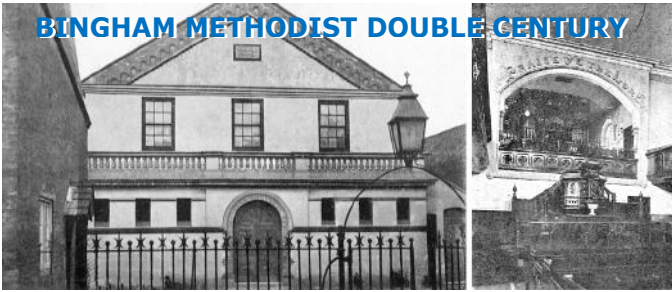


BINGHAM METHODIST DOUBLE CENTURY



From 24 – 29th May there will be an exhibition at the Bingham Methodist Church as part of the bi-centenary of the first worship on this site. Entitled 'On the Shoulders of Giants' it will focus on the influence the church has had nationally on society with particular examples from Bingham, paying regard to the debt we owe to our forefathers. Methodists were in the vanguard of such issues as education, the empowerment of women, justice for all and the Co-Operative movement to name just a few. Val Henstock is curating the exhibition and would be grateful for any relevant references that BHTA members or other readers have unearthed. Val's contacts are 01949 837510 or val24henstock@gmail.com.

[The photos show the church frontage and interior c. 1900;]

when schoolchildren found him blackberrying in Tollerton woods, six miles from the camp. Two more were found

in East Leake 'playing at cards while crouching beneath a hedge'.

At least one was held initially in Bingham Police Station (in the Old Court House in Church Street), and presumably incarcerated in the tiny barred holding cell (left) which can still be seen in the building today.

[With acknowledgement to Professor John Beckett of the University of Nottingham.]



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VICE CHAIRMAN:

Thanks to **Hammond Property Services** for their support by printing this issue of *Discovering Bingham*

WORLD BHTA'S !

When searching the internet for the website of our Bingham Heritage Trails Association be careful to avoid several other somewhat different associations They include the British Horse Trials Association and the British Healthcare Trades Association as well as the Barbados Hotel & Tourism Association and the Brisbane Hardcourt Tennis Association !

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 29th June 2018 AGM
7.30 pm in the W.I. Hall

Saturday 24th November
Annual fundraising Quiz Supper
in the W.I. Hall.

2018 FOURTEENTH LECTURE SERIES

Methodist Centre
at 7.30pm.
Admission FREE

Thursday 8th March

Tony Knight

Metal Detecting
Adventure

with exhibition of
mainly Roman finds

Thursday 10th May

Adrian Henstock

By the Sword Divided -
Nottinghamshire in the
Civil War

DISCOVERING BINGHAM

Quarterly NEWSLETTER of the **Bingham Heritage Trails Association**
www.binghamheritage.org.uk Registered Charity No: 1090475 Issue No.59 - March 2018

BHTA: Increasing public awareness of our heritage in Architecture, Folk & Natural History, Archaeology & Geology



RADCLIFFE'S MEMORIAL

"The Creation of Rockley Memorial Park" was the title of the first of our free lectures given by four members of Radcliffe on Trent WW1 Group on February 8th. Pictured below from L to R: Marion Caunt, David Barton, Rosie Collins, and Pauline Woodhouse outlined how the Memorial Park came into existence and gave information about the benefactor, Lisle Rockley.

Lisle Rockley was born in Radcliffe in November 1859 and lived in the town with his parents. He worked in bill posting and advertising and in 1895 he went to America to work as an advertising contractor. His son William was born in New York in 1896. The family returned to Nottingham later that year and in 1898 Rockley's Limited was founded. The business flourished and advertised as being "The Best of Billposting". Lisle was chairman for 30 years. By 1911 the family were living in Mapperley and William was at boarding school in Kent.

When World War 1 broke out in 1914 William Rockley joined the University College Nottingham, Officer Training Corps and received his commission in the 6th York and Lancaster Regiment in December 1914.

After training with his regiment he went to fight at Gallipoli in

August 1915. His regiment was involved in the Battle of Scimitar Hill and the attack on Hill 60. In November 1915 William was awarded the Military Cross for conspicuous gallantry. William was injured and admitted to hospital in Greece with impetigo. From there he was transferred to Hamrun hospital in Malta and admitted with sceptic eczema. He was treated there for a month and returned to England in February 1916. The medical board reported that he was unfit for service but by May he was fit enough to join the 11th York and Lancaster Regiment and was declared fit for duty in August 1916. In February 1917 he was promoted temporary Lieutenant and served with the 10th Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, 63rd Brigade, 37th Division. From July 1917 his battalion was in action at the Third Battle of Ypres and at Menin Road Ridge. He was killed in action in October 1917 and his body was not identified. The family received news of William's death on October 15th 1917. Extracts from memoirs which

gave vivid descriptions of the conditions experienced by the troops at Passchendaele were read by David Barton, accompanied by illustrations taken from archive records.

Lisle Rockley wanted something different to commemorate his son and the other men from Radcliffe. He wanted to look to the future and benefit the people of Radcliffe. He approached the Council with a view to buying some land along the cliffs overlooking the River Trent. By November 1926 he had purchased more than 20 acres of land from about 25 small landowners. The land extended along the cliffs to the Shelford boundary. Work began to provide a promenade with views across to the river, waterfalls and two small parks, one of which had a pavilion and lodge for a caretaker. Mr Butler Parr, Chairman of Radcliffe Parish Council, opened the park on October 15th 1927. Mr Rockley spoke of his desire to preserve the area of the cliffs and woods as a memorial and as a gift for the future.



Viscount Galway, Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, unveiled a plaque in the park recording the presentation of the park and woodlands to the Parish Council of Radcliffe-on-Trent. He appealed for people to look after and maintain the park and never forget the role played by these men. Lisle Rockley paid for the upkeep of the park for three years and agreed to it being called Rockley Memorial Park. In 1930 the Parish Council took over the maintenance of the park. Lisle Rockley died on 5th August 1932 and his ashes were scattered in the park.

There have been six park keepers since the park was established. It has become a bird and wildlife sanctuary and the recently acquired area of the lily ponds is a nature reserve. In 2017, to mark the 100 year anniversary of William Rockley's death, a picnic in the park was held and it is intended that this will be an annual event. Rockley Park is, as Lisle Rockley wished, a living memorial.

POST-WAR BINGHAM

BHTA has recently been given 19 copies of a publication entitled 'Bingham Deanery Magazine' which contained reports from many neighbouring parishes but rather confusingly, in view of the title, only six editions dated from July 1948 to April 1951 contained an item on the Parish of Bingham. Each was written by Rev. John Reay who



served as our Rector from 1933 to 1955. He started each with "Dear Bingham" and signed off with "Happy days". All very cheery although the local and national topics he covered were not so light-hearted and, as often happens when we study period documents, one can be left with a strong feeling of déjà vu!

From the first article in July 1948 we read:

"In visiting round Bingham your Rector everywhere meets grouses against our present national position...the country is on the way to bankruptcy. £100,000,000 is our deficit these last four months... we must import less...Too many people are failing to put the public interest before their own interest... The future depends on our ability to lead in invention and to maintain a very high standard, in manufacture...We are losing confidence in our leaders... Only don't blame the Rector."

The next year he is extolling the 'Evening Institute' (a sort of early U3A) where Mr. Roderick Collins BA, the Headteacher of the Church School organized 21 classes including Woodwork and Cookery (both over subscribed), German and Plastics ('not so flourishing') and Old Time Dancing ('in need of a few more men') etc. The Rector continued:

"Members express their appreciation of the social aspect of the classes—they come to know one another, while learning something worthwhile.... We are very much alive to the need for the

new hut (promised in 1947) to centralise our activities. We are, however, grateful to Church Hall, the Youth Centre and the W.I. Hut for letting their premises to enable us to carry on."

It seems that Mr. Collins was a man of many talents and much energy as he also served as the church Choir Master and in 1951 he offered to act as temporary organist on the retirement of Mr. Simons of whom the Rector commented:

"Mr. Simons has loved a church organ ever since he was seventeen years old. We have enjoyed his playing of an organ for many a year now and we shall miss him."

Later in his January 1951 article the Rector moves onto more national and international issues:

"What has 1951 A.D. in store for the world, we wonder? Great hardships in Britain to maintain our defence; a state of emergency in the U.S.A. and war in Korea; and Russia making things awkward for the Western world. Money is tight; everything costs more and more; so that we must continue to do without things we sorely need but cannot afford to buy."

The Rector then signs off (somewhat ironically) with his usual "Happy days".

[In the next issue of Discovering Bingham we hope to return to the Rector's reports over this 3 year post-war period covering a range of activities in the life of the town and some impending changes for the church school.]

DISCOVERIES

During major building renovations at the Hammond Property Services office at 11 Market Place one or two things of interest have emerged. A fragment of a carving on an oak board was found filling a gap between floor and joists in an upstairs ceiling. This had clearly been broken off a larger piece which would have completed the symmetrical pattern. We guessed it might be a panel from a piece of furniture and had our suspicions confirmed when we asked around the membership of the Council for British Archaeology. A member told us it was from an early Joined Oak Chest made in Somerset in the early 17th century. The reference book he quoted bore this out. [photo below] It seems the panels were "mass produced" in urban workshops and sent out to local cabinet makers to be constructed. IKEA flat packs are not the first then! "Our" panel had a small hole bored in the top with signs of rust from a nail, as if it had been used for wall decoration after the chest was broken.

The early 17th century date fits well with a build date of around 1670-80 for the cottage that we have



determined by tree-ring dating; dendrochronology, by which time the chest had probably fallen apart! In 1776 the cottage was occupied by Jasper Doncaster, a builder, from whom were descended the Doncaster family that built Long Acre House and who had the well known shop in the Market Place. Bringing a chest all the way from Somerset would have been expensive, but they could probably have afforded it!

We shall be producing a more detailed report at a later date.

THE GREAT ESCAPE OF 1917!
[Ed, - Read on to find the connection with Bingham]

A little known escape by twenty three German Prisoners-of-War took place in September 1917 from an internment camp for officers at Sutton Bonington near Loughborough. They had constructed a 50-yard tunnel over a three month period and having escaped divided into groups of four and headed towards the east coast where they hoped to get away to Germany by packet boats. The group included Captain Muller who had been in command of the *Emden*, a German raiding cruiser which had bombarded Madras in September 1914,

and was subsequently sunk off the Cocos Islands on 9 November.

The officers had been housed in new buildings at Sutton Bonington intended for the Midland

Agricultural College but which, due to the war, had not been occupied. As officers they lived in considerable comfort, with servants being found for them from the lower ranks of German prisoners.

When the escape was reported, special constables were called out all over Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Derbyshire and every measure taken to apprehend the prisoners. The constables were stationed at strategic points and night patrols and road blocks were set up, with the result that all were recaptured within a few days.

Eighteen had been caught by 28 September, and four more were taken at Chesterfield by Derby police on 30 September. Lieutenants J. Stadelfaauer and P. Bastgem were recaptured in Derby after a week 'on the run' - perhaps an inappropriate term since they had travelled just twelve miles from Sutton Bonington.

The Germans had collected supplies ready for the break out, and when three were caught in West Bridgford on 25 September they had among their possessions sardines, milk, bacon, ham, cheese, prunes, sausages, biscuits and dried toast.

Six were caught near Nottingham; two were found asleep in a wood 'worn out by their walk', and three were arrested when they aroused suspicion by asking the way to the nearest railway station ! Captain Muller was caught