

# Stapleford and District Local History Society

IN HONOURED MEMORY OF THE MEN OF STAPLEFORD WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR 1914 - 1918.			
A-E ALLDRIDGE	L-GOSWAY	A-HOGG	A-PARKER
E-ANNABLE	J-W CRAWSON	R-H HOOKS	H-G PENDRILL
C-ARMSTRONG	E-CREED	W-HOOTEN	G-PICKETT
H-E ARNOLD	A-CRESSWELL	T-H HOPEWELL	B-G PHILLIPS
G-F ATKIN	B-CROUCH	W-H HORRIBIN	G-T PHIPPS
J-ATKIN	L-CROUCH	J-H HOULT	P-POLLARD
CH-AUSTIN	T-DAVIS	J-T HUTTON	J-E REPTON
H-CBALL	W-DAVIS	H-E JACKSON	G-RIDGWAY
J-A BARBER	H-H DAYKIN	A-JACQUES	W-J RHODES
J-BARDILL	T-DAYKIN	J-JACQUES	T-H SELBY
J-BARKER	W-G DOMLEO	J-W-L KEELEY	J-H SELLWOOD
W-H BARKSBY	F-DOVE	A-KEELING	C-SCHOLES
G-BARROWCLIFFE	B-FAULKNER	G-H KERRY	J-A SHAW
A-BARSON	A-FIGG	O-A KERRY	A-SHEPHERD
E-BARSON	A-G FIELD	F-KIRK	W-J SHEPHERD
N-BARSON	B-S FLETCHER	F-LANGHAM	E-SIMPKINS
F-J BEALE	P-FLETCHER	F-LANGHAM	A-SMEDLEY
A-E BLACKER	O-C FORD	J-LEAKE	E-SMITH
T-BOWLEY	W-FOULGER	F-J LEWIN	W-E SMITH
J-W BOWMER	F-FURMIDCE	H-E LONGMIRE	R-STARBUCK
G-H BRIAN	C-CEESON	A-E LOWE	W-SUMMERLIN
D-BRIGGS	G-GILL	T-LYNES	H-TAYLOR
H-J BRIGGS	A-G GOULD	A-MARRIOTT	A-R TINSLEY
E-BROOKES	H-CREASLEY	A-E MEDHURST	J-J THOMPSON
F-BROWN	A-GREEN	J-S MELLOWS	F-THORNHILL
J-BROWN	C-H GREEN	S-B MELVILLE	H-TOMLINSON
J-W BROWN	J-T GREENSMITH	S-MERRIMAN	I-A TUCKER
R-BROWN	G-B GREIG	E-METTAM	T-TUNALEY
W-BRUDENELL	R-GRIFFIN	A-MEW	E-TUNNICLIFFE
F-BULLOCK	L-GRUNDY	T-MILLS	T-VERNON
E-BUNCE	J-W GUNN	G-E MINTON	J-E WAINWRIGHT
J-BURNS	J-HADLINGTON	A-H MIRFIN	N-WAINWRIGHT
H-BURROWS	J-HALL	J-C MITCHELL	D-WALKER
T-H BURTON	W-A HALL	T-H MOORE	E-WALKER
W-H BURTON	A-HALLAM	S-H MORLEY	J-WALL
A-BUSH	E-HALLAM	A-MOSLEY	E-A WALLIS
H-E CARLIN	H-HALLAM	G-MOSLEY	J-F WALLIS
S-CARLIN	J-HALLAM	J-NEEDHAM	F-C-S WALTERS
A-CAVEY	E-HARDY	E-NEWBOLD	C-E WATKINS
J-H CLARK	J-HARDY	C-NEWBOLD	C-WATSON
W-E CLAY	O-HARDY	J-NEWBOLD	A-E WEBSTER
C-A CLAYTON	E-B HARRIS	E-NEWTON	J-WHEAT
A-CLEAVER	A-E HARRISON	E-C NEWTON	J-WHITEHEAD
J-CLIFFORD	B-HAWKINS	J-V OLDERSHAW	A-A WICCSINS
H-S CHAMBERLAIN	E-HENSHAW	L-W OLDERSHAW	A-E WINFIELD
H-COOMBER	J-HIND	T-PACEY	W-WOODROFFE
A-A CORDON	R-HINDSON	C-W PAGE	W-C YORK

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Mayor of Broxtowe councillor Derek Burnett BEM, Barbara Brooke, Jackie Norton and Lady Mayoress Sonia Burnett, on 10 August 2018, in Walter Parker VC Memorial Square as part of the Stapleford Commemoration of the end of World War One.



Jackie Norton with some of the poppies she has crocheted for the event.



# Stapleford Cemetery in World War One



Stapleford and District Local History Society

Stapleford cemetery was opened on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 1881. The land for the cemetery was generously paid for by Mr Joseph Fearfield who was a member of the Burial Board. The first interment was on the 30<sup>th</sup> July 1881, and was a Thomas Johnson, a married labourer, aged 68 of Stapleford. The ceremony was performed by Mr Henry Fletcher.

Soldiers who fell in battle were buried near the site of their death with their comrades. This applied not only to the private soldier but also to the son of the Prime Minister. After WWI the majority of families of deceased soldiers would be unable to afford a visit to the various European war cemeteries, and would therefore remember their loved ones on family graves which they could visit more easily. Soldiers buried on home soil were the ones who were wounded and treated in English hospitals and later died of their wounds, or died from related illnesses such as TB. These would have stones if their relatives could afford the cost, or after the war the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) would erect a stone. If the strict criteria of the CWGC were not met then the deceased would remain in an unmarked grave as is the case for at least two discharged wounded soldiers in Stapleford.

Within Stapleford Cemetery there are five CWGC burials from World War One. The headstone for J Hardy was only erected in October 2017. We also know that James Hall, a civilian who lived on Frederick Road in Stapleford, was killed by the Zeppelin L20 raid over Stanton on 31 January 1916, and lies in an unmarked plot. There are two with their own stones and two in unmarked graves. The others are mentioned on family graves, and of course there is the grave of V.C. Walter Parker who died in 1936.





## Lance-Corporal Walter Richard Parker V.C.

Walter was born in Grantham on 20 September 1881. He spent his early years in London moving to Stapleford to begin work at Stanton Ironworks as a coremaker. He married Olive, the daughter of Joseph Orchard who had been the Stapleford Station Master. Walter enlisted on the 7 September 1914 in the Royal Marine Light Infantry and was attached to the Portsmouth Division. The Division was sent to the Dardanelles, landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula on the 25 April 1915. Five days later Walter was awarded the Victoria Cross for extreme courage in taking essential supplies to an isolated trench and helping to evacuate the wounded, which required crossing 400 yards of open ground and trying to avoid heavy Turkish machine gun fire. In the process he was wounded in several places. He was presented with his V.C. on the 21 July 1917 by King George V at Buckingham Palace. In 1936 he died at the age of 55 and is buried in (plot 7).



The medals of Lance-Corporal Walter Richard Parker VC,  
Royal Marine Light Infantry, Royal Naval Division

In Memory of  
Rifleman

**Thomas Tunaley**

R/7404, 3rd Bn., King's Royal Rifle Corps who died on 14 February 1917 Age 21

Son of Thomas and Annie Tunaley of Sandiacre, Derbyshire.

Remembered with Honour  
United Kingdom Book of Remembrance



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Thankyou to Barbara Grayson for informing the Society of Thomas Tunaley's recent addition to the United Kingdom Book of Remembrance.



### Chilwell Shell-Filling Factory Explosion

The 1 July 2018 was the centenary of the Chilwell explosion, and a number of events were held to remember the terrible event, including a Special Commemoration Service held at St Mary's Church, Attenborough, where most of the victims are buried.

Monday 1 July 1918 had been a very hot day. The night shift had clocked on at 6pm, and at 7.10 pm, there were series of huge bangs. Eight tons of explosive had detonated and completely destroyed the mixing-house, TNT mill and stores. It was said the explosion could be heard as far away as the Vale of Belvoir in Leicestershire. In a few minutes 139 people were killed, including 25 women. Another 250 were injured. Only 32 of the dead could be identified.

Among the dead are the following nine men from Stapleford, who are named on the memorial plaque in St. Helen's Church. They also appear on the memorial on the site of the explosion, at Chetwynd Barracks.

Albert E Blacker

Thomas Davis

Frederick J H Dove

Albert Edward Harrison

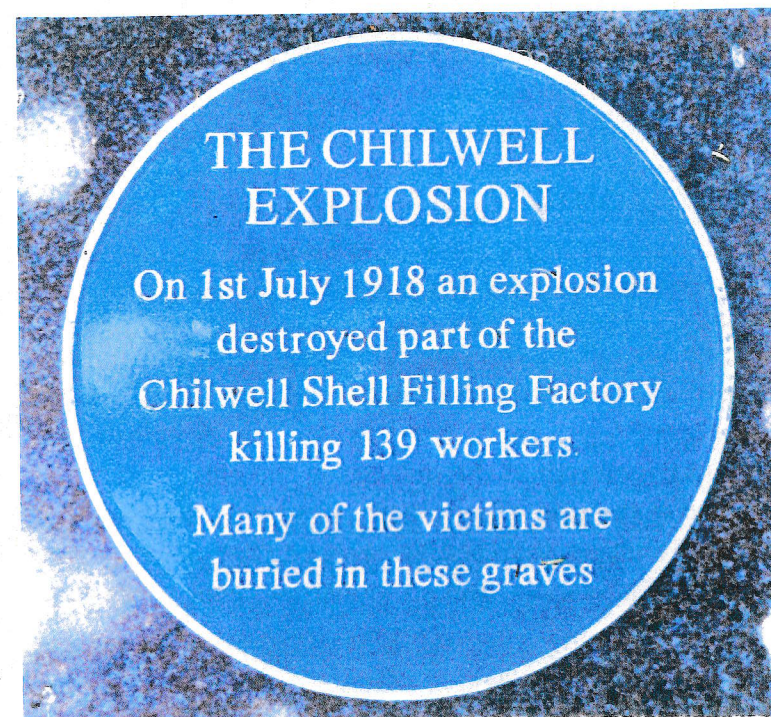
Thomas H Mills

Herbert G Pendrell

Joseph H Sellwood

John J Thompson

Walter Woodruff



*Plaque in St. Mary's Churchyard, Attenborough*

Many men and women from Stapleford would have worked at Chilwell during the First World War. The History Society would be pleased to hear from anyone who can tell us about any of their relatives who worked at Chilwell.

*Nigel Brooks*



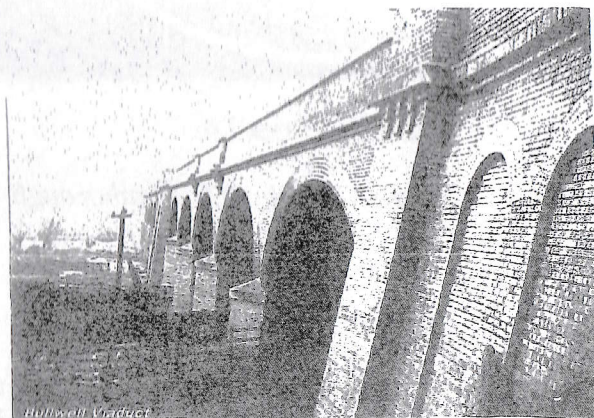
## MEETING REPORTS

8 May 2018

### LOST RAILWAYS OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

by David Amos

David opened his talk by showing two maps of railway networks in Nottinghamshire, one from the 1840s and one from the present day. The contrast was really remarkable. He explained that the huge and sudden growth of the railways in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was due to quite a few causes, one being the growth of the coalfields and another that people realised that railways were far more efficient than canals, and so industrial canal usage began to fade.



He pointed out that the Sun Inn in Eastwood was a major feature in the railway development in this area because that was where the Midland Railway Company was born – 175 years ago.

There were boos in the audience when we were shown a picture of Dr Beeching holding his report *The Reshaping of British Railways*. David pointed out that, although Dr Beeching gets most of the blame he was, in fact, just accelerating a process of railway

decline that had already started in the early 1950s. The politicians Ernest Marples, Dr Beeching, Tom Fraser and Barbara Castle all helped in the closure of railway lines throughout the 1960s.

David then showed us a lot of slides of interesting lines and stations that have disappeared. With each of these pictures there was a little story or piece of interesting information. One of these was that St Pancras Station was built of Nottingham Bricks. Another was the story of Von Werra – a German prisoner of war who tried to escape. We also heard that Skegness Sam was invented for a railway advertising poster.

David had recorded some of the stories from old railway men and he played us these recordings. He also played us a song by David Graham. These added to the variety of the evening.

As usual, David spoke in a broad Nottinghamshire accent and used a lot of the language that the railwaymen would have used, adding a lot of charm to the talk. He has a phenomenal knowledge of his subject and this came across in his excellent presentation.

John Shaw

12 June 2018

### TREASURES FROM THE ATTIC

By Brian Howes

Brian promised that this would be an interactive evening – and so it was.

He had put 13 articles on the table and explained that he would talk about each one. He said that some of the items were not worth much, but that one of them was worth a lot of money. He asked us to try to guess the value of each one. These were the articles:

1 Brian woke us all up with what we thought was a football rattle. It was an Air Raid Warden Rattle. He told us that 38 million gas



masks were made and distributed during WW2 and 26,000 Anderson shelters were built.

2 A melamine Cadbury's Sweet Dream Nightcap mug made in 1949.

3 A World Cup Willie doll, made for the 1966 World Cup – the first world cup mascot ever made.

4 A Kodak Instamatic Camera made in 1963. This replaced the ubiquitous 'Box Brownie' (50 million were made and sold).

5 A 45 record 'I'm a Moody Guy' by Shane Fenton (later Alvin Stardust) and one-time resident of Mansfield.

6 A Guinness Toucan vase. These were given to pub landlords in the 1950s.



7 A Dansette Record Player – still working. Brian played the Shane Fenton record. These Dansette players were made for about ten years.

8 A Bobby Bear Annual from 1949. Brian explained that Bobby was actually the first 'British' bear, pre-dating Rupert by about four years.

9 A small striped Cornish Ware flour/jar shaker. Until very recently Cornish Ware was really popular. Most of it was blue and white stripes. This one had the more unusual yellow stripes.

10 A Miner's lamp and methane detector. This one was from Gedling Colliery and had the miner's number welded onto it.

11 A sauce bottle with the name 'Gartons' moulded into it. Brian talked about finding this on some building land. Garton later sold the recipe and it became famous as HP Sauce.

12 A small poster advertising a Players Recreation Ground. The poster artist was the famous Tom Brown from Nottingham. The most unusual thing about the poster was the small size. Brian said that all the other Tom Brown Players posters he had seen had been twice the size of this one.

13 A small Loughborough Dairy cream jar that Brian had found in a skip.

With each item Brian gave us some interesting information or a story of how he had come by it. He also encouraged us to contribute from our knowledge and opinions.

For the second part of the evening Brian told us the value of each item.

I had intended to list all the items and their values, but have now decided to give just a few examples:

HP Sauce bottle - £10

World Cup Willie mascot - £80

The (working) Dansette Record Player - £250

Bobby Bear Annual - £10

This was an excellent talk. It was really cleverly planned and prepared and Brian's knowledge of his subject was impressive. He had a very personable and easy manner and he soon established a real rapport with the audience. There is no doubt that everyone present enjoyed this evening.

The most valuable item, the small Loughborough Dairy cream jar is worth over £1,000.

John Shaw

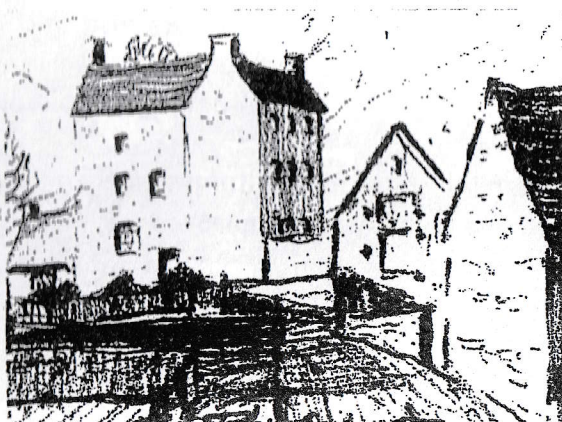


## **TOTON UNCOVERED**

**By Gill Morral**

At the beginning of her talk Gill explained that she was endeavouring to cover 1000 years in just under an hour. She was right in that her talk did cover a whole range of Toton related topics and she had certainly done a huge amount of research.

She started by stating that in the Domesday Book Toton is mentioned as having two mills, some willows and half a church. The 'half a church' refers to the fact that in the past Toton extended into a lot of what is now known as Attenborough, and they shared St Mary's Church.



Most of the medieval information came from Court Rolls and these were mainly concerned with various misdemeanours. The courts met three or four times a year and dealt with 'crimes' like trespass (by men and animals, including geese) and stealing. These records gave the names of offenders and juries from Toton. Gill then went on to describe the archaeological digs that had taken place in Toton in 2014. The digs were conducted by Trent and Peak Archaeology. Gill showed us lots of pictures of the trenches and explained what had been found from many different historical

periods. There was evidence of Toton Manor House (and that it may have had a moat around it). By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was nothing left of the house. The final walls were removed in 1952.

There were also investigations about Toton Mill. There was evidence that it started as a water mill, that it evolved into a steam mill and then later became a soap mill. They were able to ascertain that it was an 'undershot' mill and they had uncovered the series of sluices that were used to control the water flow. During this dig they came across two big wooden posts and these were dated to 1230. Gill suggested that the original mill may have been built on these posts. They found no evidence of the Domesday second mill.

Gill then described some of the extensive research she has done and gave us a few facts:

- The owners of Toton seem to have been the Peverells soon after 1066. In medieval times the Greys of Codnor owned the area and in Tudor times Thomas Whalley and family possessed it. Before the Civil War it was owned by the Warren family. In Victorian times the Birkin family possessed it.
- There is still evidence of a three field system and Gill described carefully how it had declined and was later enclosed.
- There was a long-lasting post of Swan-Keeper and one of the mentioned fields was known as Swan Nest Close for many years.
- There was a large house called The Coneries – a very big house and park, now completely gone.
- In 1830 Lady Caroline Warren established a school in Toton (closed in 1933).
- In 1950 a New Methodist Church was built.

Gill really did cover nearly 1000 years and showed evidence of many hours of detailed research. She also brought along an



impressive exhibition of much of the material that she had not had time to mention. She had many interesting maps and diagrams, pictures and charts. She explained things clearly and we Stapleford folk learned an awful lot about our neighbours.

Details of the Toton Archaeological Surveys can be found at:

[www.totonunearthed.org.uk](http://www.totonunearthed.org.uk)

Gill has also produced a book:

Toton Revealed: A Collection of Memories, Photographs and Research

John Shaw

11 September 2018

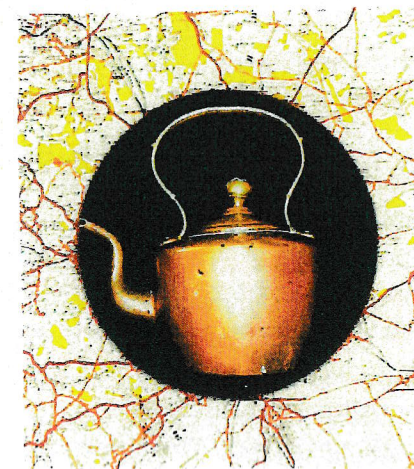
## **THE COPPER KETTLE CLUB (Part 1)**

**by Margaret Harrison**

Margaret began by saying that this was an interactive talk and she expected audience participation. She was very good at encouraging this participation and had the audience with her all evening.

We were told that the Copper Kettle Club was formed in Nottingham by J M Barrie (of Peter Pan fame). He worked in Nottingham for five years on the staff of the *Nottingham Journal*. The main objective of the Club was that each member should tell a story and the other members had to decide whether the story was true or false.

Margaret then told us some stories about the history of Nottingham, each introduced by an illustration, and we were asked to decide whether they were true or false. The stories were from a fairly small area of Nottingham, mainly around Thurland, Clumber and Pelham Streets. She is an excellent story teller, very down to earth and entertaining, and we all listened intently.



The stories covered various topics, people and places, some of which were:

- Pubs called *The Hand*
- Watson Fothergill buildings
- Thursday Itch disease remedies
- The Ducking Stool in the Old Market Square
- Bank Manager crimes
- Hot Air Balloons
- The Boer War Memorial on the Forest
- A Tunnel from Midland Station to Victoria Station
- Cow Lane (Clumber Street)

After the tea break Margaret quickly retold the stories and asked us to vote. We were then informed whether we had guessed correctly or not. This was all done with real good humour and we all joined in enthusiastically.

This was an outstanding evening of entertainment and learning. The format was brilliant and Margaret herself was very knowledgeable and had excellent communication skills. There have been many requests for The Copper Kettle Club (Part 2). Highly recommended.

John Shaw



9 October 2018

## THE HISTORY OF BUTTONS

by Jenny Swindells

Perhaps I was being sexist or perhaps just narrow-minded but I must admit that I was not sure that I was all that interested in buttons. I soon found that I was.

The first buttons that Jenny showed us were made of Whitby jet and were about 3,500 years old. They were V-perforate buttons with holes in the back through which the twine would have been threaded. This type of button has been found all over Europe, sometimes made of other material, eg amber. We then saw a full row of 19 buttons that were found along the front of a skeleton from the time of the Beaker People (about 2,500 years ago).

The next picture was of a buttoned tunic that was made to be worn under armour, with different shaped buttons for different parts of the body.

We were told that there are detailed records of the buttons on the dresses of Mary, Queen of Scots.

There are records of a Mansfield lady, Elizabeth Heath, wanting to start a school to teach "The Art of Buttony" in 1660. Unfortunately, there is no record of her succeeding in this venture.

Jenny showed us how wild and outrageous men's fashions became in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, their clothing often including a lot of buttons. This was, of course, only for the wealthy people. The poor people were often subject to Sumptuary Laws. These were: "Laws made for the purpose of restraining luxury or extravagance, particularly against inordinate expenditures in the matter of apparel, food, furniture, etc." *Black's Law Dictionary*. It was suggested that too many buttons would give poor people ideas above their station.

The pictures we were shown displayed the fact that in this part of the century some of the buttons were very large and were obviously for display rather than function.

Jenny then went on to explain the different ways that buttons were made. There were by now many different sorts of buttons – gold and silver, fabric, painted and carved. There was even a picture of a button with a shiny beetle enclosed in it.

We were told the story that cuff buttons came into use because Frederick the Great was annoyed that his smartly dressed soldiers were using their sleeves to wipe their noses!



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a growth of button factories in Birmingham. Until then buttons had been made by small groups in the Jewellery Quarter of the city. One of the big names in button manufacturing was Matthew Bolton, a member of the famous Lunar



Society, which was a group of thinkers, manufacturers and philosophers (there was no classification as 'scientist' at that time).

There were soon steel buttons and we were shown some Wedgwood buttons. When gilded buttons were used there was a strict inspection service testing the value of the gilding. These slowly went out of fashion. Enamelling was sometimes used, but this was really expensive.

From the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century buttons began to appear on the clothes of ordinary women.

Jenny then talked about Fermin's Button Factory, which was started in 1655 and is still in existence today. They make the buttons for the ceremonial uniforms of many regiments. All the buttons seen during Trooping the Colour ceremonies are made by Fermin.

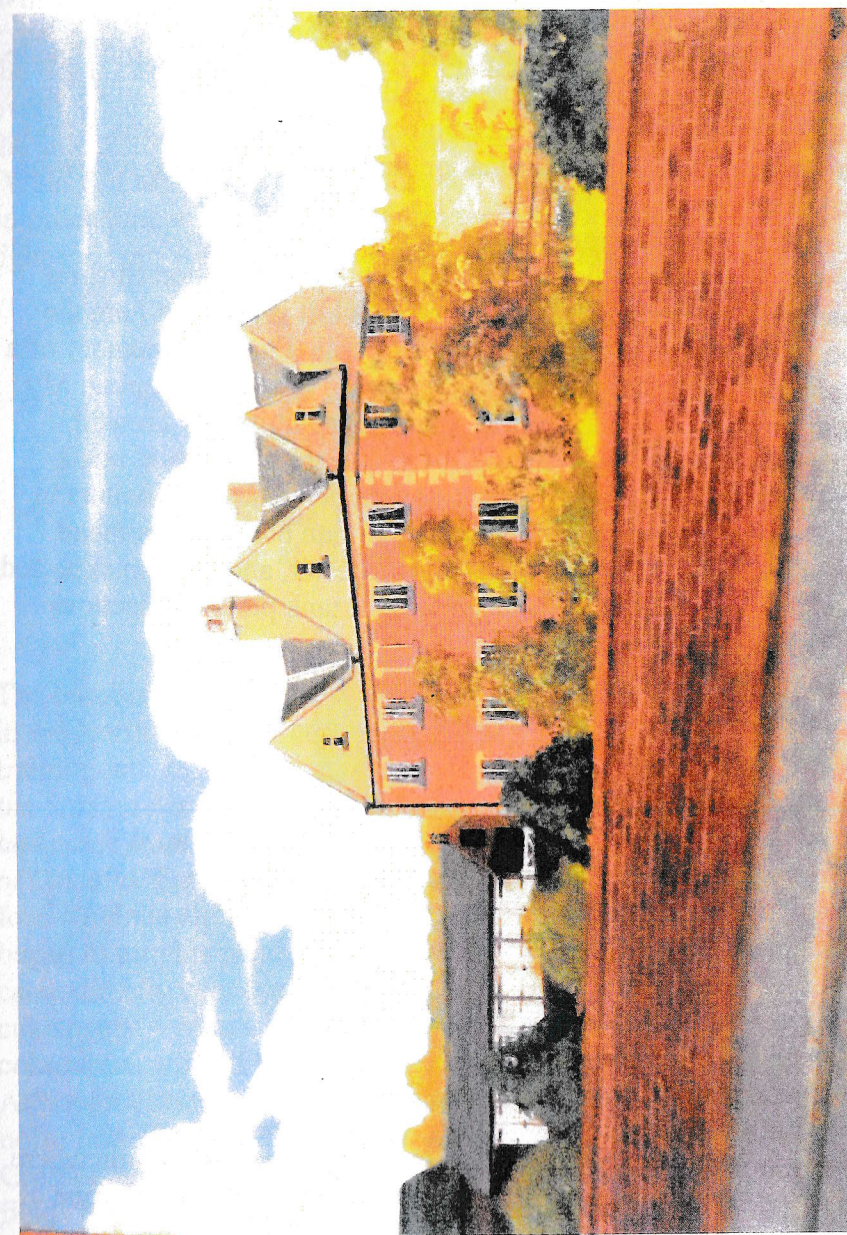
Jenny ended the presentation by showing us many different kinds of buttons. These included army buttons, those from various societies, liberty bodice buttons, a Beatles button and some showing old children's TV programmes, and many more.

As a final story Jenny told us about 'vegetable ivory' (from the Tagua nut). The trouser buttons for the soldiers in WW1 were made of this until it was realised that rats in the trenches were eating them! These were replaced by metal buttons.

The collection of buttons that Jenny brought with her caused a huge amount of interest during the break.

This was an outstanding talk. Jenny was very well prepared, her slides were very appropriate and she certainly knew her stuff. This talk greatly exceeded my expectations and I would heartily recommend it to any group.

John Shaw





### More memories from Danny Corns

Whilst working on the indexing of our archives, we came across a photograph which was donated by Pauline Geary of a Memorial Plaque in Stanton Village to a Flight Sergeant Bill Cox DFM. None of us knew any details about this so I took the photo along to Danny Corns, who I was sure would have some information on this incident. The following is Danny's response:

#### **The Grove Farm Disaster**

"Although there are people still around who heard the Short Stirling Bomber crash on the night of 31 August 1944, it is possible I am the only one around who saw the aircraft in trouble. From the memory of a nine year old, I believe it was around 11pm on a Sunday evening. My bedroom on Frog Row, (Crompton Street), faced towards Trowell. I heard this loud roar in the distance and knew straight away it was a large aircraft. After all, I had spent many nights in air-raid shelters in the early part of the war listening to the German bombers overhead heading for Coventry, Liverpool and Manchester, and we also expected Stanton to be bombed as it produced bombs, tank parts and sections later on of the Mulberry Harbour.



Looking out of my bedroom window the aircraft would be somewhere over Trowell Boards approaching from the East, with I believe one of its port engines on fire. That didn't disturb me as early in the war, walking past the newly erected bomb-plant on Lows Lane at Stanton

with my parents, we heard this explosion coming from the Dale Windmill area. It turned out to be a Wellington Bomber on an experimental run on Sunday evening, 12 July 1942. It was falling from the sky. I also witnessed the lone Heinkel 111 drop its 2000kg bomb over the New Works at Stanton on Sunday 29 September 1940, hitting the side of the Erewash Canal where it joined the Nutbrook Canal. (What is it about Sunday evenings and disasters?) As it was double summer-time when the Grove Farm incident took place it was still fairly light at 11pm with the local farmers still in the fields.

This lamp was made at Stanton Ironworks. It has been erected here on behalf of the pilot and the crew of a 630 Sqdn Lancaster bomber as a memorial to their flight engineer, Flt. Sgt. Bill Cox, DFM, later killed on a training flight in the Stirling aircraft crash at Grove Farm in this parish on 31st August 1944.

The bomber had set off from an airfield just south of Lincoln, possibly in the North Hykeham area and heading for the Bristol area on a training run. *(After further research by Nigel, it can be confirmed that the Stirling No LJ630 was attached to No 1654 Heavy Conversion Unit and came from RAF Wigsley, Nottinghamshire which is 7.6 miles west of Lincoln).* For some reason an engine caught fire and although it was a four-engined aircraft, the pilot obviously decided to return to base, and began to turn his plane and head back on a circular route. The aircraft came directly over our house, almost hitting the tall chimney of the coke ovens – what a disaster that would have been had it dropped on the coke ovens with all that gas – Hallam Fields would have disappeared. Although I heard a large bang one minute later, that could have been noise from Stanton. The following evening a group of us lads off Crompton Street went to see what had happened. We went through the fields beyond Twelve Houses and arrived below Grove Farm. Of course we couldn't get close as the RAF police were everywhere along with their Cadets, local police and other emergency services.



We were probably two fields away – there were bits of metal lying around, and it was said body parts were found although I never saw any. Richard Simpson who lived at the farm later had a propeller from the aircraft on the inside wall of the farmhouse. Ted Peck (who you wrote about in a previous newsletter) along with Dean Wright came to see me about five years ago – they had put a request in the local Advertiser for any photos or information about the crash and were interested in erecting an information board in the crash area. Due to planning regulations this never happened. If the aircraft had been 50 feet higher it may have made it over the plateau of No Man's Lane. It remains a mystery today as it could easily fly on one engine.

Grove Farm was erected in 1788 to accommodate the Manager of the nearby Dale Furnace. The furnace itself lasted only around 15 years and by 1803-4 had ceased operating. The farm building (now listed), later became the office of Stanton Ironworks.

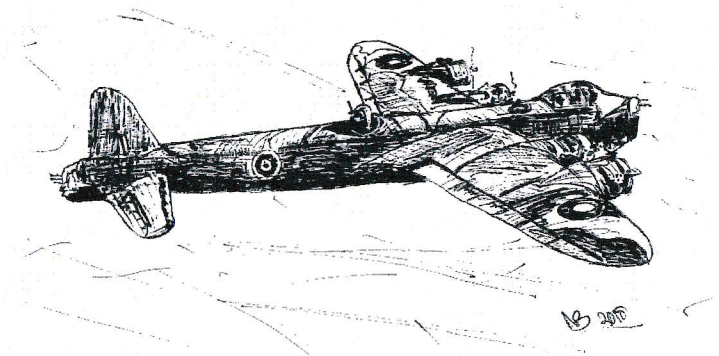
Furnace Pond itself is all that's left of the iron ore quarry. I remember as a youngster, during the 1940s, a group of us installing a rope on a tree branch overhanging the pond on which we would swing out. The last time I was up there it was still there nearly 60 years later!

It is quite a coincidence that Oswald Short was born at 3 Lows Lane, (a blue plaque adorns the property, which was partly funded by the Ilkeston History Society). He, along with his brothers who also lived at 3 Lows Lane, founded the Short Aircraft Company, later Short/Harland now owned by Bombardier. I believe a remembrance service is held by the Cenotaph at the Stanton by Dale Village Church around the time of the disaster. Over the years family members of the airmen have attended the service."



The lamp and accompanying plaque are on the left hand side of the path leading to St Michael and All Angels Church, Stanton by Dale. The seven airmen are also named on the war memorial within the churchyard:

Alexander, Raymond George (Sergeant – navigator)  
 Arthur, Paul Druce (Flight Sergeant – Royal Australian Airforce)  
 Cox, William (Flight Sergeant – engineer)  
 Hughes, Aereon (Sergeant – air bomber)  
 Lambell, James (Sergeant – flight engineer)  
 Westhead, Thomas Henry (Sergeant – air gunner)  
 Wilkinson, Bruce Gordon (Pilot Officer – Royal Australian Airforce)





## Great fire at Stapleford – estimated damage £50,000

Taken from Ilkeston Pioneer Thursday 13 January 1881

About midnight on Thursday last a fire broke out at Stapleford, which resulted in the total destruction of a large lace factory belonging to Mr Joseph Fearfield, and which also consumed both manufactured and un-manufactured goods to the extent of many thousands of pounds. It is conjectured that the disaster had its commencement in an attic wherein a large quantity of rough brown lace was stored, and of which the engine chimney formed a portion of one of the walls. The Stapleford engine was quickly on the spot, but by that time the flames had got a great hold on the building, and the chances of saving property in the upper portion of the premises, or any part of the factory itself, were seen to be very meagre. However, the men got their engine to work from pumps in the backyard and tanks attached to the building, and made strenuous efforts to prevent the spread of the conflagration, while a large number of the work people and residents in the village who had heard the alarm came forward and set themselves with a will to the task of removing as much as possible of the stock from the lower rooms before the fire enveloped the whole, which it did in a comparatively brief space of time. Rapid, however, as was the spread of the flames, the aid so cordially rendered by the villagers was of great importance, as through it a good deal of valuable property in the shape of lace was removed from the burning pile to a place of safety. At last, however, all operations in this direction had to cease as the roof fell in, and all attempts to enter the factory were attended with considerable risk. This was about the stage at which matters had arrived when the first contingent of the Nottingham Brigade put in an appearance. At first the Nottingham engines drew from tanks and pumps, but these soon failed, and then there was nothing for it but to bring the water from the Erewash – a distance of 400 yards. This was done through 44 lengths of hose by pumping from one engine to another, the Stapleford engine all the time being kept at work from the big private tank. In spite of all efforts the flames rapidly got complete hold of the premises, which were soon a total wreck. The factory was one of considerable extent – giving employment to between 200 and 300 persons – so that not only has misfortune fallen upon the owner, but the effect upon the village

generally will be severely felt. There are several circumstances particularly unfortunate to Mr Fearfield connected with the event, and the principle of these is that although the damage done amounts to between £40,000 and £50,000 he is not insured to anything like this amount. The policies he has effected are in the Mutual Fire Insurance Corporation, Limited; and the equitable office. There were in the factory 50 odd machines, and a new one of considerable value had only just been put in, while a new winding engine had been started that week. Of course in this department there is a total loss and the amount of this alone is estimated at £10,000.

Ilkeston Pioneer – Thursday 20 January 1881

THE GREAT FIRE – The extent of the fire at Mr Fearfield's factory at Stapleford on Friday is quite as great as reported by us, and the damage, which has been estimated at the sensational figure of £50,000, is fully accounted for when it is known that the factory was stored with valuable lace pieces, most of which have been destroyed. During the recent depression in the lace trade, Mr Fearfield kept all his hands on at full work, although it was impossible for him to dispose of the completed material, and this forms the bulk of the stock consumed by the fire. No less than 60 lace frames, some of them valued at several hundred pounds sterling each, were ruined by the fire, which was of a very fierce nature. As an instance of the power of the conflagration, it may be mentioned that the cast-iron columns were literally melted, and the molten metal ran about in streams. The distress which is likely to ensue in the village in consequence of the fire, nearly half the inhabitants being employed at the lace factory, which indeed was the staple industry of the place, is likely to be very severe, and it is understood that steps will be taken to institute remedial measures in the shape of relief, Mr Fearfield himself having offered to head the subscription list. The people affected by the fire number upwards of 300.

Nigel Brooks



## Thomas Towle (part two)

In the last Newsletter (N o 44 – Spring 2018), I gave a short account of Thomas Towle. Thomas was an important figure in the development and administration of Stapleford in the latter part of the 19th century and early 1900's. He was buried in Stapleford Cemetery but I hadn't been able to identify his headstone although being such an important figure in Stapleford at the time, I thought he must have had one. Many of the graves in the cemetery are in a poor state of repair due to age and vandalism etc over the last 100 years or so. With the help of my son Simon, we were able to identify Thomas's Stone by lifting a number of stones which were lying face down and photograph the inscription. Unfortunately, we were unable to flip the stone over safely and had to lay it back face down. It is a pity that some of the graves cannot be repaired or at least the stones turned over to reveal the identity of the occupants.

### **Thomas was buried in Stapleford Cemetery in plot 48**

IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY OF

THOMAS TOWLE,

WHO WAS CALLED

TO THE HIGHER SERVICE

ON NOV. 18. 1918. AGED 85

DEEPLY AND WIDELY BELOVED

MARY ANN TOWLE,

SECOND WIFE OF THE ABOVE

WHO PASSED PEACEFULLY AWAY

ON JUNE 1. 1911 AGED 76

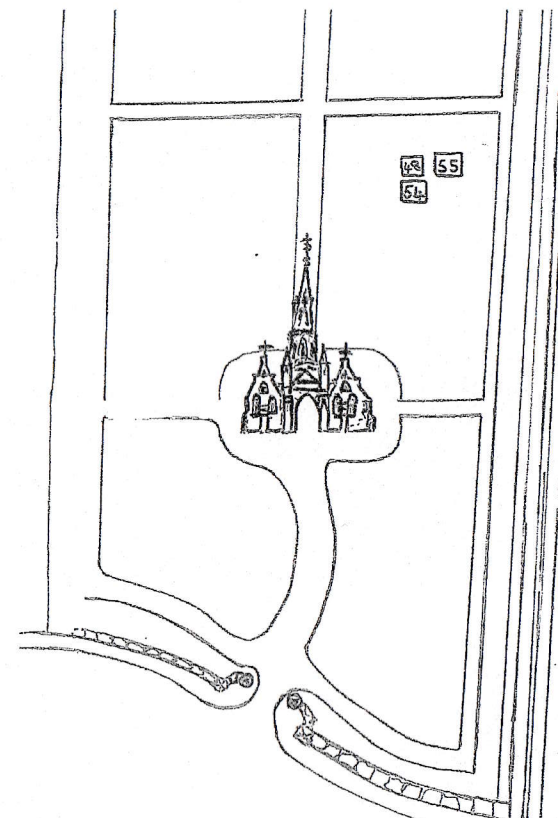
MARY ELIZABETH TOWLE,

AT 61 SHE DIED ON DEC. 31. 1918.

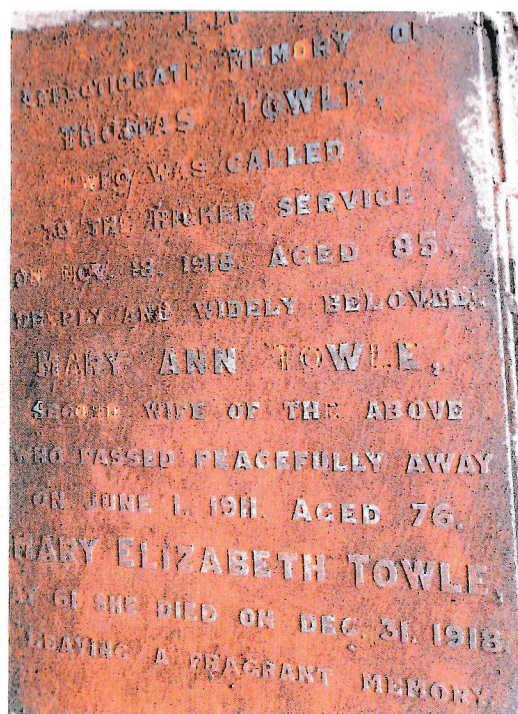
LEAVING A FRAGRANT MEMORY

Their headstone is lying face down. It is directly behind the stone of John Henry Cockeram, 1873 – 1939, (plot 54). The stone to the right of Thomas's is also lying face down - this belongs to Henry Hall who died 1 October 1929, his wife Elizabeth who died 15 April 1950, and their two sons, George died 10 June 1911 and Ernest died 17 November 1914, ( plot 55).

If anyone has any information on the Towle family or Thomas Towle the history society would be very pleased to hear from them.



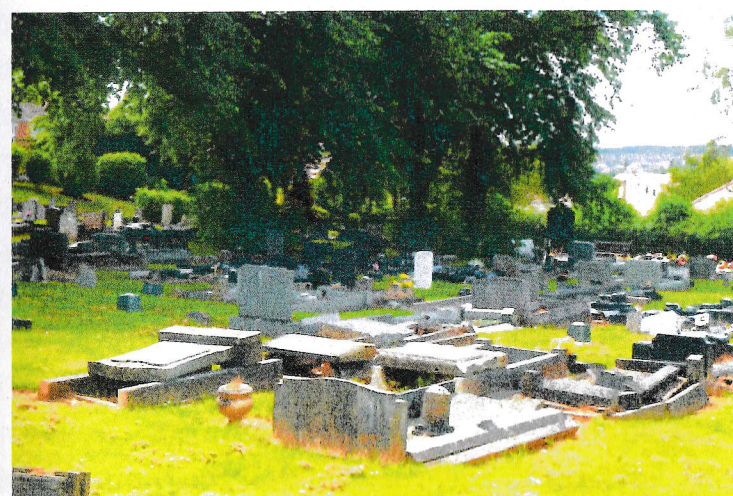




## Stapleford U3A History Group transcribes part of Stapleford Cemetery

Members of Stapleford & District U3A Family History Group spent last summer recording the gravestone memorials in the old part of the Stapleford Cemetery.

The idea of this project came originally from Cheryl Cooper and Janet Cross, who were researching their own family tree. They approached Sharon Bosworth, the group U3A Family History Group co-ordinator.



Between 10 & 15 volunteers spent many hours at the cemetery mapping & noting the inscriptions of over 750 memorial stones with around 1200 names.

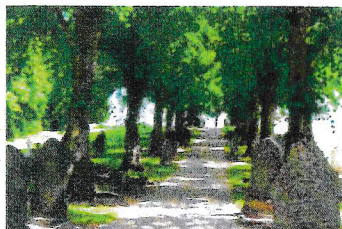
They have done a brilliant professional job and the results can be found on the website:

<https://staplefordcemeterymemorials.wordpress.com/>

The group of volunteers still meet and are now transcribing the gravestone memorials in the newer part of the cemetery.



Our Society Library has a hard copy (book) of the findings.



**STAPLEFORD CEMETERY**

Cemetery Road, Stapleford,  
Nottingham, NG9 6HP

**MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS**

by Volunteers of the Stapleford branch of the U3A



Stapleford and Sandiacre News – 7 November 1919

## STAPLEFORD GIRL'S MISTAKE

### TAKES POISON FOR MEDICINE

How a Stapleford girl, Margaret Agnes Ward, 15, Eaton Road, inadvertently partook of a dose of cyanide of potassium was related to Coroner Bradwell at an inquiry on Saturday. It appeared that the deceased suffered from a cold, and proceeded to the cupboard for a dose of medicine. There were two bottles labelled "ammoniated quinine". One bottle was empty, and the other contained about two tablespoons of liquid. It transpired that this bottle contained cyanide of potassium, obtained for killing wasps, and the girl drank a dose from this bottle. Doctor Edward Kingsbury said he found the girl unconscious. He realised that the case was almost hopeless. Artificial respiration was applied, but was of no avail. It was a case of acute poisoning. He was shown the bottle from which the fatal dose was taken, and he recognised it as either prussic acid or cyanide of potassium. The Coroner declared "Death was due from misadventure, by taking a dose of cyanide of potassium".

Nigel Brooks



## Stapleford's Unsung Heroes

WE all know about Sir John Borlase Warren,  
Walter Parker VC., Arthur Mee, Tom Martin,  
Rene Shimwell etc.....

..... but there are other **Stapleford** people who  
have lived interesting and important lives.

WE would love to tell their stories.  
If you know of any of these please let us know.

## The manufacturers prices of **HOMEWORTHY BEDROOM FURNITURE**

are due to be increased on January 1st.  
Fortunately we have considerable stocks of  
most models and we shall continue to offer  
them at

### 1977 PRICES

LESS OUR USUAL DISCOUNTS

while stocks last  
To the best of our belief they cannot be bought  
cheaper anywhere in Britain

**SAIL** The Furnishers and  
**BROTHERS** Carpet specialists with  
the largest collection  
for miles around

OF STAPLEFORD

Private Parking

Phone 397121

## THE SHIMWELL HESFORD SCHOOL OF DANCING

PARK STREET, STAPLEFORD

Beginners' Modern Ballroom & Latin American Class  
Monday 8.30 to 10.00 p.m. — Fee 35p

Basic steps in Waltz, Quick-step, Cha-Cha-Cha, Rhumba,  
Samba and Jive.

Commencing Monday, January 9

Further particulars ring Sandiacre 397193 or 392014

Adverts from 1978

Selected by Nigel Brooks



**PRICE LIST of items for sale at Society Meetings**  
**At any other time please apply to the Chairman**

Stapleford Town Trail	£1.00
Stapleford Tea Towels	£2.95
Leather bookmarks	£0.80
Local views – cards with envelopes	£1.00
Pen & ink drawings by Jack Vernon	£1.00

Full colour illustrated maps of Stapleford + Borlase Warren Coat  
of Arms, framed (produced to order) £14.00

Society Newsletters – back copies available at reduced prices

.....  
CHAIRMAN – John Shaw: 0115-9397601

email: johnshaw111@gmail.com

TREASURER/SECRETARY – Pat Hodgkiss: 0115-9469152

Website: [www.staplefordlocalhistory.co.uk](http://www.staplefordlocalhistory.co.uk)

**The deadline for submission of items for the next  
Spring 2019 issue of the Newsletter is 31 March.  
Material can be given to any committee member or the  
above-named.**

**This is YOUR newsletter! We'd love to hear from you!**

Front cover

Memorial Plaque to the men of Stapleford who fell in  
World War One, 1914 – 1918,  
St Helen's Church Memorial Chapel