



TRUST TOPICS

Doncaster Civic Trust Newsletter ©

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**Doncaster Civic Trust : Registered Charity No. 508674 : Founded in 1946
Hon. Sec : E L Braim, 2 Lawn Road, Doncaster DN1 2JF Tel : 01302 367512**

The New Sikh Temple, Catherine Street, Waterdale



The glazed south entrance elevation, with St James' Baths to the right



Graphics and domes facing Waterdale

This striking, recently-opened building now stands between St James' Baths and the County Court. It was designed by local architect Colin Harwood. He was the designer of the modern Glass House on Bennetthorpe, which was featured in "Grand Designs", and which some Trust members were lucky enough to visit.

The new Sikh Temple stands on the site of a former school and school house which the Sikh community had used for many years. It is a flat-roofed, two-storey building of well-laid red brickwork, with its southern entrance elevation clad in polished ceramic tiles. Its unique feature is the traditional golden dome above the entrance, and the smaller versions at each end of the building on the roof parapet. The building is further enlivened by shiny cultural graphics applied to the plain surfaces.

It is a distinctive, contemporary landmark giving the Sikh community an enhanced presence in the town.



National Civic Trust The Latest News

Peter Coote had written an article about the Civic Trust and its president Griff Rhys Jones. This was already edited and the finished page ready to be dropped into this newsletter when I received an e-mail bombshell.

On 17 April 2009 the Chairman, Philip Kolvin QC, announced that, because of the Trust's diminishing income in the current "squeeze", it could no longer continue and was to go into administration. He said: "I still passionately believe in the civic movement, but it now needs grassroots members of vision and energy to start afresh with a new organisation, working within its means and building gradually from the bottom". There is no effect on this Civic Trust.

This is very disappointing news, because the (national) Civic Trust had modernised and done some terrific work recently, being a focus for local groups and keeping them up to date with new legislation and best practice, as well as promoting successful initiatives by local civic societies.

Summer Outings 2009

Please use the loose booking form

Markenfield Hall and Ripon: Tuesday 2nd June 2009



Markenfield Hall, entrance elevation

Full day outing leaving Waterdale at 9.30 am
Coffee/lunch stop in Ripon
Own arrangements for lunch

Depart 1.30 pm for Markenfield Hall. A most interesting manor house built in 1310, confiscated by Elizabeth I after the Rising of the North in 1569 and since then, a farm.

Now restored and lived in by Lady Curteis, it presents a fascinating example of an early, almost untouched house.

Leave Markenfield at 3.45 pm for the Cascade Bistro for afternoon tea

Cost: £24 per person

Bookings to John Holmes
53 Thorne Road
Doncaster DNI 2EX

Bramham Park and York Gate Garden: Thursday 23rd July 2009



Bramham Park



York Gate Garden
Image : John Whitaker

Full day outing leaving Waterdale at 9.00 am for Bramham Park where we will have coffee and cakes before a tour of the house. A fine baroque house of 1710 for the 1st Lord Bingley, with fine furniture and paintings

We shall leave Bramham at approx. 12.30, as the gardens are not open to us, and comprise mainly woodland walks. Members may wish to bring a picnic lunch which could be consumed on the coach as we drive to Leeds for the second visit, in Adel.

York Gate Garden is an exceptional one-acre garden to a private house, and is renowned for its outstanding design and the detail of its planting. Tea and biscuits will be served.

Cost: £30 per person

Bookings to Mrs Sue Burley
17 The Oval
Bessacarr, Doncaster DN4 5LJ

Curtains for the Odeon



2009

April 2009: the former Gaumont Palace is now reduced to a hoarding for advertisements.

The story of the former Gaumont has moved on since the feature in Newsletter 33, January 2008. Campaigners fighting to save the building have failed to have it listed by English Heritage, and the developer Lazarus Properties has submitted two applications to Doncaster Council. One is for Conservation Area Consent to demolish the building; and the other is for permission to construct a new mixed-use building on the site.

In response to the application to have the building spot-listed, English Heritage researched and inspected the building in some detail. In the 1930s, Gaumont Palaces were among the most opulent cinemas in the country, often with large stages to accommodate variety and theatre. Doncaster's Gaumont was opened in September 1934, to the designs of William Edward Trent, their chief architect, assisted by his son, William Sydney Trent. With a capacity of 2,020 it became the largest cinema in South Yorkshire.

Of the few remaining features, the most significant is the bas-relief at high level above the restaurant windows on the Hall Gate frontage, now covered by the metal cladding. This was by the architect's brother, Newbury A Trent, and depicts "the progress of a film from its conception, the writing of a scenario, the building of the set, to the shooting and completion".

English Heritage considered the Doncaster cinema to be a good example of its type, being one of Trent's major projects, and is cited in studies on the history of cinema architecture. Unfortunately, "most of the features that gave it architectural interest have been removed", the assessor wrote, concluding that the auditorium was almost unrecognisable from its 1930s Art Deco design. Features of the circulation spaces like the sycamore panelling that once covered the walls, the geometric grille-work and the murals depicting film stars were the distinctive elements that gave the building special interest. These have all been lost in successive "modernisations".

Externally, English Heritage considered that the design had been compromised by the addition of the metal cladding, and the associated damage to the signage fins and the front first floor windows. Some of the canopies on the south (Thorne Road) side of the building had been removed.

In fact, all the curved elements of the original design have either been removed or over-clad, except for the curved corner of the building itself.

Although the bas-relief had survived, this was considered by the assessor not to compensate for the damage and alterations made to a large proportion of the entrance.



1936

This image shows the opulent Gaumont Palace in its prime. The films showing were Chaplin's *Modern Times*, and *The Mine with the Iron Door*, starring Richard Arlen, both released in 1936. The card is unwritten and I had assumed, wrongly, that it was from the 1950s. So, Newsletter 33 was incorrectly captioned.

In response to the suggested importance of the building as a concert venue for “music legends”, most notably the Beatles, the assessor wrote that “internationally renowned acts played in venues across the country on a regular basis, and so these events cannot be said to give the building special interest in a national context”.

The assessor recommended that the building should not be listed for these 3 reasons.

- Numerous design features both internally and externally have been removed or damaged through successive modernisation.
- The original auditorium space has been compromised by the insertion of two extra cinema screens.
- The historic interest of the building is of local rather than national significance.

Two other advisers agreed with these conclusions, so the building was not listed.

Because the Odeon is within the Christ Church Conservation Area, it still requires (conservation area) consent for its demolition, and this can be granted by a local authority. Consent for demolition should not be granted until a suitable replacement building has been designed and approved.

The Government recommends a condition on these approvals stating that the demolition of a building in a conservation area should not begin until a contract has been let for the construction of its replacement, for which planning permission must have been obtained. This is intended to prevent unsightly gap sites in historic streets, as happened with the previous Odeon site further down Hall Gate.

Archie Sinclair

The Contents of the English House 1500-1700

Malcolm Dolby 15 January 2009



Our Chairman gave about 60 members a warm welcome at our first meeting of the New Year. After wishing us all a Happy New Year he went on to introduce Mr Dolby to us. Mr Dolby was no stranger to many as he had been well known for his work at Doncaster Museum.

He began by explaining that most of the detail of his talk had been obtained from probate inventories, which had to be made on the death of all householders. These inventories provided details of all the possessions, wealth, and occupations of the householder. The churches were responsible for the upkeep and storage of these documents, which are still retained by local archives.

He then proceeded, with the aid of excellent slides, to guide us through the possessions of a variety of homes in the 16th and 17th centuries, starting with perhaps the most important asset, money. The money was mostly silver and gold coins, kept in sturdy wooden chests, usually made by the local carpenter. These coins often had chipped edges as small bits were often cut off and used to settle debts. We then looked at clothing in different styles and materials depending on the wealth and occupation of the owner.

Our next stop was the kitchen, the heart of the home. A huge fireplace contained all the culinary needs of the family ranging from very elaborate wrought iron cranes and spits, pots and pans of various sizes and uses, porringers, skillets and even toasters. The wooden box containing the salt was probably the most valued item.

We then went on a fascinating journey following the development of English furniture, starting with very simple benches and stools mostly put together from wood and nails by the local carpenter. Joint stools were made with more skill by the joiner. Backs were slowly added to the stools and eventually the chair emerged, culminating in the great chairs of the 1770's. We also saw the development of cupboards, linen presses and tables. New materials also appeared, mahogany replacing the oak which had been used up to that time. Along with the table came the advent of tea pots, coffee and chocolate pots and goblets made of silver or pewter.

Sleeping had generally been done sitting up until now, in bed chairs which gradually became four-posters that dominated the bedroom. Often there was a truckle bed tucked under the main bed. The mattress was a very basic affair stuffed with straw or feather according to your status, and most mattresses provided homes for large numbers of fleas and other such domestic wildlife. The mattress was suspended on ropes strung from either side of the bed frame, and these ropes had a tendency to sag, hence the expression "sleep tight".

This was a lively and interesting talk giving a real glimpse of the social history of the period. We also discovered the origins of many of today's commonly used sayings. My impression was that so much modern design is reflected in our past. After a number of comments and questions from members, our chairman thanked Mr Dolby for an interesting talk and, to round off a very pleasant evening, invited us all to partake of a glass of sherry and some of Tina's wonderful baking. This was an excellent start to our new year and I would like to say thank you to all who help to make our meetings possible.

Mary Bateman

Signs of the Times

Andrew Firth 19 February 2009



Andrew Firth is an assiduous and witty observer of the endless variety of notices, milestones, street signs and advertisements that adorn our surroundings.

He began by showing a slide of a house in Abbey Lane, Sheffield, which is covered with a beautifully arranged collection of old enamelled advertisements.

This was followed by a trip to Retford railway station and a stone memorial commemorating the wartime work of the WVS (now WRVS) in the area. This included the provision of 2,284,000 dinners!

We then visited the grave of Tip, a very brave dog whose owner died on the Derbyshire moors one winter. Tip remained by his body for 10 weeks until it was discovered.

These three slides set the scene for a lively illustrated talk which was informative but never dull. Mr Firth knew his subjects and provided us with a lot of information relating to the history and location of these “signs of the times”.

He took us on a tour which included old milestones with interesting spellings; carvings on the Derbyshire rocks of ships in Nelson’s fleet at Trafalgar: Victory, Defiance and Royal Sovereign; a sign high on a tree saying, “no manure removal”, to which a member of a previous audience had remarked, “Got to be a good cow to get up there!” and a large advertisement outside a farm in Skipton saying, “Wear British Wool – 4.3 million sheep can’t be wrong”.

Mr Firth had an excellent collection of notices from cafés including, “Prices subject to change according to customer’s attitude”. He showed us a disabled space in a cycle park and “Bargain Basement Upstairs” in a shop.

Some were sad, including a recently reinstated memorial in Matlock Park to a PC Wright who drowned in 1911. A young girl he was attempting to apprehend fell into the local river during the chase. PC Wright drowned while trying to save her. She survived.

Mr Firth told us that the presentation is one of a collection of 30 such, and he entertains many groups and communities.

It was a very pleasant and informative occasion on a dark February evening, and it raised our spirits. I, for one, will be far more observant of the variety of interesting, sometimes sad, sometimes historic and frequently amusing “signs of the times” that surround us as we go about our daily lives

Elizabeth Marsden

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Gardens Great and Small : Looking at Some Open to the Public

Julian Brandram 19 March 2009

The final talk of this season was a photographic whistle-stop tour of gardens open to the public.

It began with the Welsh National Botanic garden where Julian Brandram showed us pictures of the Old Estate walled garden with a magnificent glass house holding many rare plants. We then moved closer to home to Brodsworth Hall garden – a classic Victorian garden with its lush planting and large fernery.



Brodsworth Hall Garden

Image : English Heritage

Next came my favourite local garden at Newby Hall. We were shown beautiful photographs of its wonderful herbaceous border, the longest in the country, we were told. This long-established garden is well planned with cleverly positioned urns and water features.

From Newby we travelled down the road to Renishaw with its beautiful trees leading the eye down to the lake. The ancient statues here led us on to Italy to look at more statues in their natural environment.

We then returned to Wales, to the hillside garden at Powys, with urns, an old orangery and statues of dancing sheep reminiscent of Italy.

York Gate garden came next, to whet our appetite for the Trust's visit in July. Julian walked us down the topiary walk and pointed out the sunken garden and a quaint potting shed. I am eager to see more, and look forward to our visit.



York Gate Garden, Adel, Leeds

Image : John Whitaker

There was more topiary to see in Tatton Park where there was also a very strange building like a cut-out pumpkin.

Beth Chatto's garden was an inspiration. An old car park had been turned into a beautiful sun-trap garden like something on the continent.

We flew back to France to admire the ultimate formal gardens of Villandry and the huge garden at Versailles. This was complete excess with huge fountains and a canal that had gondolas floating down it in its hey-day. We continued with the water theme in Italy where a garden near Venice was entered by water and had wonderful vistas and huge fountains.

Julian Brandram gave us a fascinating introduction to some of the best gardens in England and abroad. Unfortunately, most are too far away for a Civic Trust summer outing, but don't forget to come with us to York Gate on 23 July.

Sue Barnsdale

Two Local Pubs Suggested for Listing

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has recently made applications for two pubs in the Doncaster area to be listed, and we have supported them. Both buildings date from the 1930s and, although not truly historic, their special interest derives from their intact survival, inside and out.



Left and below
Coach & Horses
Barnburgh



Right
The Plough
West Laith Gate
Doncaster
1934



The two buildings have some common features, like their scale, their broadly-vernacular character and Mansard roof profiles with similar dormer windows, but they are quite different in their contexts: one a detached country pub in the centre of a village, near the church; the other in the heart of built-up Doncaster.

CAMRA is campaigning nationally to protect pubs that have survived unaltered, and still remain as their designers intended. It says that these number only 198 pubs out of a national total of over 55,000.

The Guildhall Columns Re-visited

The feature in the last newsletter, about the columns from the former Guildhall, prompted two members to write in immediately about their whereabouts. The Guildhall stood in Frenchgate until the late 1960s, and it had been suggested that its columns ended up first on the Sandy Lane tip, and later in the Lakeside groundworks.

One member assured me that the columns were dumped in a field close to the level crossing at the Bentley end of Arksey village. He visited the site and saw for himself the broken columns and damaged Corinthian capitals. Armed with hammer and cold chisel he removed some decorative fragments as mementos of the once-grand building in Frenchgate. He still has the fragments, which moved house with him, and are now in his present garden.

The other member was told only recently that the portico columns from the Guildhall were buried in a garden in Arksey. Apparently, someone who was working for the contractors was building a house at Arksey where there was a problem with flooding in the garden. The columns were sunk into the ground to stop the flooding.

So, thanks to our members: one has conclusive first-hand knowledge and evidence; and the other suggests that hopes of the columns' recovery may now be dead and buried. Case closed.

Planning Matters

The Planning and Conservation Sub Committee meets monthly to consider whether we should comment on planning applications affecting listed buildings and conservation areas.

Since our last Trust Topics we have looked at a number of applications including barn conversions, new flats, new houses, redevelopment sites and advertisement hoardings. The types of applications are always varied and the committee is kept busy. However, despite the numbers of applications considered we have only needed to comment on a few cases.

We examined a resubmitted application to convert Hill House School and Edenfield, both at the top of the Town Fields, into flats. The application included two new blocks at the rear of each property. We reported in Trust Topics last September that we had raised concerns about the original application, mainly related to landscaping, parking and trees. The resubmitted plans, however, showed that the new block adjacent to Edenfield would be of increased height. We objected because we felt that it would detract from Edenfield, an important Victorian house, and would result in private houses being overlooked on Lawn Avenue. Despite our concerns the application was approved by the local planning authority.

At the same meeting, we objected to an application from the Stables Restaurant in the grounds of the listed High Melton Hall, who proposed to attach a railway carriage to the stables for use as a seating area for the restaurant. We objected as we considered that it would affect the character of existing buildings including the stables, the church and others.

Sometimes works are completed where the applicant has not applied for the necessary consents. This happened in the case of the Priory Café in Priory Place. The listed building had been repainted resulting in a strident colour scheme detracting from the overall harmony of the terrace. Doncaster MBC has undertaken much work with guidance and grants for improvements in this area over the past few years. We objected to this application and it was later refused.

The fate of one building has been considered at every one of our last three meetings, the now disused Odeon Cinema. As explained on page 5, the application by a local group to have the building listed was rejected by English Heritage because too much of the original design had been lost. Consequently, when the new owners applied for conservation area consent to demolish it, we raised no objections. However, we requested that a condition should be imposed that no demolition should take place until a contract had been signed for building the new development. Hopefully, this would avoid empty demolition sites disfiguring the town such as the site further down Hall Gate where the previous Odeon once stood.

The Trust needed to be content with the design proposed for new building on the Odeon site, one of the most prominent in the town. The first application was for a mixed use development including A1 retail, A3 restaurants, B1 offices, D2 gymnasium and a casino. We objected to this application in March because it would have been in places 7 storeys high. This was considered to be unacceptable as it would be alien to the character of the Christ Church Conservation area. We suggested that 5 storeys would be a more appropriate height.

However, a revised application was submitted which our committee considered at the end of April. This was a better scheme with the height reduced to five storeys as we had requested. We have raised no objections to this revised scheme.

Planning and Conservation Sub-committee

Hall Gate – “This Once Great Street” Our Letter to Doncaster Free Press

In the Free Press on 23 April 2009, Sir David Danum bemoaned the state of Hall Gate, “this once great street”, and asked what was the Civic Society doing? “Having a long sleep, it seems”, he thought. We were moved to respond:

Doncaster Civic Trust has been championing the town’s historic buildings for over 60 years, so it was good to see Sir David Danum promoting the wonderful Georgian and Regency architecture that we can still enjoy. Our Town Trail guide is almost 30 years old and still popular.

We agree that Hall Gate has been hit badly in a few places. When you double the size of the Frenchgate Centre at the north end of town, and then suffer a recession, something has to give. The result is some vacant properties, particularly at the opposite end of the town.

Despite this, many fine historic properties in Hall Gate are well maintained and are a credit to their owners and the street. Sir David’s litter may be “indescribable” literally because most of the time the street is clean, thanks to the Council’s workforce.

We agree that the old Odeon site is a real problem. With the adjoining fire-damaged buildings it was to be a new pub development by J D Wetherspoon. Doncaster Civic Trust commented on the application, seeking to ensure that its design was appropriate to the Conservation Area setting. However, the company did not go ahead and, instead, took over the former Yates’s in Cleveland Street, when it closed. The site now awaits development and blights Hall Gate.

The Council and the Civic Trust have to work with the market forces, and can only guide development when the entrepreneurs and investors re-appear after this recession.

Those old enough can remember when Hall Gate had some of the best shops, probably in the 1950s. But after the 1960s the strong magnet of the Arndale/Frenchgate shopping centre meant that the quality retail was unlikely ever to return. Today, the only growth seems to be in food and drink uses, as the estate agencies suffer a downturn.

Maybe the next big thing might be a return, in part, to Hall Gate’s original use, residential. With people living above offices and shops in the town centre, we might start to change towards a more liveable, civilised town centre.

Perhaps the Council could secure funding in the future to re-start the “Quality Streets” initiative, which never quite reached Hall Gate. It would do well to become more like High Street, with trees and wider footways.

Things are not all at a standstill, however. Lazarus Properties has made applications to redevelop the Odeon at the Thorne Road junction. It is keen to make its plans, even if a start on site might have to wait for an upturn in the market. Doncaster Civic Trust has made comments on all the recent applications for this important site, one of the most prominent corners in the town. We think it is important to get it right. And we are not asleep.

Archie Sinclair, Chairman

Christ Church Terrace from 1827 to the Present Day

An account of various properties in Christ Church Terrace, Doncaster, from 1827 to the present day. This is their history, as supplied by Trust member and resident of one of the houses, historian Gordon Smith. Additional material by Peter Coote, in italics.



The handsome town houses standing on a hill overlooking Christ Church are known as Christ Church Terrace. This should not be confused with the much later Christ Church Road, which leads off Thorne Road.

The information contained within this article is information taken from extracts of numerous title deeds in respect of 7, Christ Church Terrace. It is fortunate that these documents have survived and that on purchasing the property the present owner acquired all deeds from the time of its construction to the present day.

Built of orange rustic brick, with stone dressings, they are contemporary with the London three storey terraced town houses popular from the early 18th century. The raised ground floor comprises dining room which is separated from the kitchen and service area by a central sky-lit staircase. Principal reception rooms occupy the first floor and bedrooms are above. A similar block exists in Park Square, Leeds, and a wall plaque there states that such houses were designed and built for the occupation of "single professional gentlemen".

Originally known as New Church Terrace in 1827, the name changed to Christ Church Terrace after the dedicated name of Christ Church was adopted. As a result of extensive development along Thorne Road in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the number sequence of Christ Church Terrace was changed and no. 3 became no. 7. It is assumed therefore that the four properties mentioned in the title deeds refer to the houses now numbered 9, 8, 7 and 6. Because the change in number sequence also changed direction, no. 5 remained no. 5, whereas no. 6 is now no. 4.

Adjoining the original properties is a group of Edwardian houses each with a canted bay window, and numbered 1, 2 and 3. These replaced a large 18th century stone house occupied by the Crowther family and from which they ran a nursery on extensive gardens to the front and side of the house.

Christ Church Terrace, showing the 3 Edwardian houses to the right



The contrasting styles



Crowthers were noted seed suppliers and nurserymen not only to Doncaster's fashionable town houses but also to the neighbouring large country estates. By family descent, the nursery passed to the Wright family who demolished the old house and replaced it with three substantial terrace houses, retaining the first one for their own use. The nursery ceased trading in the 1960s after surviving in business on the same site for 200 years. Their house and nursery land was sold to the present owner, Mr Pye Patel. A descendant of the Wright family still, however, has an interest in one of the properties.

A comprehensive account of the origins and building of six terraced houses on land next to Mr Crowther's nursery:

Land in Doncaster, now the site of six three storey houses called Christ Church Terrace, was sold to Robert Saunders on 13th June 1827. He was a retired army officer and married Christiana Elston, daughter of Thomas Elston, whose trade was described as White Smith (tin). The conveyance contract states as follows:

"...other part of the said close called Sand Pit Close on towards the south by the said close formerly in the possession of Thomas Hawksworth but which was then used as a Nursery in the occupation of Mr. Crowther on or towards the West and by other part of the said close called Sand Pit Close then, set or started out as a building ground and sold and converted or intended so to be the said Robert Saunders on or towards the East".

A further deed was then made up to establish a family settlement and this was divided into three parts. Of the first part named were "William Hurst, the younger, of Doncaster, architect, and Edmund Godfrey of Stainforth, gentleman," of the second part was William Elston, gent., Mary Denison (nee Elston) wife of Thomas Denison (separated); Elizabeth Elston, spinster, Robert Saunders Esq., and his wife Christiana (nee Elston), and of the third part "Catherine Elston, spinster"



Although this is really a list of names, it also tells us more about the houses. For example, the involvement of William Hurst is very interesting. During the early nineteenth century he designed many of the town's buildings including the Subscription Rooms, Priory Place and the Priory Church, as well as, importantly, Christ Church.

Hurst's buildings still lend a touch of charm and grace to the townscape after nearly two hundred years. I think we can assume that he would have been keen to be involved in the development of the new houses as he would want to ensure that the designs of the new properties overlooking his church would be appropriate. I would suggest, therefore, that he was the architect of all the first six houses in the Terrace.

At this time there would have been little further development beyond Christ Church. A contemporary map shows that there were two large detached houses known as Field House and Broxholme, both long since demolished. A windmill stood on the edge of Town Fields, and near where Rectory Gardens now stands was Mr. Graham's Academy but there was little else. This was very much a rural scene. The terraced properties which stand today beyond the Church are much later and the land there would have been fields. The development of Thorne Road was very much a series of planned schemes by the Victorians.

The Elston family mentioned in the deeds were also well known. They were tradespeople who had amassed sufficient capital to be called 'gentlemen'. Eric Braim wrote about the Elstons in a Civic Trust Newsletter article in 1995, explaining how the Elston family rebuilt a property in Hall Gate as their residence. Today this is the Goose public house.

We also know who originally occupied the houses from the map. The first house, furthest away from town, was occupied by a Mrs Smith, then Mr Barton. Number 3 was a school occupied by a Mr. Heigham. Next was a Mr. Sorsby. The next house was the home of surveyor H. Sanderson and lastly that of a Mr. Sheppard

In 1832 Robert Saunders died and left his property to his wife Christiana Saunders.

According to the property deeds, on 3rd and 4th June 1839, Catherine Elston (Christian's younger sister) sold to William Hurst and Robert Baxter "all those three messes (messuages) and tenements situate and being in Christ Church Terrace in Doncaster aforesaid, together with the appurts (appurtenances), and the reversion etc. and all deeds etc".

Further extracts reveal 24th March 1858, by indenture of this date between Robert Baxter, gent, and John Lister of Doncaster, surgeon: First part. *Perhaps the Robert Baxter referred to was a solicitor who played a key role in bringing the railway to the town.*

By 1857 William Hurst, Catherine Elston and Mary Denison had all died and Christiana Saunders was the only surviving member of the Elston family. *Over the years they had been generous to Christ Church including purchasing stained glass windows.*

28th September 1857, "3 messes or tenements were put up for sale for auction at Pye's Royal Hotel in Doncaster", sold to William Henry Foreman by his agent, John Butterfield, for £1,180, and the money paid to Christiana Saunders. About this time Forman must have acquired a further property because from now on all reference is made to four houses.

At the time of the sale the properties in Christ Church Terrace were in the "respective occupation of Miss Mary Drabwell, Mrs Waller and Miss Wright and other messe or tenement with the garden and appurts in the occupation of the Rev'd Mr. Sculton".

William Henry Forman was a man with a mission, an acquirer, and one of Doncaster's most interesting characters of the nineteenth century. He changed the future direction of the town's development. Forman was born in Doncaster in 1794 but left the town as a boy and later became very successful in owning and running an ironworks in Wales. He used much of his finances in Doncaster, for example giving £1000 towards the re-building of the Parish Church after the 1853 fire. At this time he also began to buy up properties in the town including Hall Cross House, Beechfield House, Field House, part of the Wheatley Estate and Nether Hall, with the latter being acquired from the Copley trustees for £12,000 in 1856. It is widely thought that Forman was prompted into this purchasing spree by more than financial acumen. He had a genuine concern for the town he remembered as the 'sweetest of towns' and he sought to save the more attractive parts from the cheap cottage developments already appearing to the west of the town. No doubt his purchase of the Christ Church Terrace houses, or rather four of them, fitted into his overall plans. Even so he was only really successful in delaying development.

Most of his houses, such as Field House, have gone but there never was any really poor cottage development on his land. He did allow some building though; next to Christ Church Terrace he granted a site of 2 acres for a new Grammar School, provided the architect was George Gilbert Scott. This was duly built and still stands proudly on its site today.

William Henry Foreman died in 1869 leaving all his property in trust to his nephew Alexander Henry Brown, elder son of his sister Helena Giomuifred.

The deeds at this stage become more complex and unfortunately we do not have the space to outline every detail of what happened next. However, basically the will was challenged. Eventually, in 1874 The Court of Chancery ordered that the property left by William Henry Foreman should be sold and the money raised to be paid into Court to the credit of 'Brown and Collins', the account of the proceeds of the sale of the real estate subject to further order. At this time (1874) the annual rental per house was £74. By order of the Court of Chancery, W A Collins of Tonbridge had been given power to act and on the 12th March 1874 the Christ Church Terrace property had been sold by public auction at the Angel and Royal, Doncaster. It was listed as Lot 3 and the highest bidder was "Christiana Waller of Doncaster at £1,720". Christiana Waller may well have been living in Christ Church Terrace because it is recorded that at the time of purchase from William Henry Foreman's estate (owner of four of the six terraced properties) in 1870 they were rented to Miss Mary Drabwell, Mrs Waller, Miss Wright and the Rev'd Mr. Scruton. Later tenants were recorded as being Miss Sorsby, Benjamin Wood, Thomas Wright and the Rev'd C.Burke.

The sale of the four Christ Church Terrace houses to "Christiana Waller (spinster) was registered at Wakefield on 8th July 1875". By 1876 no. 3 was unoccupied, the last tenant having been Rev'd Charles Newike.

On 24th March 1876, Christiana Waller sold no. 3 (now 7) to Elizabeth Wadsworth of Barnburgh for £410.

It is at this point that the ownership of the four properties became separated and we can only follow the owners of the one house. However a more detailed study of the Population Census would tell us the details of the tenants of all the other houses, if not the owners.

Gordon Smith's article then details all the owners of no. 3, now no. 7. Space does not allow all the changes to be recorded, but we can say that Elizabeth Wadsworth left the house to her niece Henrietta Grindle and the Grindle family owned it until 1962 taking us into modern times.



Apart from the additional three houses, further alterations took place to several of the houses in the Edwardian period. Three of the original properties lost their original ground floor windows to be replaced by bays. These no doubt increased the size of the front rooms but they also had a major impact on the appearance of the terrace. Two of the houses retain the bays but no. 5 was superbly restored to its original appearance in 1977, winning a Doncaster Civic Trust Award for the work. The plaque may be seen on the outside of the building.

5 Christ Church Terrace with award plaque to the right of the door

Gordon Smith

NB Sources used include articles by Eric Braim on Nether Hall Park and a history of the Elston family which appeared in various editions of Doncaster Civic Trust newsletters.

The Back Page



Destination Newcastle-Gateshead

Newcastle-upon-Tyne has been an important destination for many years. Its castle (the clue is in the City's name!), built in 1080, commands a fine defensive view over the River Tyne, and of anyone daring enough to try and cross it. In the 19th and 20th centuries its engineering skills were exemplified by its bridges, shown above: the soaring arch of the Tyne Bridge (1928); behind it, Armstrong's Swing Bridge (1876); behind that, Robert Stephenson's High Level Bridge (1849), which carries the railway above the road. Behind these three arched bridges is the girdered Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, which carries the Metro railway on an altogether less elegant structure.



The view east from the Castle's keep

There have been significant changes since 2000 particularly on the south side of the river. The Millennium Bridge, shown above in the background, opened in 2001 for pedestrians and cyclists and was the winner of the RIBA Stirling Prize for Wilkinson Eyre Architects. It pivots on its ends, to open for ships like an eyelid, winking. To its right is the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art opened in 2002, in the former Rank's 1950's Baltic Flour Mill. Behind the Tyne Bridge is the shiny Sage Gateshead, the performance venue by Norman Foster, opened in 2005.





**Doncaster
Civic
Trust**

Summer Outings 2009 : Booking Forms

Please enclose remittance and make cheques payable to **“Doncaster Civic Trust”**.
Also, please add your telephone number in case we have to contact you.

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Markenfield Hall and Ripon: Tuesday 2nd June 2009

Return to John Holmes, 53 Thorne Road, Doncaster DN1 2EX by **26th May 2009**

I enclose £..... for.....places at £24.00 each

Name.....

Address.....

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Bramham Park and York Gate Garden: Thursday 23rd July 2009

Return to Mrs S Burley, 17 The Oval, Bessacarr, Doncaster DN4 5LJ by **16th July 2009**.

I enclose £.....for.....places at £30.00 each

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