love and respect.

During this period, Jane had been saving money with one purpose in mind, that of opening a Baptist chapel at Morton, two miles north of Dyke. She felt that the village was enclosed in a moral and spiritual darkness and although services had been held in the homes of various non-conformist believers, they had been vigorously opposed by the parson, the Rev Thomas Holdsworth, and the squire, William Parker, who controlled most of the land and properties. But Jane had bided her time until she heard of a cottage for sale and bought it for use as a chapel and soon services, prayer meetings and a Sunday School were being held there regularly.

Jane had resisted attempts by the squire to purchase the cottage and thwart her scheme but as time went by, he began to see the fruits of her labour in improving the morals of the village and withdrew his opposition. But the small chapel soon became inadequate and land was offered by John Gibson, a corn merchant from Bourne, for a new one that was opened on Sunday 21st June 1846 after Jane had taken on the burden of raising most of the money herself. The old chapel, lighted by dripping candles, continued in use until April 1876 when a more commodious building with schoolrooms was opened and this building continues in use today.

By now, Jane needed to spend more time at home to care for her ailing parents, one blind the other weak, and so she turned her attention to Dyke. She had already established a school in the village at her own cost and in 1843, a building was completed and this continued in service for 27 years but was eventually demolished because it lay on the route of the new Bourne to Sleaford railway line. Then in 1861, she bought a small property for Sunday School meetings that were held until the present Baptist Chapel was opened in 1879 and is still in use.

She was now comfortably situated, the owner of 61 acres of land at Dyke that was rented out and brought in a modest income, as well as the proceeds from the shop in Eastgate. After the death of her parents, her mother having died on 18th January 1846 and her father on 5th September 1858, Jane lived for a while with her nephew William Garner at his home in Dyke and then retired from business and left the village for Bourne, living alone at a small house in Church Street for several years, busy with her reading and bible study, her patchwork and sewing, visited by many friends and still doing good works, quietly and unobtrusively, paying pressing debts for others, sending parcels of necessities to needy people and always ready with a word of sympathy or compassion for those bereaved or distressed by the ills of the world. Yet she still had the time and mental energy to ponder on questions of faith, meeting regularly with theologians, scholars and writers on Sunday afternoons. But her health began to decline and she suffered spasms and fainting fits and with some reluctance, in 1880 was persuaded to go and live with her sister Elizabeth who had married a Bourne merchant, William Wyles, at their home in Elm Terrace. She resisted the idea of losing her independence for some weeks but finally succumbed and went quietly, knowing there was no sensible alternative. She was now an old woman who needed care and attention although no

invalid and her faculties were in full vigour, still attending religious services and prayer meetings and maintaining an active interest in the Sunday School where she continued teaching as long as her strength allowed. On her way home, Aunt Jane, as she had now become known, would be followed by a number of young people wanting to speak with her and although far removed by reason of age, she felt sufficiently young in heart to be one of them.

On Saturday 16th June 1883, the day before she died, there was a characteristic incident at the Baptist Church where she had offered a bible as the prize to the scholar completing the best set of texts on the subject of baptism. Jane was so satisfied with the work submitted that she decided each should have a bible and the books were distributed as she lay dying. Her declining physical condition, complicated by a severe cold that threatened bronchitis, finally took its toll although she had already anticipated the end and had settled her affairs, giving instructions to relatives about her estate. After breakfast on Sunday, she had her will read over again and signed it then had a period of reading and conversation, her mind as active as ever. She retired to rest but suffered a new attack and went into a coma and in the afternoon, the pulse fluttered, hesitated, stopped and all was over. The cause of death was certified as senile decay and that a small clot of coagulated blood lodged in the brain due the exhausted state of the heart. Today, this would be known as a stroke.

The minister at the Bourne Baptist Church, the Rev William Orton, later wrote these lines which stand as her epitaph: "The gentleness and refinement of her character were shown in courtesy to all, in esteem for the poorest, in her recognition of the use of the lowest, both in human life and material things. Nothing was high enough for pride, or low enough for contempt. Outwardly, her life taught that true dignity is irrespective of rank or fortune, that with care and thrift, the lowest may rise, that adverse circumstances may be controlled, that it is in the power of all to inform themselves for the benefit of others. Seeing her virtues, knowing that the same sources of strength are open to all, those who honour her piety may follow her and, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

The funeral was on Thursday 21st June and afterwards Jane was buried in the town cemetery. The Redmiles have become part of the history of Dyke village although there is no one with that name living there today. Life was hard during the latter years of the 19th century and many emigrated seeking new opportunities, to Australia, Canada and the United States, and descendents are now numerous. Jane is remembered in Dyke by a new housing development called Redmile Close, completed in November 2000, while on the other side of the Atlantic, a proud family tradition continues.


The chapels at Morton and Dyke

James Goodyear
1810-1871

The toll bar in North Road in 1880

One of the unluckiest men in the history of Bourne must have been James Goodyear, born in 1810 in humble circumstances who began his working life in a menial position but rose to become one of the most influential farmers in the district. But although blessed with prosperity, his life appears to have been a series of misfortunes and three incidents in his life are well recorded to illustrate the old adage that money is not everything.

The year 1858 was particularly marked by ill luck because that autumn, he lost several valuable animals on his farm at Cawthorpe when eight cart horses and a stallion were poisoned. The incident occurred on Sunday 10th October when he instructed a servant boy to fetch some hinder-ends of barley [withered or waste grain for stock feed] out of the granary to mix with the chaff to feed the horses. The boy, not readily finding the barley, looked into an old bean mill where there was a quantity of seed barley which had been dressed with dry mercury and had been left over from last season. He took this to the horses with the resulting tragedy and by the following Wednesday, four were dead and two not expected to recover.

A few weeks later, on Monday 15th November, Goodyear sent two lads on an errand with a horse and cart from Bourne to Cawthorpe. The boys, William Stevenson, aged 11, and his eight-year-old brother George, were the sons of Richard Stevenson, a tailor, of Star Lane (now Abbey Road). When they reached the toll bar in North Road, situated at what is now the junction with Mill Drove, the horse took fright and bolted. George was riding on the shafts, a common practice at the time, and was thrown to the ground and when Henry Bullock, of Dyke, arrived to help, he was quite dead. William, who was riding on the horse, managed to stay on and keep hold until the animal halted near the spinney at Cawthorpe where he too was thrown off and seriously injured. Medical assistance was given but he remained in a precarious state for several days.

An inquest on George Stevenson was held at the Nag's Head on Tuesday 16th November, when the coroner, William Edwards, recorded a verdict of accidental death and the medical evidence produced the extraordinary although irrelevant information that when he was three years old, the boy had swallowed a halfpenny which never passed through him. The consequences to Mr Goodyear of the accident with the horse and cart are not known but as one lad was killed and another seriously hurt, he must have made some form of compensation to the family.

Goodyear himself died in tragic circumstances on Friday 28th July 1871 at the age of 62 after being gored by one of his own bulls at his farm premises in Star Lane. The previous Monday, Mr Edward Smith, a castrator, of Thurlby, was called to operate on the bull and Goodyear went into the pen alone but the bull broke loose from its fastenings, snapping a chain attached to a manger that gave way. There was a ring in the animal's nose but it was not secured at this time and it was supposed that Goodyear was about to attach a staff to the ring to lead the bull out of the pen when it charged, pinning him to the door post, its horns around him and its head pressing heavily against his body. The bull then pushed him out into the farmyard and thrust its head against him again but Mr Smith grabbed a hayfork and held it at bay while Goodyear managed to crawl away. The bull was then safely tethered until the arrival of Quartermaster-Sergeant Harrison from the Bourne Rifle Corps who despatched the animal with one shot through the forehead with his rifle.

An inquest was held at the Windmill Inn [in North Street] the following day before Mr William Edwards, coroner. Mr Frederick John Glencross, a surgeon from Brook Lodge, Bourne, said that he had been called to the farm immediately after the accident and had tended Goodyear until the time of his death. There were several contusions on the abdomen, chest and back, a small scalp wound and a slight contusion of the left arm but no fracture. The immediate cause of death was the bruising of the intestines and peritoneum, with exhaustion. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death.

The funeral was held a few days later and the shops and business premises in Bourne were closed and the blinds drawn as a mark of respect and of sympathy with his family and friends as the cortege passed on the way to the town cemetery where he was interred. The Stamford Mercury reported on 4th August 1871: "By his integrity, industry and economy, he had risen from being a farm servant to comparative influence, taking a very active part in establishing the important ploughing meeting now held annually at Bourne."

Henry Goodyear, his son, who inherited the farming business, suffered a similar mishap 25 years later but survived. On Saturday 21st November 1896, he was moving a three-year-old bull to a fresh shed on his farm in the Austerby when the nose ring at the end of the securing chain fell out and the animal got loose and pinned Goodyear between its horns against the metal frame of the manger. He struggled to get underneath the manger but the bull attacked him again and gored him badly, and then tossed him over its back. A farm labourer, Benjamin Rogers, ran to help and after squeezing himself between the bull and the wall, attacked it with a pitchfork until it ran bellowing from the shed. Mr Goodyear was taken into the house with serious lacerations to his body in several places, one of which exposed a main artery. Dr George Blasson was called and treated his injuries from which he eventually recovered. At the annual dinner of the Bourne Fat Stock Society the following month, a collection of £1 3s. [£75 at today's value] was made for Rogers in recognition of his bravery in risking his life to save Mr Goodyear.

Henry Bott
1810-1888

The Angel Hotel

The longest serving landlord of the Angel Hotel in Bourne was Henry Bott who presided as mine host for 50 years in the middle part of the 19th century during which time he became one of the town's most highly respected and influential persons.

He was born at the Angel Hotel on 15th October 1810 when it was owned by his father, also Henry Bott, and when he died in 1838, his son succeeded as landlord. Mr Bott senior had bought the Angel at auction in 1807 when it was a quaint old stone building, an ancient hostelry then used as a posting house at which the Perseverance stage coach plying between Hull and London stopped regularly. Under the patronage of father and later his son, the Angel evolved as an important market town hotel and during this period, the foundations of the business that we know today were laid. Bott junior was untiring in his endeavours for the business and for the town and both prospered as a result of his association with them.

In 1852, he married Hannah Howell Harrison at Boston in Lincolnshire and they had five children, Henry (1853), Arthur (1855), Elizabeth Baily (1857), Herbert (1859) and Edmund (1863). His interests were diverse and the various census returns between 1841 and 1881 list him variously as a hotel owner, innkeeper and maltster making his own beer, as well as being a farmer with 270 acres of land, employing five men and three boys, a housekeeper, a boot man, cook, waitress and barmaid. In 1856, he became a director of the newly formed Bourne and Essendine Railway Company and he was also prominent in civic life and was for a time chairman of the Vestry Meeting that administered local affairs, the forerunner of the local councils that were introduced in the late 19th century. He took a prominent part in all local affairs and was always at the forefront of any enterprise that concerned the welfare of the town.

His main social interest was as a freemason and he was instrumental in the formation of the present Hereward Lodge (No 1232) that now has its own headquarters building in Wherry's Lane. There was no permanent meeting place at that time and Mr Bott arranged for a room at the Angel Hotel to be set aside for that purpose. But perhaps his

most lasting legacy to the town was the introduction of street lighting. He was, in conjunction with William Wherry senior, one of the original promoters of the Bourne Gas Light and Coke Company in 1840 which built the town's gas works and soon, coal gas was not only being used for heating and lighting in homes, shops and business premises, but also for street lighting. This was in the main due to the insistence of Henry Bott who wanted to see the streets safe and well lit at night for the benefit of townspeople. The movement for the introduction of gas lighting in the town centre met with considerable and influential opposition but Bott's resolute perseverance triumphed over all obstacles and by 1885 there were 56 public gas lamps at various points around the town which had never previously been lighted at night. Kelly's Directory of Lincolnshire reported: "The town consists principally of four streets diverting from the Market Place, all remarkably clean and lighted with gas."

Henry Bott was not merely a committee man because he also served for 25 years as the town's gas inspector. He was also deeply religious and a regular worshipper at Bourne Abbey where he officiated as the parish churchwarden. It was in this capacity that he was mainly responsible for the alterations to the Abbey Church which were carried out in 1870 and involved moving the organ gallery and extensions to the north aisle at a total cost of £1,200, financed by public subscription. The work was already being planned by Mr Bott and the church architects, together with a committee of 21 parishioners, when he was re-elected parish churchwarden for the fifth successive year at the Easter vestry meeting on Monday 13th April 1868 and tributes were paid to his diligence and perseverance, particularly in regard to the project in hand.

Henry Bott died at the hotel on 7th July 1888 at the age of 77. The entire town mourned his passing and shops and businesses closed while his funeral was taking place. After a service at the Abbey Church, principal tradesmen and fellow members of the Hereward Lodge of Freemasons joined the imposing funeral cortege as it moved down South Street on its way to the cemetery where he was buried in a graveside ceremony and his body now lies under a grand marble cross mounted on a triple plinth. Buried with him are his sister Sarah Bott (12th January 1801-7th July 1861), his wife Hannah Howell Bott (25th March 1833-13th June 1885) and a son Edmund Samuel Bott (15th September 1863-10th March 1867).

After Henry Bott's death, ownership of the Angel Hotel passed to his son, Arthur who died in 1899 at the young age of 44 and is buried in the cemetery alongside his father. None of Henry Bott's other family had followed the licensed trade, his eldest son for instance, also called Henry, had become a doctor at Brentford, qualifying in 1872 and later joining the volunteers as a subaltern and went on to command the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, the Duke of Cambridge's Own Middlesex Regiment, from 1898 until 1903 when he retired with permission to wear the uniform of the battalion and in 1900 was granted the honorary rank of colonel. His third son, Herbert Bott MA, took holy orders, being ordained on 20th December 1885 by the Bishop of Newcastle and then became a curate at South Shields and Vicar of St Aidan's Church, Newcastle, but died aboard ship during a voyage to South America in 1913 and was buried at sea. Elizabeth Baily Bott married Robert Leonard Wherry, landlord of the Red Lion, Bourne, in 1884 and they had two children, Audrey (1886) and Helen (1887).

Although there are many descendents in the south of England, there are no surviving members of the Bott family living in Bourne today.

John Lely Ostler
1811-59

The Ostler memorial in the town cemetery

The ornamental drinking fountain that stood in the market place at Bourne for a hundred years was moved to a safe location in the town cemetery after being threatened by modern traffic flows. It was designed by Edward Browning and erected in 1860 as a memorial to one of the town's 19th century worthies, property owner John Lely Ostler, who had died the previous year, and paid for by public subscription and although his connection with the town was only a brief one, he must have been a man of some consequence to deserve such public recognition.

John Ostler was born in 1811 of a distinguished family from Grantham who claimed as an ancestor Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), the Dutch artist who came to England as a young man in his twenties and became a celebrated portrait painter in the courts of Charles I and Charles II. Lely bought property near Lincoln where his son John Lely settled, and he was subsequently remembered for his charitable and educational work. Many of his descendants became lawyers who also distinguished themselves with their own contribution to local affairs and Ostler's father William (1770-1853) was for many years the Town Clerk at Grantham.

John attended the grammar school for seven years before finishing his education at Oakham School in Rutland and on leaving, became a partner in his father's law firm. In 1849, he joined the town council and was elected mayor in 1851 and again in 1858 when he officiated at the unveiling of the statue to Isaac Newton that can still be seen near the town centre and was also one of the prime movers in the preparation of St Peter's Hill, a major town improvement scheme of the time, contributing his mayoral stipend towards the cost. He became a magistrate in 1855 and was a leading worker for charity, supporting many benevolent causes and acting as secretary to several religious societies including the Irish Church Missions to the Roman Catholics, the Foreign and British Bible Society and the Pastoral Aid Society. Ostler was also a major contributor to the various subscription lists launched to promote the welfare of the poorer classes.

He moved to Cawthorpe with his wife Laura (1785-1864) only a short time before his death and his name can be found in the records of the Manor of Bourne in 1854 in connection with the purchase of Cawthorpe House, which he and his widowed mother, Mrs Lydia Ann Ostler (died 1869), were buying from John Hurn Dove. Between then and his death in 1859, he became one of the biggest land and property owners in Bourne.

By 1856, he was a very rich man and White's Directory of Lincolnshire records that he had obtained possession of several properties, paying a total of £2,200 for his acquisitions. They included the site of the old coal yard, granary and sheds in Eastgate near the Fen Bridge which Ostler converted into a fellmonger's yard, dealing in skins and hides, and also the Maltings in West Street which had recently been enlarged by the addition of a foreman's dwelling house, together with the newly erected wine and spirit vaults and chambers, counting house, bottle house, timber sheds, saw pits and other buildings. He was also a dedicated Christian and while serving as a director and a principal shareholder of the Bourne and Essendine Railway Company he made himself responsible for looking after the moral welfare of the labourers employed on building the line by arranging for preachers to speak to them at meetings in the town and at the camps where they lived.

At his death, Ostler also left some cottages in Bourne and Dyke together with land at Dyke and Dyke Fen. These properties were bequeathed to his son who, after studying at Magdalen College, Oxford, was known to be working at the Audit Office at Somerset House in London in 1865. The direct connection of the Ostlers with Bourne was therefore a very short one and yet sufficient money was raised within a year to finance this very elaborate edifice to perpetuate his memory to a much greater degree than many others who had a far more important claim to local renown. He did achieve a reputation for his charitable acts and philanthropy, the building of a school at Dyke in 1854, the donation of land for the Eastgate school in 1856 when his daughter, Miss L Ostler, laid the foundation stone, and the provision of a site for the Bourne Waterworks Company.

John Ostler died on Monday 27th June 1859 at the age of 48. The first sign that he was ill came in a letter he sent to the Bourne auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, an organisation in which he took a deep personal interest, saying that he would be unable to take the chair at their meeting due to be held in the Town Hall that evening, Friday 10th June, although he had presided at a similar meeting in the Guildhall at Grantham two weeks before.

Announcing his death, the Grantham Journal remembered his charity in these words: "Few persons have enjoyed the praises of his neighbours and fellow townsmen for the benevolent purity of his motives more than the deceased. All parties regarded the excellencies of his character with respect; and many a tear was shed by the poor and afflicted on his departure from Grantham to his new residence at Cawthorpe House, near Bourne. His record is on high and his memory will be cherished with affection and regard, not only by the more immediate circle of his intimate friends, but by all those who have witnessed his godly simplicity and sincerity of purpose, and admired his deeds of charity and Christian love."

Thomas Hinson
1816-1902

Many of the tombstone in the town cemetery and those in the surrounding villages are the work of Thomas Hinson, a master builder and monumental stone mason who worked in Bourne during the 19th century. His ancestors had moved to the town from Crowland and the business was passed down through the family, from his great grandfather Robert (1730-1762) to his grandfather John (1758-1811) and then to his father John (1787-1843). Thomas was born in 1816 and when he inherited the business it was operating from a yard in Abbey Road, Bourne.

Apart from the tombstones, the family firm carried out a great deal of work on the stonework of Grimsthorpe Castle over the years. The Hinsons may also have been the builders of the Wesleyan Chapel in Star Lane in 1841 which the family actively supported for many years. This building is now the Methodist Chapel while the thoroughfare is known as Abbey Road.

By 1856, Thomas Hinson and his brother Charles were operating from premises in West Street as contractors, builders and stonemasons. The firm's prosperity was greatly increased by the opening of Bourne cemetery in 1855 and many of the memorials there were made by Hinson's and are marked accordingly. One of their most prestigious gravestones in the cemetery is that of one of the town's Victorian benefactors John Lely Ostler who died in 1859 and the base slab is signed with the firm's name.

Thomas was one of five children and he married Olivia Chapman of Bolingbroke, Lincolnshire, in 1838 and they went to live in West Street, Bourne. They had fourteen children and all but one were baptised at the Weslyan Chapel. All of the brothers were associated with the building industry and worked as masons, bricklayers, joiners, carpenters, plumbers and glaziers. Increased railway travel during the mid-19th century brought work opportunities in other towns and the sons left Bourne to seek employment in the Midlands, the North and in London, with the exception of Thomas, who worked as a builder, and Jabez, a carpenter. Thomas' younger brother Charles (1818-1905), for instance, who was also a master mason, moved to Stamford where he too ran a building business until his death.

By 1851, Thomas was living at the Austerby with his wife and six of their children aged between two months and nine years, and his nephew Frederick, from Ketton, Rutland, who was learning the business. In 1877, Thomas Hinson bought a piece of land in Eastgate from the Marquess of Exeter's Trust and built the property now known as No 6

Eastgate as a home for his son Thomas. A plaque containing a small sculpture of a lion's face and the date 1877 can be seen built into the upper section of the side wall. Rows of three rose emblems have been sculpted into the stone lintels above the front door and the windows of the upstairs rooms and there is also a cross engraved into the stone sill of the right hand bedroom window. These small sculptures indicate that Hinson's built the house and spare stone from the mason's yard was used as materials rather than waste them.

Thomas's wife Olivia died in 1882, aged 62, and eight years later, in 1890, Thomas went to Grimsby to live with his two sons Michael and Walter who had moved there some years before. He married again at Grimsby in 1894 when he was 78 and died there in 1902 at the age of 86.

His son Thomas continued to use the premises at No 6 Eastgate as a builder's yard while part of the house became a bread, cake and grocery shop run by his wife Mary Ann. A photograph exists of the property in 1907 when it consisted of two semi-detached homes with both front doors in the middle. On either side of them were the front windows of the two houses, the one on the right being a bay window with a low brick wall and iron railings at the front which indicates a private home, while that on the left was open to the pavement and the window flush against the wall which was used a display for the shop premises.

Thomas died on Saturday 9th August 1924 at the age of 79 after being in business as a builder for 40 years. He had retired fifteen years before but returned to work to assist in the building trade during the Great War of 1914-18. His death came after a long illness and he was confined to his bed for the final two weeks. The funeral took place at Bourne cemetery where he is buried. After his death, his wife continued running the shop which also sold sweets and was a favourite call for local children with a few pennies to spare. It continued in business until the mid-1950s when it was being run by their son Walter and his wife. Thomas also had a daughter who lived with Walter, Jessie Elizabeth Hinson, who worked as a dressmaker but never married and continued to run the shop after Walter and his wife died. She herself died in December 1959 at St George's Hospital, Stamford, and is the last known Hinson to have lived in Bourne.

No 6 Eastgate, now a private house

Robert Mason Mills
1819-1904

One of the most important industries to be developed in Bourne during the 19th century that became known throughout the world was the extraction and distribution of pure water from its underground springs and the man responsible for this endeavour was R M Mills.

Robert Mason Mills was born at Hackney in Middlesex on 2nd April 1819, the son of a solicitor, but decided on a career in pharmacy rather than law, and when his father died while he was still in his teens, he became apprenticed to an apothecary at Shoreham in Sussex. Anxious to improve his prospects, he moved to Bourne in 1842 to take over the management of a chemist's shop at No 1 West Street that was owned by Mr Frank Daniel who had founded the business in 1815, the year of the Battle of Waterloo. Mr Daniel had been in failing health and when he died three years later, his widow sold out to the new manager. In the same year, Robert married Miss Fanny Hodgkin, aged 22, daughter of Mr Henry Hodgkin, a prominent agriculturalist from Edenham, and they moved in to live in the rooms above the shop.

The business prospered under his ownership and soon he combined it with that of seed merchant but the real success began in 1864 when he began to manufacture aerated water under the name of Mills and Co., the Original Bourne Waters, a project that was to bring a new prosperity to himself and to the town. By 1878, the water had achieved a nationwide reputation and in that year, he brought in Thomas Moore Baxter, a young chemist from Wisbech but who had been working in Brighton and had struck up a romantic attachment with his 22-year-old daughter Emily. Mr Mills decided to concentrate on the water side of the business while Baxter ran the shop and subsequently married Emily.

The manufacture and supply of aerated water was the first venture of its kind in this part of South Lincolnshire and his products were soon acclaimed world wide. During the Egyptian campaign of 1882 for instance, a large quantity of his mineral waters was sent out for British soldiers and the firm was later awarded a Royal Warrant for supplying Queen Victoria's son, the Duke of Connaught. Supplies of soda water and ginger beer were sent in wooden cases by rail to hotels and country houses where the drinking water from wells was not always of a good quality. There was also a brisk trade in the hunting shires of Lincolnshire, Rutland and Leicestershire, where wealthy members of the Belvoir, Quorn and Cottesmore Hunts had their hunting boxes during the winter months. Soft drinks also became popular during the summer with passengers

taking train trips to the seaside and supplies were sent to various railway station waiting rooms around the country. The business grew so rapidly that it was soon employing 24 men and for almost half a century, the company had a distribution area extending from Doncaster in the north to Hatfield in the south as well as many intermediate stations.

Robert Mason Mills had many interests apart from his business. He was a prominent member of several archaeological societies and was an authority on local architecture. He was also a man of great artistic talent and connoisseur of antiques and when he died, left a large collection of paintings and prints together with furniture, china and books.

In 1860, he presided at a public meeting held for the purpose of considering the erection of a public hall for the town and the result was the building of the Corn Exchange in 1870 at a cost of £2,000. He was also chairman of the town's water and gas companies, both undertakings that were subsequently purchased by Bourne Urban District Council. He was also the first of three generations who acted as local agents to the successive Marquesses of Exeter who were Lords of the Manor of Bourne.

The shop in West Street pictured circa 1910

He also became a firm friend of Charles Worth, son of a Bourne solicitor who went to Paris in 1845 and established his internationally famous fashion house where he founded haute couture. He frequently visited him and his family at their palatial villa at Suresnes and both Worth and his two sons visited Bourne for a glimpse of their father's home town.

A dedicated churchman, he was also a benefactor of the Abbey Church at Bourne and in 1883, the west end was restored practically at his expense, in memory of his wife Fanny who had died two years earlier on 10th September 1881 at the age of 58, and his generosity is marked by a plaque saying: "To record the restoration of the west end of this church by Robert Mason Mills of Bourne, this brass plate is placed by the congregation: 1883." Then four years later, he paid for three new stained glass windows to be installed in the south wall to commemorate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The centre window bears in each corner the inscription Victoria Jubilee with the date 1887 in

the middle. He also completed the restoration of the nave in 1893, the chancel in 1903 together with the porch and south roof.

He was, in fact, an ardent royalist, and was particularly proud at having been born in 1819, the same year as Queen Victoria and whom he had seen in London when he was a child. He wrote personally to the Queen on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee saying: "May it please your Most Gracious Majesty to allow me as one of your humble and devoted subjects to congratulate you on your 78th birthday and also upon your reign of 60 years and may you continue to reign. I was born on 2nd April 1819. I had the honour of seeing your Majesty with the Duchess of Kent at the age of 8 years at Vauxhall, also at your Coronation and the Opening of Parliament and other State occasions. I feel I have been a devoted subject during your Majesty's glorious reign over a happy and contented people. May your Majesty continue in good health and strength to reign over your subjects for many years. I remain with the profoundest veneration, your Majesty's most faithful subject and devoted servant. - Robert Mason Mills, Bourne, Lincolnshire, 12th June 1897. "

The letter prompted a response from the Privy Purse Office six days later saying: "The Private Secretary is commanded by The Queen to thank Robert Mason Mills for his letter of good wishes. - 18th June 1897, Buckingham Palace."

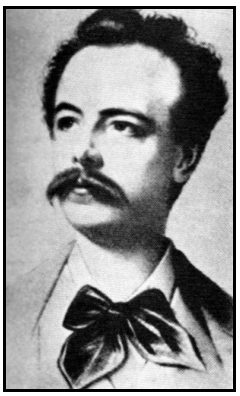
Mr Mills died on 17th March 1904, aged 85, and the funeral at the Abbey Church was attended by parishioners in large numbers and the church was filled to overflowing and a half-muffled peal was rung on the church bells. He was buried in the town cemetery with his wife Fanny who had died on 10th September 1881 at the age of 58 and a single stone obelisk on two plinths marks their grave.

After his death, the contents of his home in West Street were sold at a two-day auction at the Corn Exchange on 17th-18th May 1904 and included antique and modern furniture from two reception rooms, library and five bedrooms. Also sold were his art collection of 140 oil paintings and engravings, the highest price paid being ten guineas (worth £626 at today's values) for The Red Hall, Bourne by an artist named A C Glendening. The other lots included various antiques, silver and Sheffield plate, porcelain such as Wedgwood, Worcester, Crown Derby and other wares, clocks and bronzes, and 60 dozen bottles of vintage port wines. The sale fetched a total of almost £900 that would be worth over £56,000 today.

His will, also published that month, showed that he had left estate valued at £15,080 gross (equivalent to £933,000 today), and that probate was granted to his daughter Mrs Emily Baxter and her husband Thomas. He left Emily his household effects and an immediate legacy of £100. There were other various bequests including a legacy of £50 to Lizzie Sprigden, the servant who cared for him during his final years, together with an annuity of £30 and the use of a house for life. He also left £20 to a clerk in his employ and one week's wages each to farm labourers and others in his employ while the residue of the estate was left in trust to his daughter for life.

On the death of R M Mills, the aerated water business was taken over by his son in law Thomas and continued to flourish until well into the 20th century.

Charles Worth
1825-95



The achievements of Charles Frederick Worth are particularly notable because life in a small Lincolnshire market town was hardly the background for someone who was to become the founder of haute couture and take the world by storm with his internationally famous Parisian fashion house. He was the son of William Worth and a plaque outside Wake House in North Street tells us that he was born there on 13th October 1825. William Worth was a successful solicitor but incurred many debts through drinking, gambling and speculative investments and was declared bankrupt. He deserted his wife and children, leaving them destitute and homeless, and Mrs Worth sought help from wealthy relatives at Billingborough who took her on as a housekeeper.

Charles left school at the age of 11 and became apprenticed to a local printer to earn his keep but disliked the work intensely and a year later, employment was arranged for him with a draper in London and so he was put on a stagecoach to begin a new life in the capital. His employers were the linen drapery firm of Swan and Edgar who had premises in Piccadilly and Regent Street until they closed in 1982. Charles worked for no pay and slept under a counter in the shop. His occupation at the outset was mainly book keeping but he began to show an interest in the sumptuous French fabrics his employers imported for sale. He became captivated by the exquisite cut and workmanship of the gowns made by the Parisian workshops and in 1845, he moved to the royal silk mercers Lewis and Allenby.

But his stay there was not long and later that year, at the age of 20, he boarded the cross Channel ferry to France where he hoped to make his mark in the millinery trade. He made for Paris and took lodgings with a kindly housewife who taught him French while he earned a living doing a number of menial jobs and once he had mastered the language, he applied for and got a job as an assistant with the leading fashion fabric retailers of the day, Gagelin and Opigez. He worked there for twelve years and it was during that time that his skill as a fashion designer became apparent. In 1851, Charles married a colleague at the firm, Marie Augustine Vernet, an attractive sales girl. They were both 26.

Marie had been with the company since she was 16 and also acted as in-house model for mantles and shawls, the only ready-made products in the shop. Charles then set about designing and making plain but perfectly fitting dresses for his wife in order that the mantles and shawls could be shown off to their best effect and so, by chance, he became a dressmaker. His creations were the very first that Parisian ladies of fashion had seen to fit so well and flatter their figures. Customers were impressed by the designs and soon began to ask for similar dresses but Gagelin specialised in selling silks and fabrics, not

making dresses, and they resisted Worth's pleas to open a dress department until he shrewdly pointed out that such a venture would enhance their fabric sales. The dressmaking business was duly opened on their premises and Worth became the first man to participate in a trade that until then had been dominated by women.

One of the highlights of his career during this period was his work on a lady's court train which went on display at the Paris Exhibition of 1855. His reputation spread and, thinking that Gagelin were not giving him the recognition he deserved, he formed a partnership with Otto Bobergh, a rich Swede, and went into business as a couturier lady's tailor and as a result, Maison Worth opened its doors on the Number 7, Rue de la Paix, in 1858 with a staff of twenty. His innovations are remembered today because he was the first designer to show his creations on live mannequins and to sign his work with a label, the forerunner of today's designer labels. He lit and decorated his salon in the conditions in which his gowns would actually be worn and his collections were made and shown off in advance of sale.

The salon was soon attracting the most eminent customers and among them was Princess Metternich, wife of the Austrian Ambassador to Paris, who wore one of his gowns at a court ball in the Tuileries. The Empress Eugénie noticed the dress and became a customer and Worth's reputation was established. This royal patronage gave him his chance as the dictator of fashion and style and his establishment in the Rue de la Paix became the centre of haute couture. He sent samples of his work to Europe's leading families and by 1865 he was dressing the nobility and the royalty of Russia, Austria, Italy and Spain. The salon became an important call for wealthy American women doing the grand tour and even Queen Victoria is reputed to have bought one of his creations.

When Otto Bobergh retired and returned to Sweden in 1870, Worth carried on the business with the help of his two sons, Gaston and Jean Philippe, and soon they were making a profit of £50,000 a year, a phenomenal amount in those days, while his salon was producing between 6,000 and 7,000 gowns and 4,000 outer garments annually. But he still had one classic innovation to launch on the world: the bustle which dominated ladies fashion into the next century and Maison Worth started to attract a rich clientele from America, ladies making the grand tour of Europe, and by 1871 he was employing 1,200 people and his gowns were exported throughout the world.

At the height of his fame, he was earning £40,000 a year and his personal fortune made him one of the richest men in France, almost equal to the emperor himself. He was a man of obvious enterprise but also of great energy and every day until the end of his life he went to his business from the magnificent house he had built for himself in the Rue de Berri or from his villa at Suresnes. But he also gained a reputation as a good employer, always benevolent to his large staff and liberal in his help for French charities and he also joined the French Reformed Church.

He was awarded the Legion of Honour but despite his tremendous success in France, maintained his links with Bourne through his friends and he also made occasional visits, often staying with the Bourne businessman Mr Robert Mason Mills who also visited him at Suresnes. In later years, Worth's two sons also came to Bourne as guests of Mr. Stephen Andrews, the solicitor who had bought Wake House. But it was in France that his life's work had been celebrated and it was there that he died from pneumonia on 10th March 1895 at the age of 69 when his funeral was an extraordinary testimonial to

the reputation he had achieved and the affection in which he was held. The 2,000 mourners included not only the mayor and civic officials from Paris but also many deputies and senators from the French Assembly and the President of the Republic himself. Worth was buried at Suresnes and his wife was placed in the same grave three years later but his name remains as a byword in world fashion which he did so much to modernise and where his influence is still evident.

There was much speculation when Worth died to see if this would also herald the end of Maison Worth but his sons took over, Jean-Philippe (1856-1926) taking up the creative reins while Gaston-Lucien (1853-1924) supervised the financial side and the phenomenal success of the fashion house continued. Functional clothing began to replace the formality of dress of previous years and although Worth continued to make splendid gowns, the demand declined because of the diminishing number of state occasions and the dwindling European nobility but the dowager clientele that had been the mainstay of the business slowly disappeared.

With his talent for design and promotion, Charles Frederick Worth had built his design house into a huge business during the last quarter of the 19th century but Gaston-Lucien and Jean-Philippe succeeded in maintaining his high standards. Jean-Philippe's designs in particular followed those of his father with his use of dramatic fabrics and lavish trimmings. The house flourished during the their tenure and well into the 1920s but the great fashion dynasty came to an end after Charles' great-grandson, Jean-Charles (1881–1962), retired from the family business and in 1956, the House of Worth closed its doors, two years short of a century of creating sumptuous and artistic gowns for the world's most renowned women.

Charles Worth has left an elegant legacy to world fashion and in December 2002 a prestigious blue plaque from English Heritage marking its connections with the famous Paris designer was placed on the front of Wake House while the Worth Gallery at the Heritage Centre in South Street celebrates his life with displays and copies of his famous dresses. Seventy of his original creations survive but they are scattered around a dozen museums in America and Europe. One fine example can be seen at Deene Park near Corby in Northamptonshire, which is open to the public at various times throughout the year, although the biggest collection is in the United States.

Wake House and the blue plaque from English Heritage

John Layton
1831-1905

The Californian gold rush of 1849 was the biggest ever known and attracted thousands of prospectors who flooded in from around the world following a major find by a Swiss settler, J A Sutter. Fortunes were soon being made and lost too in the plethora of gambling houses that mushroomed, along with saloons and brothels, in San Francisco which grew from a village to a city of 25,000 in the space of a few months.

Within the United States alone, more than 80,000 people headed west and the nation's unexplored heartland was soon criss-crossed with trails. More still sailed in via Cape Horn or crossing the Panama isthmus while others arrived from Australia, China and of course Britain. Among them was John Thorpe Layton, second son of William Layton, a local farmer and former landlord of the Bull Hotel in the Market Place at Bourne [now the Burghley Arms], who decided to leave home and seek his fortune in the new world.

In July 1849, when he was only eighteen, he signed on as a seaman aboard the barque Jane Dixon that sailed from Liverpool bound for California, sailing around Cape Horn to San Francisco, reaching there in January 1850. He left the ship there and spent the next few months engaged in boating and fishing on the Sacramento River and San Francisco Bay until the spring of 1851 when he took a passage from San Francisco and came to the mouth of the Umpqua river in Douglas County. He landed at Gardiner and made his way through southern Oregon to the mines at Yreka and Scott River, northern California, remaining in the locality until 1st August 1852. He then moved to Jackson County, Oregon, and worked in the mines around Jacksonville until 1858, thence to Williamsburg, Josephine County, where he was engaged in trading and mining with fair success. In 1877, he bought a farm and established a homestead.

He was frequently attacked by Indians but he fought them off successfully and in order to help suppress the various uprisings, he enlisted on 8th August 1853 in the company of Captain John F Miller as a private and served for thirty days. On 13th October 1855, he joined Company F, commanded by Captain A S Welton, and remained in the army until 13th November 1855. While living in Jacksonville, Layton got married on 13th February 1856 to Mary T Nail (born in Missouri in 1840) and there were five children, of whom the oldest died in infancy.

The others were Charlotte, Lola, Mary and Ida. His wife Mary died on 20th December 1864. Layton was married again on 18th August 1866 to Harriett F Doak (who was born at Illinois) and they had one child, William, but he divorced her in 1868. His third wife was Theresa Moore (born at Spencer Creek, Lane County, Oregon, 24th April 1852) whom he married on 8th November 1871 and they had nine children, Edward, Rose, Ella, Florence, John (Lester), Lena, Cora, Jessie and Amy. Twenty-five years after

leaving Bourne, Layton had become an astute businessman and property owner. He also developed the hydraulic mining system that was used when the deposit was soft and lay under a loose overburden. This method is known as hydraulicking in which strong jets of water are projected against the bank of gravel and overburden which are loosened and washed away by the action of the water. Beds of gold or tin bearing gravels were subsequently mined in this way.

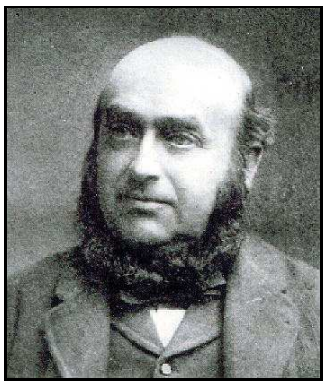
In 1904, his standing in the community was summed up in an account published in the book Portrait and Biographical Record of Western Oregon which eulogised his life as follows: "The claims of John Thorpe Layton, upon the consideration of his fellow residents of Jackson and Josephine Counties, rest upon his more than ordinary ability as a miner and prospector. Today he is the fortunate owner of the Ferris Gulch and Williamsburg mines, both placer claims that have been in active operation for more than forty years, and about thirty miles of mining ditches. He is further represented among the stable and up building enterprises of the county by the Layton Hotel at Grants Pass, and he also owns eight hundred acres of mineral and agricultural land. John T Layton was the owner of both the Ferris Gulch and Williamsburg mines, in active operation for more than 40 years, thirty miles of mining ditches dug by hired Chinese labourers, builder of the Grants Pass Hotel in 1889, and owner of 800 acres of mineral and agricultural land. "

John Layton's father, William, was born on 29th January 1799, and married Mary Ann Pears (1800-1855). He was landlord of the Bull Hotel in Bourne and is listed as such in Pigot's Trade Directory for 1835 but by 1842, he had left the licensed trade and become a farmer. He died in July 1872 at the age of 73 and is buried in the town cemetery. The couple had eight children, John being born on 16th May 1831. He attended several schools in the area and then served an apprenticeship of four years at a hardware shop in Stamford before leaving for America in 1849.

There is some evidence that he never originally intended to remain in America but planned to return home once he had made his fortune. This is revealed in a letter home to his father in 1855, the first he had written since he sailed from England six years before. The *Stamford Mercury* reported on Friday 22nd June 1855: "A letter was received last week by Mr William Layton of Bourne, from his second son, John Thorpe Layton, whom he had not heard of since 1849 when he sailed from Liverpool for California. It is dated April 15th 1855, Jacksonville, Oregon Territory. He has been in the mines nearly four years and intends remaining two years longer. By dint of perseverance and hard labour, he has realised a large sum of money which he is striving to increase before he returns to Old England. Previous to his departure, he was serving his apprenticeship with Mr Johnson, ironmonger, of Stamford. "

Layton died on 14th December 1905 aged 74 and is buried in the Jacksonville Pioneer Cemetery at Jacksonville, Oregon. He was survived in this country only by his young sister, Charlotte, who was 15 when he left home, spending her life as a teacher and in 1854, opened a private school in West Street, Bourne and ran it for almost fifty years, catering at first for young ladies and then for boys too. In old age she lived in lodgings in Harrington Street where she died on Sunday 15th October 1914 at the age of 80 and was buried in the town cemetery and although she had specifically requested no flowers, there were several floral tributes from some of the 30 past pupils of her school that still resided in the town.

William Wherry
1841-1915



The name of Wherry has been associated with Bourne for the past two centuries as a mark of both enterprise and commercial success but one man stands out not only for his contribution to the family business but also for his service to the community that has been unequalled since. He was William Robert Wherry.

His grandfather, Edward Wherry was the proprietor of the village stores at Edenham, as were his ancestors, but he had expansion in mind and he bought the premises of John Gibson in North Street in 1806 and started trading as a grocer and draper. His sons William and Edward joined the business that soon expanded to include seeds. When John Gibson died in 1825, William Wherry bought the buildings and yard across the road on the east side of North Street from his trustees and Wherry's shop with its distinctive bow window continued to trade on the same site until the mid-20th century although the premises were sold and eventually demolished to make way for the Burghley Centre development in 1989.

Edward Wherry senior was a deacon of the Baptist Chapel in West Street and he laid the foundation stone when it was built in 1835 at a cost of £1,700, an appropriate choice because members of his family were destined to serve as deacons for more than 100 years. His firm of Messrs Edward Wherry and Sons, merchants, quickly progressed and a wholesale section was added to the business and an additional showroom opened. Both road and water transport on the Bourne Eau were used by the company to send and receive goods and by the mid-19th century, items of drapery were being brought in by wagon from as far afield as Manchester while the opening of the railways and Bourne's connection to the main line also greatly increased their volume of business.

William Wherry made a point of attending the twice-yearly cheese fair at Leicester to buy supplies and to get there in the early days, he travelled to Melton Mowbray by horse and then finished the journey by coach. He attended the fair a total of 99 times and became such a familiar figure among the buyers that he achieved the honour of sitting next to the chairman at the luncheon that always followed the cheese sales. When the time came to make his 100th visit, he was greatly annoyed when his family refused to allow him to make the journey because of ill health and so he was baulked from completing his century.

In 1856, William Wherry's 15-year-old son joined the company as an apprentice. He was William Robert Wherry and five years later he took sole charge of the grocery department and the buying of drapery with which he was connected for the next 17 years. He also developed the trade in seed and grain, thereby laying the foundations of the firm's present activities. The business prospered under his control, particularly the

agricultural side, to such an extent that it was created into a separate concern trading as W R Wherry & Co and contracts for root seeds were placed with local farmers on behalf of most of the leading seed houses.

For 26 years, he purchased all of the white mustard seed for Keen Robinson and Co, the firm that ultimately amalgamated with Messrs Colman of Norwich and to store this seed ready for transport, he bought a large waterside warehouse in Eastgate. The company also operated a windmill in North Road with three pairs of stones, two for wheat and one for barley. The mill became a landmark in the town but lost its four sails when it was struck by lightning in 1915 and the stump was finally demolished in June 1994.

By the 1870s, Wherry had built up an extensive business with connections throughout Britain and in several countries overseas including the United States and France while trade in this country was being done not only by rail but also by coastal steamer. In 1877, for instance, a shipping company at King's Lynn in Norfolk was handling casks of soda from Newcastle and bound for Wherry's in Bourne while peas were being shipped outwards to places such as Glasgow and wheat was transported to a firm at Leith on the London steamer.

It was evident that Wherry was a man of enterprise who was prepared to break into any new line of business that might show a profit and be beneficial to his company. Not only was he trading in groceries, drapery and seeds, but by 1880 he was also selling quantities of tallow to a soap works at Wakefield in Yorkshire and to firms elsewhere. He was also sending snowdrops to be sold in Glasgow and jonquils and lilies to a firm in London while they were also doing business with the House of Correction at Folkingham. A letter to Wherry's from the prison governor in 1877 offered to supply the firm with "anything you may require in the shape of Brush Door Mats" and a few days later, he acknowledged the firm's order and sent off two bundles of mats with more to follow, all no doubt made by the prisoners.

Wherry was possibly the first man in this country to recognise the need in the food processing industry for a complete dried pea trading operation and during the winter of 1878-9 when times were hard and unemployment likely, he introduced pea picking as a further side of his business. Peas were grown by farmer customers and transported to Bourne where they were picked by local people in their own homes to remove those that had become discoloured or eaten by maggots, Bourne's original cottage industry, and although a factory was opened in Church Lane in 1902 for this purpose, home picking continued until well into the 1930s to supplement the family income. Seven years before, Wherry had bought warehouses, stables, two yards, a house and other buildings in South Street from the trustees of Thomas Turnell Mawby who had died in 1894 and this became the headquarters for their operations and in 1909 the business was amalgamated as a company, with W R Wherry and his four sons as its first directors.

William Wherry's civic and religious activities were equally busy and he became a well-known public figure. One of his main interests was in education and he played an important part in the implementation of the Education Act of 1870, being continuously elected chairman of the Bourne School Board and it was due to his influence that the town had its first secondary school. When county councils were established in England, Wherry was returned as the elected representative for Morton on Kesteven County Council and was subsequently appointed a county alderman, serving continuously on the finance committee and later as chairman of the education committee.

He became a magistrate sitting on the Bourne bench of justices and other appointments followed, embracing a wide variety of subjects in which he was not only interested, but also an acknowledged expert, including the railways, county boundary changes, public health, fen drainage and the administration of the various charities, particularly the foundation of the Butterfield Hospital and the Bourne Nursing Association.

He was a Liberal by political persuasion and a founder of the Stamford Division of the Liberal Association and could have made a career in politics but refused an invitation on two occasions to stand as their candidate for the Stamford parliamentary seat, preferring to devote his energies to Bourne and its townspeople. He was also a prominent non-conformist and held practically all of the offices in connection with the Baptist Chapel in West Street where he was a senior deacon and superintendent of the Sunday School. He was also treasurer for many years, the first of his public offices that he relinquished in retirement, writing off a balance of almost £120 that was then due to him. He was widely known as a preacher throughout the district, especially at Tongue End, and was a member of the Board of the Baptist Missionary Society, a manager of the Baptist College, a representative on the East Midlands Baptist Association, secretary and treasurer of the Bourne Christian Fund and the first president of the Bourne and District Free Church Council.

Wherry was such a busy man and so dedicated to serving the community that shortly before he retired from public life because of ill health, his numerous public offices and positions of responsibility numbered almost 100.

Until 1894, William Wherry and his family had lived in West Street but he subsequently moved into the house in South Street that was included in the purchase from the Mawby estate. This was known as The Cedars, a complex property on the site of the old Abbey infirmary comprising parts from the 16th to the 20th centuries and which took its name from the huge tree growing in the garden. The massive cedar blew down in a gale on 3rd January 1976 and its name was changed to Bourne Eau House that exists today between South Street and Church Walk. He died at home on 24th May 1915 at the age of 74 after being in failing health for three years and he had been confined to his bed for the final two months. His funeral was held at Bourne cemetery where he was buried in the family grave beside his wife Emily who had died in a road accident at Hunstanton on 9th September 1897 at the age of 51.

Wherry's corn warehouse in South Street, once the hub of the company operations but converted into retirement flats in 2008.