

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

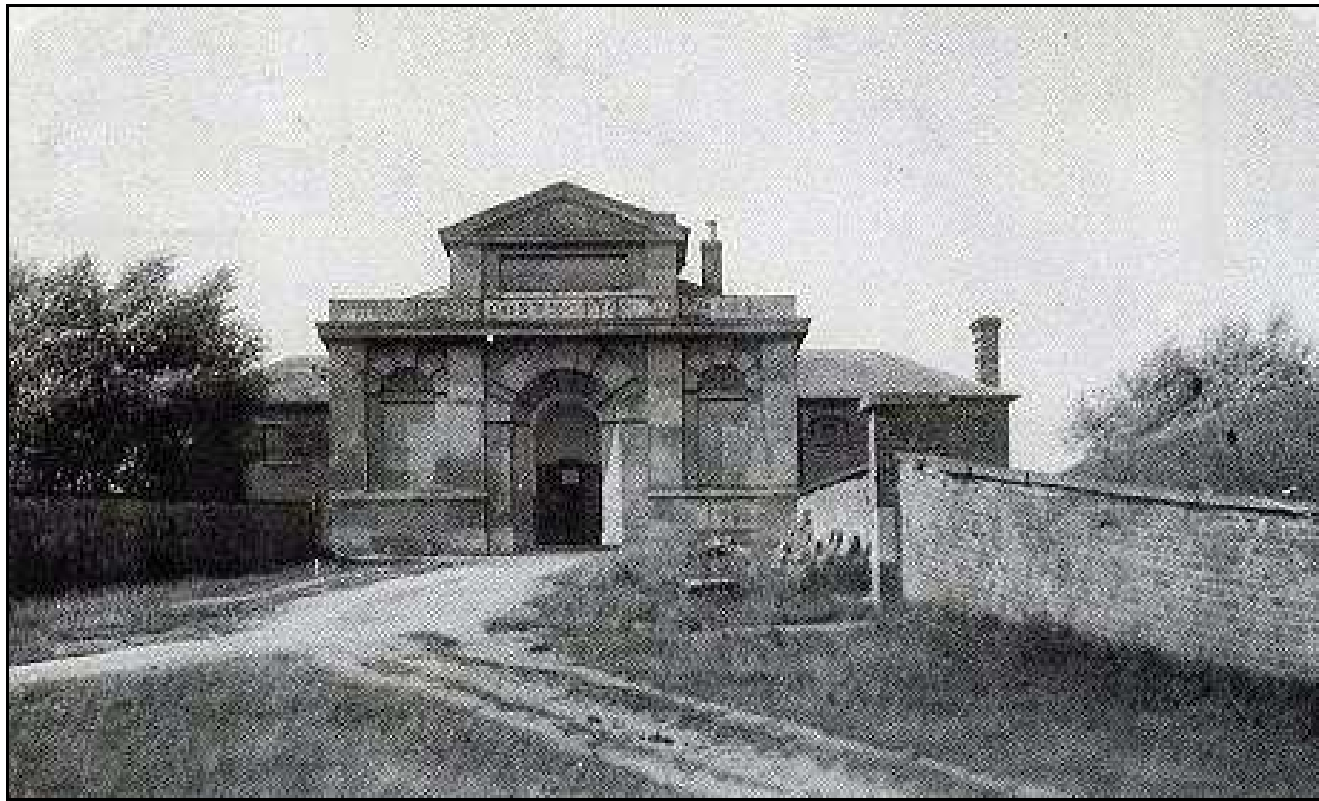
Crime was widespread in Bourne in past times and punishment for offenders was swift and harsh. Most of the felonies were petty theft involving money, valuables, clothing and often animals. There were many tricksters and pickpockets about and travellers were likely to be robbed by highwaymen.

Bourne had its stocks where wrongdoers would be locked in by the legs and pelted with stones, rotten fruit and bad eggs. They stood at the edge of the market place at the top of what is now Abbey Road together with a whipping post where miscreants were punished even for disorderly conduct. One lad who had been a particular nuisance in the town, Daniel Summerby, who worked as a slater, was described as being "malicious, desperate and unruly" and on his last appearance before the magistrates in 1688 for rowdy and disorderly conduct was told that if he offended again he would "be taken to the common whipping post, there to be whipped till blood come". The warning appears to have been timely because there are no further reports of him causing trouble.

Poaching and common assault were also serious crimes and husbands could also be summoned for not looking after or deserting their families. Public executions and transportation to the colonies such as Australia and America still figured in court judgments well into the 19th century and many of the cases reflect a legal system that often appears harsh and vindictive.

One of the most touching cases occurred in 1832 when Priscilla Woodward, aged 16, a servant girl, set fire to a haystack belonging to her employer in protest over being given too much work to do milking cows and other farm and domestic duties. The magistrates were told that she was unable to read or write and did not understand the court proceedings but despite her ignorance, she was sentenced to be transported to Australia. In 1836, another servant girl, Sarah Marvin, aged 15, was accused of stealing bed linen from her mistress and she was sent to Tasmania.

Offenders could also be committed to the House of Correction at Folkingham, such as Mary Atkinson and Eleanor Kelly, both aged 17, who were committed in 1851 for stealing a small amount of money and two handkerchiefs. This was a forbidding jail with several punishment devices including a whipping post, stocks, hand crank and treadmill, iron manacles for troublesome prisoners and tiny cells with small air holes for those who had been sentenced to solitary confinement.



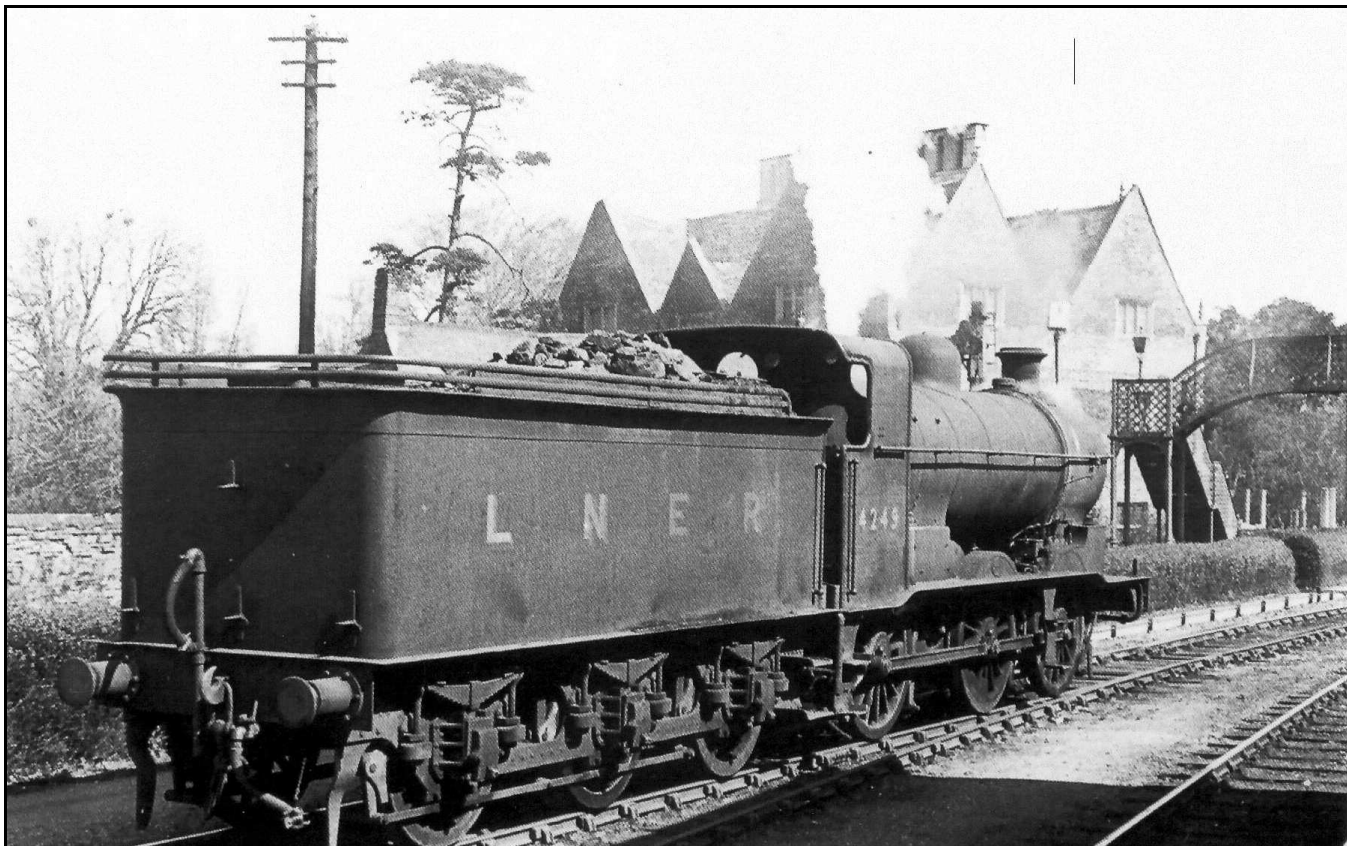
The House of Correction in 1909

During the early part of the 20th century, the courts were dealing mainly with minor infringements of the law such as speeding, begging, drunkenness and petty theft, and the cases reflected the ubiquitous presence of the police who were either out and about on the beat or patrolling on their cycles. Soaring administrative costs in the years following the Second World War eventually made such prosecutions unviable and now only the more serious cases find their way into the courts while many lesser crimes are now labelled as anti-social behaviour and often ignored.

THE RAILWAY AGE

The railway came to Bourne in 1860 with the building of a 6½-mile stretch of track to connect with the main Great Northern Railway line at Essendine, north of Stamford, and during the next 100 years the system was regularly extended and improved. The Spalding

and Bourne Railway was opened in 1866 followed by a 17-mile branch line north to Sleaford and the final stage came in 1894 with another link west to Little Bytham where it connected with the branch line from Saxby, east of Melton Mowbray, thus creating a through route between the East Midlands and East Anglia of which Bourne could take full advantage.



A locomotive steaming through Bourne

The extensions brought with them the addition of new buildings to keep pace with the latest technology and equipment to maintain the town's presence on the network for both passenger and freight services. This included the opening of a booking office at the Red Hall, a footbridge over the main line to the platforms and the addition of sidings and warehouses to handle freight and equipment to maintain the locomotives and rolling stock.

The railway became one of the most useful travel facilities in our history and continued until the last passenger train left Bourne for Spalding on 28th February 1959 while the termination of freight facilities for the movement of sugar beet disappeared in 1965, virtually ending the railway age for Bourne. Closure heralded the start of a massive demolition programme and over the next few months practically every remnant of the railway system was removed. The work included dismantling the platforms and other facilities such as workshops and the brick-built engine sheds which had been erected in 1894 but every effort was made to

salvage valuable materials such as metal and wood. Some of the equipment which was still usable was given away and the rest sold for scrap.

The railway installations which disappeared included the notorious level crossing and signal box in South Street at the southern entrance to the town on the main A15 trunk road, scene of many traffic delays as the gates were closed to allow steam trains pass on the line between Bourne and Spalding, and several fatal accidents.



Schoolboy train spotters trespassing on the tracks in 1948

Another familiar feature, the iron bridge carrying the line over Abbey Road, was also dismantled and a heavy duty crane was brought in to help lift the cumbersome metal sections on to lorries to be hauled away.

Other relics of our railway past that disappeared included the station itself. Although the platforms were dismantled in 1964, the red brick buildings continued in use as the central depot and offices of Wherry and Sons Ltd., the agricultural merchants, who have been associated with the town since the early 19th century. But these too were finally demolished in 2005 when the company decided to relocate and new houses have been built on the site.

The railway age in Bourne is now largely forgotten, yet during its

existence it brought trips to the east coast seaside resorts within everyone's reach while travelling to London and elsewhere in Britain became an accessible journey for businessmen.

But there are still reminders of the steam age scattered around the district but not everyone recognises them, such as small bridges on country roads, gatekeepers' cottages in Mill Drove, the Austerby and in the main street at Dyke village, all with their distinctive design and whitewashed outside walls, and now all sold and converted for use as private homes. Three platform lamps from Bourne railway station also adorn the driveway at The Croft in North Road and developers planning to turn this property into sheltered homes for the elderly have promised to retain them as a feature.

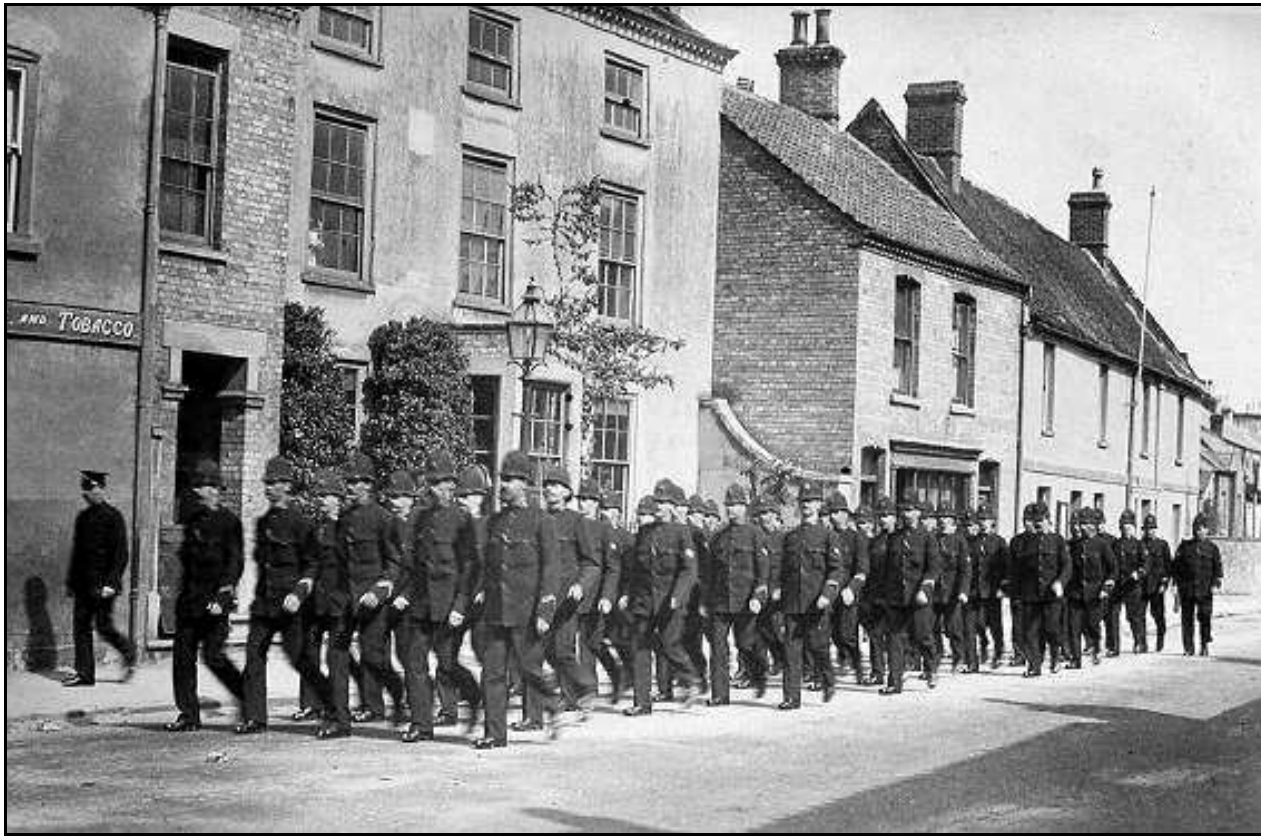
THE POLICE

Law and order in past times was maintained by constables appointed by the magistrates, usually farmers and yeomen who combined official duties with their normal work. In times of riot and civil disturbance, special constables could be recruited from various walks of life provided they were of respectable character, such as shopkeepers, clerks, tradesmen and even pensioners.

The County Police Act of 1839 paved the way for the establishment of county police forces and Bourne was part of Kesteven, one of the three divisions in Lincolnshire, whose first chief constable was Captain Philip Blundell Bicknell, who was appointed from over 100 applicants in 1856. A police force for Bourne was in place by 1857 with an officer and two constables who were soon arresting offenders for larceny and attending the May Statute Fair in the market place, normally marred by drunkenness and fighting and frequented by tricksters and pickpockets, but not a single case of disorderly conduct was reported that year.

The police strength increased as the town expanded and by 1861 a

permanent headquarters had been established at the corner of Burghley Street and North Street complete with offices, cells and hostel accommodation for officers so enabling them to be available on 24-hour call to patrol the streets. There were then 16 officers and their presence was marked by a considerable decrease in crime and general lawlessness.



Police on parade through Bourne in 1890

The police station in North Street continued in use until 1960 when it was replaced by a new building in West Street while the old premises were demolished to make way for new housing. Lincolnshire Police, as the force is now known, also employs a number of Community Support Officers, a new breed of police men and women with limited powers but more frequently seen on the streets.

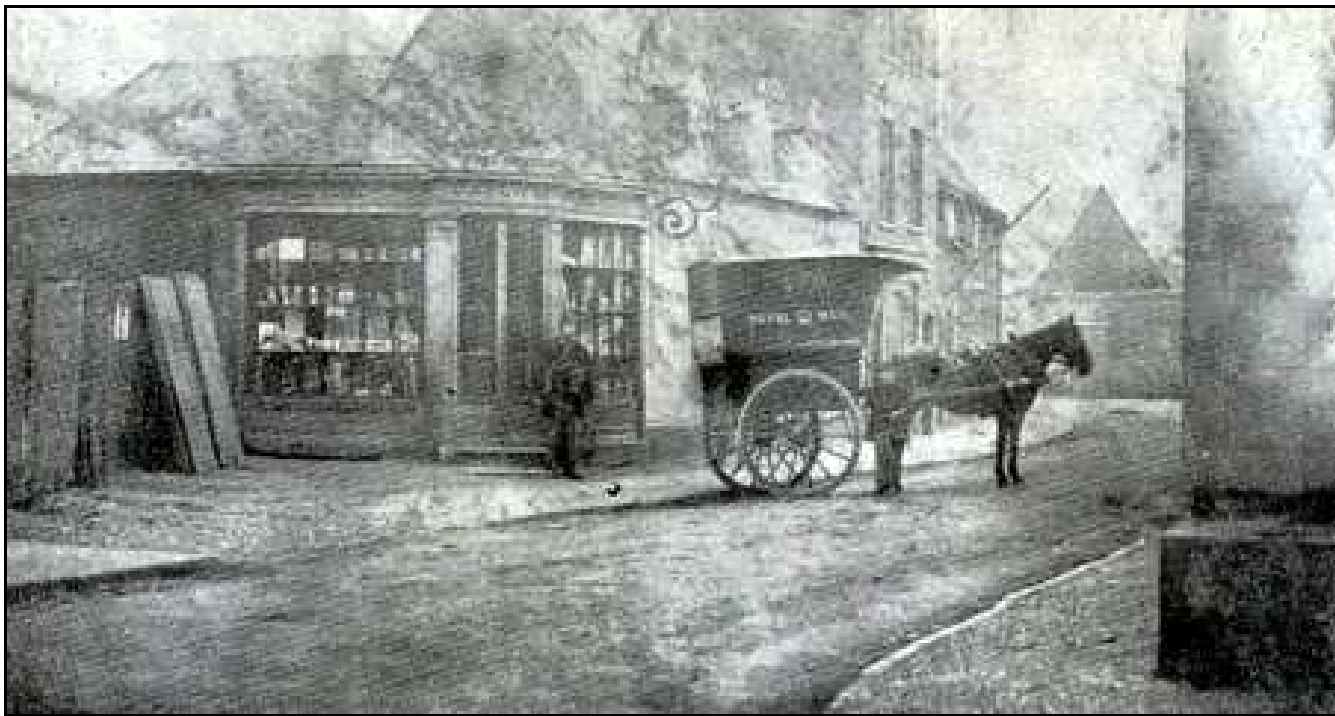
In the past 150 years, modern policing methods have changed drastically through the introduction of mobile patrols, new technology, shorter working hours and fewer points of personal contact, with the result that the friendly neighbourhood constable of past times has all but disappeared.

Despite increased efficiency, there is public concern, particularly among the elderly who feel unsafe because petty crime frequently goes unchecked and that their environment and well-being is threatened by litter, graffiti, vandalism, yobs on the street corner and other anti-social behaviour that is not investigated. There is

therefore, a frequent cry for a permanent return of the bobby on the beat who was such a familiar and reassuring sight in past times.

THE POST OFFICE

The introduction of the penny post by Rowland Hill in 1840 brought the postal service within the reach of everyone with a safe, speedy and cheap method of sending letters. This resulted in a tremendous increase in the volume of mail and by 1849, the number of items carried had reached almost seven million.



The Abbey Road post office in 1868

The first Post Office for Bourne was opened in Abbey Road in 1847 and within ten years there was a daily collection and delivery of letters. Horse-drawn carts were used to transport the mail between the Post Office and local railway stations and after the railway arrived in the town in 1860, all of the village postal services were eventually linked to Bourne.

The telegraph was connected to the Post Office in 1870 and in the same year, the post office was moved from Abbey Road to the stone-built premises in the market place, now the town centre, on the left of what is now Lloyds Bank and was run by John Pearce in conjunction with his stationery and music shop next door.

The mail service was particularly efficient at that time with letters

from London arriving four times a day and there were three daily deliveries. The last collection for the capital was between 7 pm and 8 pm and the wall letter boxes that had been introduced in 1853 were so popular that they were being cleared three times a day, the last time varying according to location, between 6.45 a m and 7.05 p m. There were many such post boxes around the town but they were much smaller than those in use today.

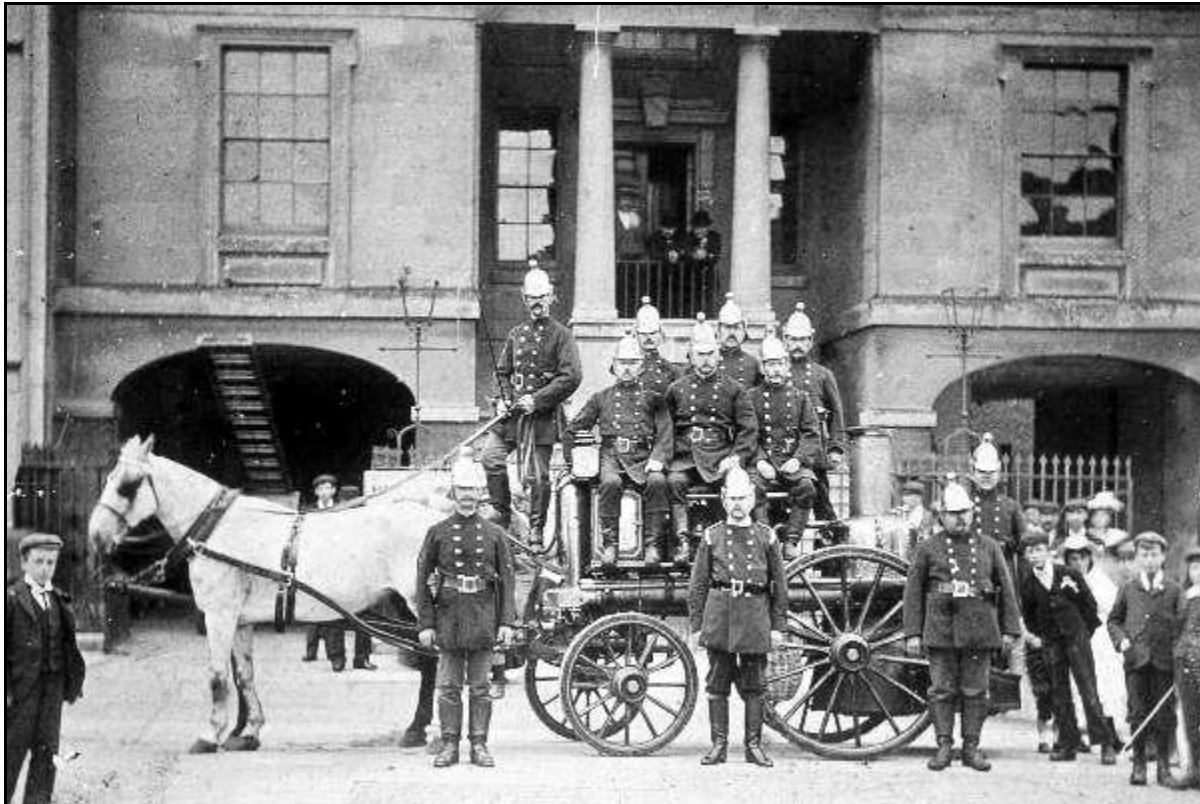
The telephone service, which was also run by the Post Office, was introduced to Bourne in 1878 and trunk lines erected through the town on wooden poles in the early years of the last century. In 1944, a manually operated telephone exchange was opened at the Post Office premises in North Street and this continued in use for more than twenty years until an automatic telephone exchange was built in Manning Road when 560 subscribers were connected and the 999 emergency service was introduced at the same time. STD, or subscriber trunk dialling, was not immediately available and Bourne had to wait two years until the telephone exchange at Spalding was fitted with the necessary equipment.

Business at Bourne Post Office continued to expand as the population increased and in 1981, the present building in West Street was opened, complete with sorting office at the rear, one of the most modern in South Lincolnshire, and although there have since been several threats of closure, it continues to provide a useful service for the town handling a wide range of services in addition to letters and parcels.

THE FIRE BRIGADE

The first fire brigade in Bourne was formed in 1815, run by local fire insurance companies who owned a manual water pump. Those who paid regular premiums for protection against the outbreak of fire were given a metal plaque bearing the name or logo of their particular company which was attached to the outside of the building and could be easily identified by the brigade in the event of a blaze. This was an unsatisfactory

arrangement because the appliance and equipment were often poorly maintained and not all buildings in the town were protected. In 1874, an Act of Parliament transferred responsibility for the upkeep of the fire brigade to the Vestry Meeting which was then in charge of parish affairs, empowering the overseers of the poor to pay out of the local rate.



The horse drawn pump in 1900

By 1900, responsibility for the fire brigade had been taken over by Bourne Urban District Council when a horse-drawn pump was kept underneath one of the arches of the Town Hall. It was a manual appliance requiring crews of four men working each side of the pump and delivering a single jet of water. When the firemen became tired of pumping, bystanders were recruited to take over and paid one shilling an hour although sometimes the volunteers were rewarded with beer and a barrel was carried on the fire engine for this purpose.

The council later bought a new steam pump manned by twelve volunteers and hauled by a pair of grey horses which were stabled in the yard of the Bull public house next door but were also shared with a local undertaker who used them to pull the hearse at funerals. Nevertheless, it was an efficient service known to turn out to a fire within 11 minutes. When there was an alert, firemen were called out by a brass bell on the chimney of the Bull that was rung by pulling a rope dangling between the two buildings but high enough to be out of the reach of mischievous children.

In 1928, a pump towed by a lorry was purchased but the vehicle to pull it had to be hired from a local firm and in 1930, the brigade received its first motor tender towing a trailer pump, an appliance with long ladders on the top and benches alongside the tender on which firemen sat while travelling to a fire. This remained in service until 1945 when the present fire station was opened and within twenty years it housed three modern appliances, each carrying 400 gallons of water, foam and breathing apparatus.

The fire station was rebuilt in 1969 with a new appliance room, stores, repairs, muster and watch rooms, a station office, social clubroom and kitchen. There has been a continuous development to the modern fire service we know today with constant upgrading of vehicles and equipment and Bourne is now part of the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service. The station is manned by retained fire fighters, that is personnel who also have full time jobs but are alerted by beepers when there is a fire or an emergency because the brigade also turns out for other disasters including road accidents and air crashes. In 1989, Mrs Annette Jackman, aged 27, a mother of two young children, joined the staff at the Bourne station, so becoming the first retained firewoman in Lincolnshire.

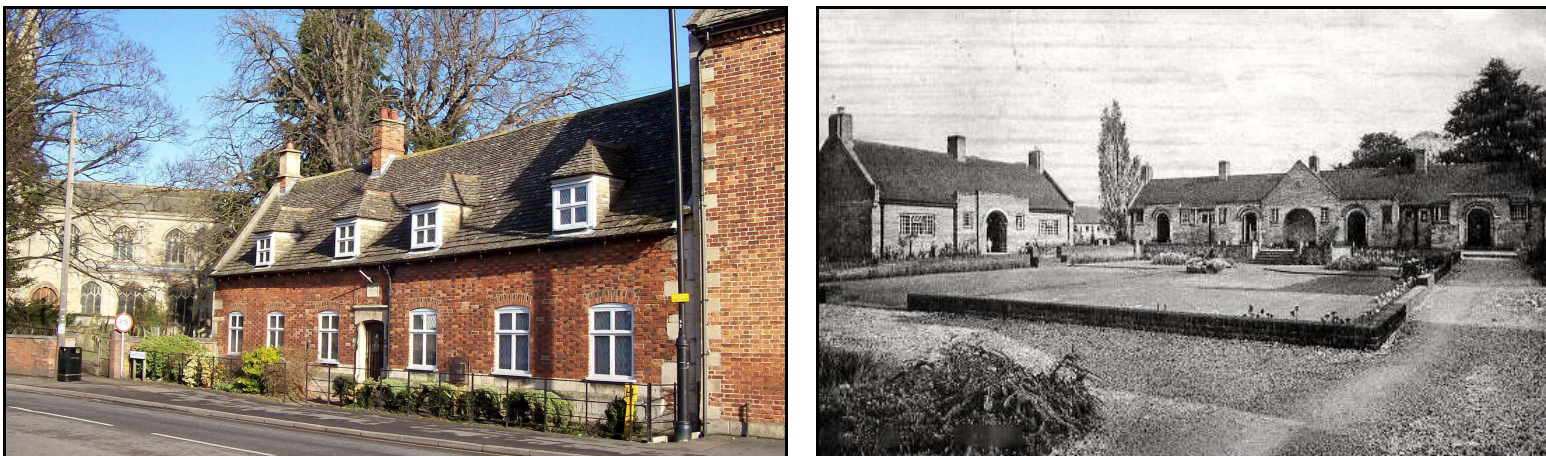
CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Charity is generally defined as the giving of help to those in need, either in goods, money or time, and Bourne has a long history of wealthy citizens who were ready to share their fortunes with those who were less well off, notably the poor, particularly widows and orphans, the sick and disabled.

Almshouses are one of the earliest forms of charity, built to provide homes for the old and infirm who are unable to fend for themselves, and there are two such places in the town today. The Tudor Cottages in South Street date from 1636 and were built with money given by William Trollope, a landowner whose family had been associated with Bourne since 1543. He also provided a

yearly sum of £33 for the maintenance of six poor old men from the parish to live there and although rebuilt in later years, these houses are still in useful service today.

On the other side of town, the West Street almshouses were opened in 1932 with money left by several benefactors whose names can be found on a bronze plaque at the front. Foremost among them was Robert Harrington (1589-1654) who, according to legend, walked to London to seek his fortune.



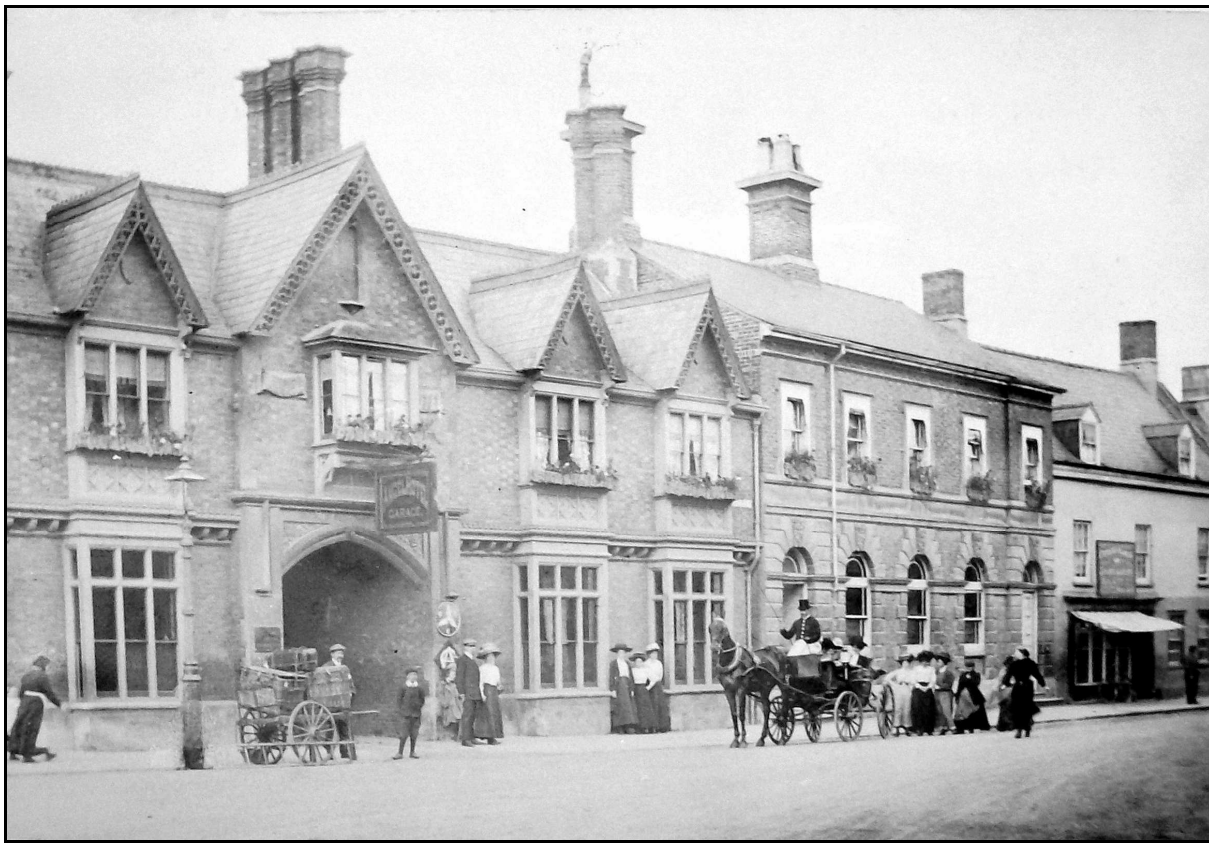
The South Street almshouses and the West Street almshouses in 1932

He became successful in business and when he died, remembered his home town by leaving shops and dwelling houses in the Leytonstone area "for the benefit of his own people", namely the citizens of Bourne and fittingly, Harrington Street was named in his memory. His bequest, and those of several other benefactors over the years, are administered today by Bourne United Charities which has used the money to provide many facilities for the town such as the Abbey Lawn.

The Wellhead Park and War Memorial Gardens which opened in 1956 were also provided through the generosity of one man, Thomas Whymant Atkinson, who left money and property to the town. A more recent benefactor was Thomas Leonard Pick who earned a great deal of money from this town but remembered it in death by leaving his fortune to the community, a sum in excess of £4 million. The Len Pick Charitable Trust was formed after his death with immediate bequests to his favourite local causes and promises of more to come, not least to the Abbey Church, the Outdoor Swimming Pool and Bourne Town Football Club where he was regarded as their most loyal and dedicated supporter.

INNS AND PUBLIC HOUSES

The wayside stop or inn was among the first buildings in Bourne to give refreshment and overnight shelter to travellers in years past and from those early beginnings sprang the hotels and public houses we know today.



The Angel Hotel in 1890

The **Angel Hotel** in the town centre dates from the 18th century and is probably the oldest surviving hotel for guests in the town and the former livery stables can still be seen at the rear, now converted into shops. It was an important posting house during coaching days because it stood on one of the main routes from London to York and a daily stagecoach service passed through, often making an overnight stop and usually picking up passengers. There are also records of babies being born there to expectant women passengers who suddenly went into labour.

Another ancient coaching inn is the **Burghley Arms** across the road, once a private residence and formerly known as the Bull, a name which persisted until 1955 when it was changed to the Burghley Arms in honour of Lord Burghley who was born there in 1520. Other historic public houses include the **Nag's Head**, once a popular meeting place for most of the town's sporting and social organisations, and the **Anchor Inn** in Eastgate which dates back to

the days when the Bourne Eau was navigable and was frequented by sailors from the boats which plied their trade along the waterway.

Through the centuries at various times, a total of 36 taverns or public houses are recorded in Bourne together with 30 beer houses which sold only ale but their number declined as a result of the continuous taxation on alcohol and by the turn of the 19th century they had disappeared completely.



The Nag's Head in 1887

In recent years, there has been a fluctuating pattern of closures and openings with the most dramatic developments occurring during the final years of the 20th century when the face of the traditional public house began to change, influenced by the ban on smoking in public places, a decline in drinking habits and a demand for food to be served. New public houses such as **Smiths of Bourne** and **The Jubilee** which have opened in North Street reflect these changes and by 2010, there were just twelve public houses within the parish although not all are doing good business and some face an uncertain future.

TRADES AND SHOPS

The nature of a town in past times can be identified through the

occupations pursued by those who worked in it but these changed with the years. A good example is the transition of the blacksmith to motor mechanic because the forge where horses were shod often transformed into a garage to repair motor cars as they became popular during the early part of the 20th century.

Bourne has had a busy commercial life since medieval times when craftsmen and farmers brought their goods for sale into town every week. They gathered around the market place and in the shambles or early shops around the Town Hall but soon their occasional sales developed into a steady way of life and as permanent premises were needed, they moved into town.

Many of our town centre shops today are converted cottages or houses which can be easily identified on close inspection but the trades in which its people were involved in centuries past bear little resemblance to those we find today. This being an agricultural area, leather dealers were prominent during the 16th century when the raising of cattle provided the hides used by cobblers, saddlers and harness makers.

There were also bakers who baked the bread, carpenters who made furniture, drapers and milliners who made and sold clothes, butchers and fishmongers to provide meat and fish and even a candle maker because these were the days before homes were lit by gas and electricity.

Trades and crafts associated with rural life are amply illustrated in the records of the 18th century. Many people now lived and worked in the town where there were millers to grind the corn and weavers who produced cloth, and as carts and wagons were used for transport, wheelwrights were needed to make the wheels while the building of new cottages was done by thatchers, slaters, stonemasons, plumbers and glaziers, and the fires to keep them warm required fuel provided by a woodman.

The people were becoming more prosperous by the early 19th century and could pay more attention to their appearance,

A History of Bourne

especially for their Sunday best clothes. As a result, many shops were devoted to their sartorial requirements and during this period Bourne had ten tailors for men, ten dressmakers for the ladies and fifteen boot and shoe makers. Straw hats or boaters were also becoming a popular fashion accessory and there were several craftsmen in the town who made them.



Butcher's shop in West Street in 1885

There were also eleven grocers to provide food, seven butchers for the supply of meat, three surgeons or doctors to treat the people in times of sickness, four watch and clock makers and even a professor of music to teach children singing and to play instruments such as the piano and violin.

Victorian England was a place of ingenuity and enterprise and small trades and businesses flourished with Bourne providing a wide variety of goods and services at a time when transport was often inadequate and mass production only just emerging. In addition, there were a variety of other occupations and crafts that have now largely died out including a brazier and tinman and the makers of bricks and tiles, ropes and sacking, tobacco pipes, leather breeches, straw bonnets, baskets and barrels, the latter known as coopers. Also listed was an animal preserver who worked from a shop in West Street stuffing animals, birds and fish for display in glass cases, a popular feature of Victorian homes.

New inventions and the demand for a wider range of goods and

services during the 19th century enabled some local tradesmen to offer a variety of wares such as John Morris who had a business in West Street. The premises were mainly a printing works but there was also a showroom at the rear for the sale of pianos, organs, and harmoniums and he also advertised himself as a bookseller, bookbinder and stationer, newsagent, music seller and circulating library, paper hanger, patent medicine vendor, distributor of stamps and sewing machines as well as being a shipping agent who could book cruises, so making him the town's first ever travel agent.

Unusual occupations were still evident and in 1885, William Redshaw of North Street, whose main livelihood was as a photographer, is also listed as a manufacturer of rustic furniture and the provider of accessories for halls, libraries, drawing and dining rooms, offices, lawns and gardens.



The West Street hardware shop in 1920

The early 20th century, with its rising population and increased commerce, began to take on a form we recognise today and included such trades and professions as solicitors, grocers, hairdressers, coal merchants, painters, dentists, shoe repairers, ladies and gentlemen's outfitters, butchers, bakers and fishmongers while there was also an emerging industry in the sale and servicing of motor cycles and automobiles. One shop in particular has survived the changing trends and that is on the

corner of South Street and West Street, owned by Harrison & Dunn since 1945 but selling hardware by them and previous owners for more than 160 years, and it remains a place where you can buy many things for the house from a drawing pin to an ironing board. There is a characteristic air in the shop reminiscent from past times, a whiff of screws and nails, while the service is always a personal one, a reminder of what shopping was once like and still existing on a weekly turnover of small transactions that provide those necessities you cannot obtain from the modern superstores which are eroding the trade at so many of the smaller outlets.

Today, the variety of shops has declined and those we have are continually under threat from increasing taxes, rents and other overheads and the town centre is frequently blighted by vacant premises as a result. The modern trend is for out of town superstores and although convenient for most people, this has made the problem worse because they are invariably built by national companies who can undercut the local competition which is then forced out of business with the result that the market town of yesteryear suffers accordingly and may soon become a thing of the past.

RECREATION AND LEISURE

The town has several green spaces for relaxation and leisure but the main venue for sporting activities has for many years been the Abbey Lawn, endowed by an ancient charity and providing facilities for a wide variety of games for both the beginner and the veteran. The land originally formed part of the grounds of Bourne Abbey but the public were allowed to use it at the discretion of the vicar so it became the town's unofficial recreation ground and has been in use for such purposes for at least 200 years.

Sheep once grazed there but the land was eventually acquired by a syndicate of local businessmen who rented out the rights for cricket and football and in 1931, when under threat from housing

development, Bourne United Charities bought it to be preserved as an open space and sports ground for the benefit of the town in perpetuity and since then there has been a continuous programme of improvement and upkeep.

Several sporting organisations now use it, notably Bourne Town Cricket Club whose activities date from the early 19th century and Bourne Town Football Club which was founded in 1883 and is nicknamed The Wakes. Bourne Tennis Club plays here together with Bourne Town Bowls Club and a relatively new sport, petanque, a type of boules that originated in France has been gaining popularity since the town became twinned with Doudeville in Normandy in October 1989.

There was once a putting green (circa 1965), a great attraction during the summer months when visitors could spend an enjoyable hour or so for 3d. a round. Three pence in those days, when there were 240 of them to the pound, would be about 20p at today's values and so it became a very popular pastime, especially for courting couples on hot and sunny Sunday afternoons when the ice cream man was waiting nearby with his Stop-me-and-buy-one pedal cart.

The Abbey Lawn has also been the scene of many celebrations over the years, its grassy open space filled with children who joined in sports and teas in large marquees to mark such as events as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 when she had reigned for sixty years, the coronation of King George V in 1911, the peace celebrations for many wars and the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. There have been many more similar events and it was a tradition in those days that each boy and girl who attended was given a mug marked with the date as a souvenir.

The handsome hand-forged, wrought iron gates in Abbey Road were made during the 18th century and formerly graced an estate entrance at a stately home in Derbyshire, installed in 1933 and refurbished in 2009 when the entire grounds were also enclosed by nine feet high iron railings designed to deter intruders who had

been causing criminal damage to the sports buildings and equipment.

On the far edge of the Abbey Lawn is the outdoor swimming pool, a favourite leisure facility for the past eighty years. This is one of the few traditional outdoor pools or lidos remaining in England, dating back to 1138 when it was a carp pond providing fish for the monks at Bourne Abbey, but was converted into public baths at the instigation of keen local swimmers in the early 20th century.



Maypole dancing at the Abbey Lawn in 1910

In 1922, a committee was formed to clean it out and make it suitable for bathing including the erection of dressing rooms at either end and an approach to the baths from Coggles Causeway. Since 1990, the facility has been administered by the Outdoor Pool Preservation Trust, an organisation run by volunteers to ensure that the pool has not only survived but its facilities enhanced year after year and as a result it has become one of the town's favourite summer amenities, attracting thousands during the hot weather.

The Wellhead Field has been in use since 1890 when a group of boys petitioned the town's M P, Henry Cust, to find them somewhere to play football and cricket and he persuaded a local landowner to lease Hereward's Field, as it was then known. When Mr Cust arrived from London for the first cricket match, he was met at the railway station by a large crowd of boys all cheering and shouting and then paraded through the streets with the

town's brass band to their new recreation ground.

The land continued in use until 1911 when the present ground in Recreation Road was opened to celebrate the coronation of King George V. Hereward's Field was subsequently purchased by Bourne United Charities in 1945 for preservation as an open space and is now part of the Wellhead Gardens and still the scene of many of the town's major events.



St Peter's Pool and Hereward's Field in 1906

Bourne also had a golf club which was formed in 1899, a modest venture with a nine-hole course that was laid out on what was then known as the Castle Meadows and adjoining fields, close to the Red Hall. It was little more than a grassy surface with a few undulations but sufficient for players to pursue the ancient game although it did not survive after the Great War of 1914-18 when it closed down through lack of money and support.

BOURNE AT WAR

The militia: Until the first regiments of the regular army were formed in the mid-17th century the only way that an army could be raised in times of trouble was through the militia when able bodied men could be conscripted. Those from towns such as Bourne were selected either by the parish constables and later by ballot, serving three or five years on the defence of the realm.

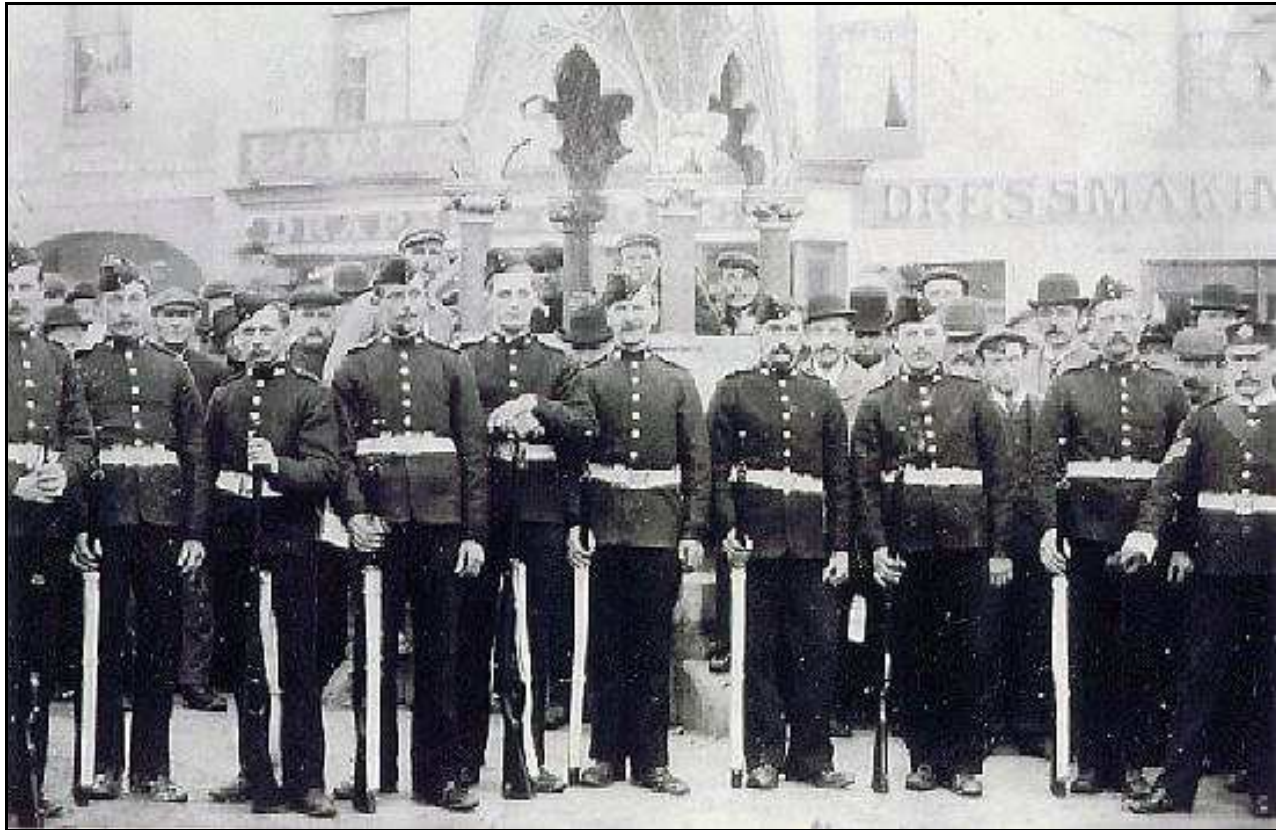
There were exemptions for married men with several children or those who did not fit the physical requirements, but it was an unpopular system and from 1831 recruits were confined to volunteers only with militia units later being attached to the local county regiments, such as the Lincolnshire Regiment. The militia finally petered out around 1907 being converted into what is now the Territorial Army.

The English Civil War: The earliest reference we have to troops in Bourne is during the civil war of 1642-49, the armed conflict between Royalist and Parliamentary forces arising from the constitutional, economic and religious differences between Charles I and the Long Parliament. Bourne was of little importance in the conflict but the parish registers do record an entry under Burials showing that on 14th December 1643, Elizabeth Gee was interred after being "shot by ye soldiers". It is not clear whether these were Royalist or Parliamentary forces but at this stage in the war, the districts around Spalding and Stamford, which might well have included Bourne, were in sympathy with the Parliamentary cause.

The threat from Napoleon: There was also some activity in the town when Napoleon was planning to invade England and the recruitment of soldiers became a priority to back up the regular army. By 1794, several units had been formed and began training with firelocks, an early type of musket in which the priming was lit by sparks, although others equipped themselves with farm tools and other implements such as pitchforks while those who had their own horses joined a troop cavalry. The invasion never came and by 1816, the volunteer units had been disbanded.

The Crimean War: The South Lincolnshire Militia visited Bourne during the Crimean War from 1854-56 with fife and drum playing to attract recruits and there were many volunteers. But the town's main effort was directed towards raising money for a national patriotic fund to help relatives of those killed and to provide material aid for the troops and a consignment of linen and bandages weighing 2 cwt. was collected and sent off to London for

onward shipment to the war zone. The end of the war also brought organised peace celebrations in the market place when the whole town joined in a day of eating, drinking, fireworks, sports and merrymaking.



Bourne volunteers on parade in 1880

The Boer War: Volunteers from Bourne were among the first to enlist for the Boer War of 1899-1902, the second of the South African Wars waged between the British and the Dutch settlers. Many came from the town's own reserve unit, H Company of the Second Volunteer Battalion, the Lincolnshire Regiment, which was based at the Drill Hall in North Street. They were given a hearty send off with a dinner at the Nag's Head and a march to the station accompanied by the town band, the streets decorated with flags and lined with cheering crowds.

The war ended in May 1902 and when the news reached Bourne there were demonstrations around the town. Bonfires were lit in the Market Place and South Street and blazing tar barrels rolled down the road. The police were called out to maintain order and 29 people were arrested for various offences including assault and throwing missiles but in view of public opinion, the cases were either dismissed or the accused given light sentences.

Bourne had provided 28 active service soldiers for the campaign and 22 arrived home safely the following August when they were

given a celebration dinner at the Corn Exchange with music and singing and each was honoured with the presentation of an inscribed silver tobacco box.

The Great War: The jingoism which existed during the Boer War was still evident when the First World War broke out in 1914, a conflict between the Central European Powers of Germany, Austria-Hungary and their allies and the Triple Entente of Britain and the British Empire, France and Russia and their allies, later to include the United States of America which entered the conflict in 1917. It was fought on the eastern and western fronts, in the Middle East, in Africa and at sea and before it ended in 1918, an estimated ten million lives were lost and twice that number were wounded.



The first Bourne volunteers in 1914

At first the army still depended on volunteers and regular recruiting meetings were held around Bourne where passionate speeches were made urging young men to rally to the cause. Among the first to enlist were fifteen recruits who left Bourne to join the Lincolnshire Regiment on Monday 31st August 1914 and they were escorted to the railway station by the town's brass band with a large number of residents following behind to give them a hearty send-off. In the ensuing months, more lads volunteered but in 1917 army service became compulsory for all young men with the introduction of conscription. It is not known how many men

from Bourne served during the Great War but at least 97 lost their lives and their names are inscribed on the War Memorial in South Street although it is thought that the figure was nearer 140 and that at least 40 names are therefore missing.

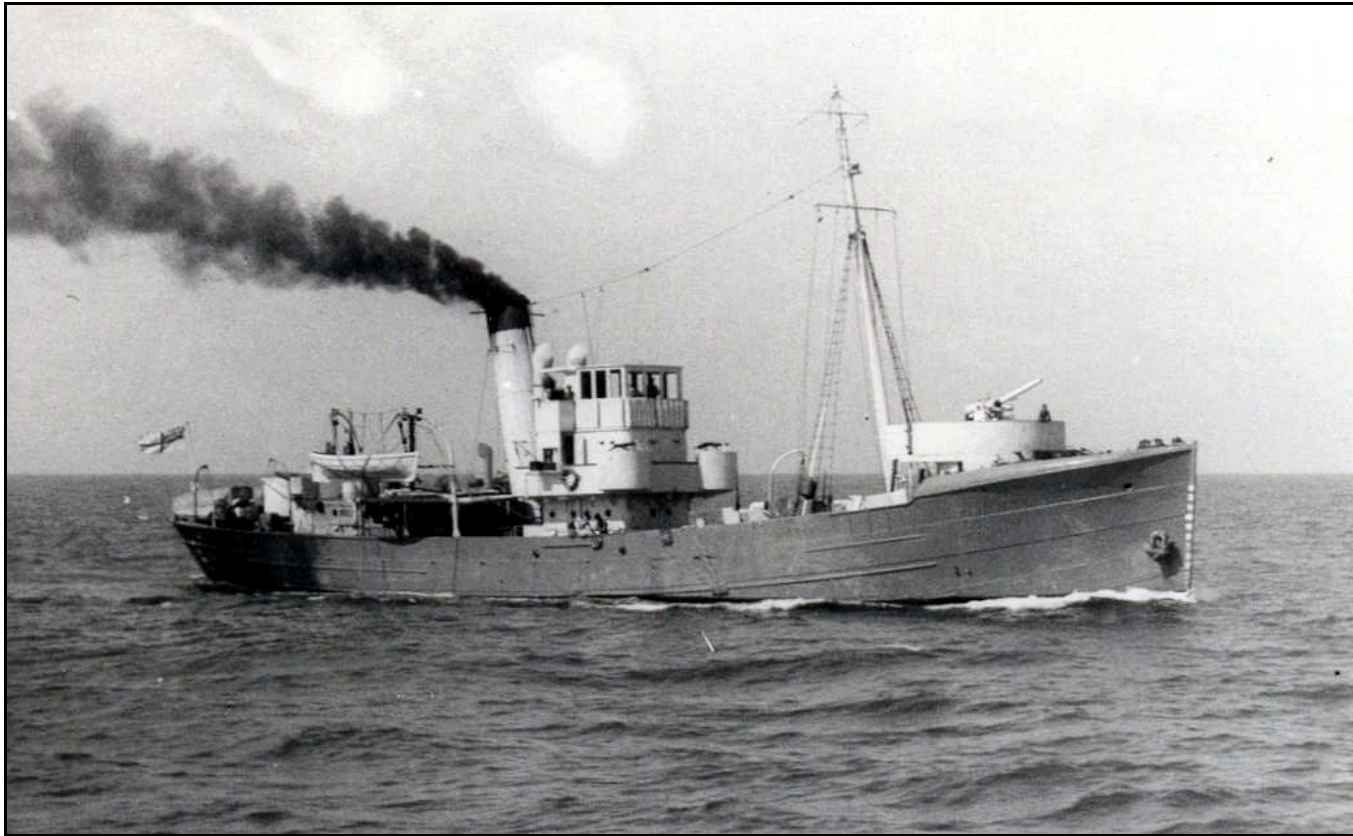
The fighting ceased at 11 am on Armistice Day, Monday 11th November 1918, and within weeks, the boys started coming home and were honoured during the official peace celebrations that were held in Bourne the following year, on Saturday 19th July 1919. It was a lively occasion with a parade through town headed by discharged and disabled soldiers, tea at the Abbey Lawn for 1,000 children, sports and fireworks, although later in the evening there were several incidents of unruly behaviour and again the rolling of lighted tar barrels down the street which had marked the end of the Boer War sixteen years before. The disturbances continued after midnight and although there was no serious damage, the brigade remained on duty until three o'clock the following morning.

The Second World War: Despite the promise by politicians that Armistice Day would mark the end of the war to end all wars, another major conflict broke out in 1939 but this time it was a global conflict which involved most of the world's great powers, eventually forming two opposing military alliances, the Allies led by Britain and the Axis with Germany at the centre.

It lasted until 1945, a long period of austerity, food rationing and fear of the unexpected because enemy bombers could be overhead at any moment, yet these years brought a greater involvement of the civilian population on what came to be known as the Home Front. In Bourne, the people were encouraged to save their money to help buy arms and munitions and even raised enough to adopt a minesweeper, HMS Beryl, which eventually saw distinguished service in the siege of Malta.

Home owners were persuaded to dig for victory by cultivating their gardens and every available plot to grow more vegetables while everyone seemed to be "doing their bit", a popular wartime

phrase, by joining one of the defence organisations such as the Home Guard or the Women's Land Army or simply collecting waste paper or participating in one of the many economy drives underway to help the war effort.



The minesweeper HMS Beryl which was adopted by Bourne

The Home Guard was particularly successful, an army organisation devoted to the defence of Britain later popularised by the television programme Dad's Army, but it had a serious role to play and attracted many men who were less able for active service or had important occupations and by the war's end, a total force of 1,600 had been raised in the Bourne area.

For the first time the effects of the war were actually felt in this town when a German bomber crashed on the Butcher's Arms in Eastgate in 1941, demolishing the building and killing seven people inside. There were other minor bombing incidents but the town escaped largely unscathed yet still made a major contribution to the war effort.

One of the great unselfish acts in our history was the reception and housing of evacuees from Hull, the east coast port that attracted enemy bombers, and during this time the people of Bourne opened their homes to 900 children. As the months went by, they arrived by train, each carrying a case containing their clothes and a few precious possessions, an identification label

attached to their coats, many frightened and away from home for the first time, but they were received by couples, many with children of their own, who were prepared to care for them until the war was over. The link between Hull and Bourne that was forged in those days is still remembered and some of the evacuees even stayed on, married and raised families.



Evacuees at the Abbey Primary School in 1943

The town also played host to a very different party of visitors who started arriving in December 1943. The entire First Battalion of the Parachute Regiment consisting of 550 officers and men were eventually billeted in Bourne in readiness for the Battle of Arnhem which took place in September 1944. During the nine months they were here, the men stayed in a variety of accommodation, in halls and homes, disused workshops and tents at Grimsthorpe Park, training for this major assault but also taking an active part in the life of the community and when they finally left, it appeared that the town was suddenly deserted.

The battle was unsuccessful and 459 of the men stationed in Bourne were killed, wounded, captured or reported missing. Some of those who survived, returned and married the girls they had met during their stay and their families live here today.

Once again, it is not known how many people from Bourne served in the war but 32 are named on the War Memorial. It should also be remembered that few families had not been touched in some

way and when peace was declared in 1945 there was a spontaneous outbreak of rejoicing with parades and street parties and an optimism that life in future would be different.



Street party in the Austerby in 1945

The War Memorial: During the years following the Great War of 1914-18, Remembrance Day was observed by a lone bugler who sounded the last post from the market place, now the town centre. He was veteran soldier Richard Pattison (1879-1959), bandmaster of the last Bourne Town Band, but in 1956, the present war memorial was built in South Street and this has been the central point for the ceremony ever since.

The first war memorial in Bourne was the extension to the old Butterfield Hospital in North Road, officially opened in 1921, and the first roll of honour was inscribed on a wooden plaque which can still be found on the west wall inside the Abbey Church.

The design of the new stone memorial was based on the cenotaph in Whitehall, London, and is inscribed with the names of 97 local men who lost their lives in the war together with 32 men who did not return from the conflict of 1939-45 and a further three who died on active service before the century ended.

The last name of the last soldier who died in the Great War to be added is that of George Coverley. He had been overlooked when the memorial was erected but after an approach by his relatives

and the Royal British Legion, his name was added in 1985. The names of several other soldiers who died in action are also remembered with plaques in the Abbey Church that were presented by family and friends.



The War Memorial in South Street

BOURNE WOOD

The town's most beautiful natural amenity is Bourne Wood, 400 acres of forest which are managed for timber production but also for nature conservation and recreations and are open to the public at all times with many secluded paths and woodland trails that attract many thousands of visitors each year.

There has probably been continuous tree cover on this site for the last 8,000 years and the present species are a mixture of broadleaf and conifer of all ages and their diversity has created ideal conditions for a wide range of wildlife. Once owned by the successive Lords of the Manor of Bourne, the wood is now managed by the Forestry Commission. In past years, the trees were heavily felled, during the First World War, for instance, to provide props for the trenches, but there is now a policy of re-establishing the ancient forest.

Many plants have survived and so make the woodland valuable in terms of conservation. The wild flowers that can be seen here in

A History of Bourne

season include bluebells, primroses, wood anemone and nettle leaved bell flower while fallow deer are abundant and you may catch a glimpse of their smaller, shy cousin, the muntjac or barking deer. Other animals that frequent these glades are foxes, grey squirrels, owls, snakes, badgers and dormice and a wide variety of birds. Nightingales can be heard on summer nights and rare bats and dragonflies fly over the ponds at twilight. Seven species of bat have been identified including the rare Leisler's bat which was first discovered in nesting boxes in 1991 and is now closely monitored.



Bourne Wood and walkers in 1920

Deep in the woods are two lakes which were made by damming a small dip in the landscape in 1972 and these have become watering holes for woodland inhabitants and home to ducks, herons, many aquatic animals and several species of fish. The pool is a mass of rushes and sedge, white water lilies float on the surface and yellow flag grows in the margins of the lakes while fallow deer come to drink here in the evenings and early mornings and their hoof prints can often be seen in the soft mud at the water's edge. This is a marvellous sight if you are prepared to sit here until dusk or to get up at 4 am on a summer's morning for a rendezvous with these graceful creatures.

There are many seats around the wood with small brass memorial plaques remembering past walkers who have passed on and near

to the main path from Beech Avenue is a copse of twenty small oak trees which were planted in January 1999 by the Friends of Bourne Wood organisation as a tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales, who died tragically in 1997, and the spot was named Diana's Glade.

THE CONSERVATION AREA

The older parts of Bourne are officially protected within a Conservation Area which was drawn up in 1977 to preserve historic buildings and open spaces and prevent them from unwanted development and neglect. This means that no alterations can be carried out without specific approval.

The central point is the market place or town centre together with much of North Street, West Street and South Street, the Wellhead Gardens and St Peter's Pool, Church Lane, the Abbey Church and its precincts and the Abbey Lawn. At the time this area was defined, 75 buildings in the parish of Bourne were identified as being of historical and architectural interest. This is known as listing, a system followed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the advice of English Heritage which gives the building either a Grade I or Grade II status according to importance but only the Abbey Church is in the top category.



The cemetery chapel and Ostler memorial

Fifty-one of the buildings were within the Conservation Area but two have since been demolished. The other 24 were outside the designated area, in Eastgate, Cawthorpe and Dyke, which are within the parish, but four of these have also been pulled down.

An additional building, the cemetery chapel in South Road, was given Grade II listing in April 2007 to protect it from demolition by the town council and the following July, the Ostler memorial in the town cemetery was similarly graded.

Listed buildings in Bourne are found in the most unlikely places, a newspaper shop in North Street, a fish and chip shop in West Street, an iron bridge in Church Walk and even a stretch of wall in South Street, part of the Red Hall gatehouse, all of which are similarly protected as Grade II.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS



The Red Hall is our most famous secular building and has survived several attempts to have it pulled down. It was built in 1605 by Gilbert Fisher, a London grocer who wished to live in the country, and used red bricks made in Bourne for the construction and which give the property its distinctive name.

Mr Fisher spent so much in the process that he died in debt but his descendents managed to live there for almost a century followed by the Digby family whose tenancy led to the mistaken belief that it was used by conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament. Lady Catherine, the last of the Digbys, built a fine garden around the house which she loved, and after she

died in 1836 it became a private school until 1860 by which time the railways were arriving in Bourne and it was sold for use as a booking office and home for the stationmaster and for the next 100 years, the hall was subjected to the daily vibrations of steam locomotives and freight wagons rumbling past. Miraculously, it survived without serious damage and when the railway station closed in 1959, it was bought by Bourne United Charities and restored to its original glory for use as a community centre and its colourful exterior remains a tourist attraction, frequently photographed by visitors.

There is a tale that the Red Hall is haunted by the ghost of a grey lady who flits through the rooms of this 17th century mansion on moonlit nights. Stories of the apparition have persisted over the years and for those who do believe in ghosts, perhaps it is that of Lady Catherine, who was so reluctant to leave.



Baldock's Mill

The Domesday Book of 1086 records that there were three water mills in Bourne but there is now only one. Cliffe's Mill in West Street disappeared in 1910 and Notley's Mill in Eastgate was demolished in 1973 but **Baldock's Mill** in South Street, although no longer grinding corn, continues in its new role as a Heritage Centre.

The present building dates from the early 19th century but stopped working in 1924 and its preservation is entirely due to the Civic

Society which acquired the lease in 1981. After long spells of hard work by a dedicated team of volunteers, it has been converted into a small museum of which the town can be justly proud, containing many displays, documents and artefacts relating to our past. In addition, the old water wheel has been removed and a new one installed and is now turning in the mill race to produce electricity for the building and so reduce power costs, an encouraging project in an age of increasing awareness of our environment.



The Town Hall

The **Town Hall** has been the centre of administration in Bourne since it was built in 1821, an imposing building of Portland stone with a façade of twin Doric columns and an outside staircase to the upper floors. The money to build it was raised mainly through public subscriptions and a list of those who contributed hangs in the main chamber. In years past, balls were held here attended by the town's gentry when the ladies in their fine dresses danced until dawn and horse drawn carriages lined up outside to take them home.

Today, the town council meets here and the district council has offices in the ground floor and until recently it was also used as a courthouse with cells for prisoners in the basement. There was once a wooden clock tower on top of the building but it was destroyed by fire in 1933 when the gas lamp used to illuminate the hands and face overheated. It was never replaced but a new

timepiece was installed on the pediment where it can be seen today.

Wake House in North Street dates from the early 19th century and is best known as the birthplace of Charles Worth, son of a local solicitor, on 13th October 1825 and a plaque was placed on the front by English Heritage in 2002 to commemorate this event. The building was later used as council offices and is now the home of the Bourne Arts and Community Trust and more than thirty organisations meet there regularly.

The most popular building in Bourne for meetings and concerts is the **Corn Exchange** which dates from 1870 when the town had a thriving corn trade and dealers met there regularly to sell their grain. A public hall was included in the original design and has been the venue of varied events including ice skating in 1876 and the first film shows were staged there in 1925 before the town had its own cinema. In 1889, the building was struck by lightning during a thunderstorm but there was no serious damage.



Wake House and the Corn Exchange

The corn trade during the 18th and 19th centuries also resulted in many warehouses being built around the town to store the grain and some survive, recognisable by the distinctive red brick walls and blue slate roofs. There is one in South Street, opposite the Wellhead Gardens, now converted into flats, another in Burghley Street which is to be redeveloped shortly and a third in Cherryholt Road overlooking the river which is used for car auctions.

The imposing building at No 63 West Street is a perfect example of Victorian ostentation, once a red brick farmhouse and grain store

until its wealthy owner gave it a Gothic style façade. In 1896, the building became the **Bourne Institute** devoted to recreation, education and intellectual improvement with a library, snooker room and other amenities. A miniature rifle range was established in the adjoining granary in 1902 and fifty years later, the town's library moved in until the present premises were opened in South Street. In 1975, the Bourne Institute was renamed the Pyramid Club which flourishes today, an organisation owned by its members whose activities are devoted mainly to billiards and snooker.



The old Bourne Institute and Bourne House

The imposing Regency mansion at No 46 West Street known as **Bourne House** was built in 1830 as a family home for the Bell family, latterly Major Cecil Walker Bell, a solicitor and churchwarden at the Abbey Church. When he left the town in 1940, the house was bought by Kesteven County Council and used as dormitory accommodation for evacuees from Hull and after the war the authority converted it into a hostel for maladjusted and problem children, orphans or those from broken homes. The house continued in this role for a quarter of a century until being phased out and after standing empty for some years, it was acquired by property developers who turned it into a complex of retirement homes and maisonettes.

The **Tudor Cinema** was opened in North Street in 1929 when moving pictures were becoming popular. The first screenings were silent films accompanied by a pianist and the talkies, as they were known, followed in 1931. In those days, there were performances each evening with afternoon matinees for children on Saturdays and during the school holidays. Audiences declined

when television arrived and bingo took over and the cinema finally closed in 1989 and is now used as a Chinese restaurant.

The elegant 18th century town house which can be seen in South Street as you enter Bourne is **Cavalry House** which takes its name from a previous owner, Thomas Rawnsley, a wool stapler, who raised a mounted troop of cavalry in 1794 known as the Lincolnshire Light Horse Rangers to fight Napoleon. The troops were drilled at various places around the town ready to repel an invasion of England but it never came and the unit was disbanded. Captain Rawnsley died in 1826, aged 71, and there is a plaque to his memory in the Abbey Church but it is difficult to see because it has been placed high up on the wall of the north arcade.



Brook Lodge

The house we know as **Brook Lodge** was originally built as the vicarage in 1776 by the Rev Humphrey Hyde, who was then Vicar of Bourne, and stands at the end of Church Walk but the frontage is on a dangerous double bend in South Road. It was replaced by a new vicarage in 1879 and has since been used as a doctor's surgery but is now converted into flats. The exterior has been rendered and whitewashed and the building has lost much of its grandeur from past times when the house was the scene of frequent summer garden parties and musical concerts.

The **Old Bakehouse** in the Austerby is a Tudor mansion almost in its original condition and was once part of the former residence of

the Abbots of Bourne and reputedly constructed with stone from Bourne Castle. Part of the building was in more recent times used as a bakery and sales shop, hence its name today, but it retains a wealth of original style and fittings. Little is recorded of life in the Abbey of Bourne during the first four centuries of its existence but it is known that after its dissolution in 1536, the manor of Bourne Abbots passed into secular hands and eventually came into the possession of the Trollope family early in the 17th century. This gave them considerable land, farms and houses in Bourne, Cawthorpe and Dyke and this historic property may well have been among them.



Dawkins House and the Old Maltings

Dawkins House is a large limestone building in the Spalding Road that was in existence before the 17th century. Until sixty years ago, it was a public house called the New Inn and the earliest date associated with the property is 1550 when the man thought to have built it, Thomas Dawkins, a tanner, lived in nearby Eastgate, and it would therefore predate the Red Hall by half a century. Little is known of the building except for a few deeds dating from the 19th century and a stone plaque that bears the inscription "Thomas Dawkins Anno Dom. 1666" can be found on an extension built when it was being used as a public house and so the additional space was probably required as a bottle store and as a place to accommodate horses and carts belonging to weary travellers.

The **Old Maltings** in West Street is an imposing building, particularly so because of the mellow red brick and blue slate roof which dates back to the late 18th century. The original building was destroyed by fire in 1790 and rebuilt in 1806 although since

then, it has been sympathetically restored for modern business use by later tenants, Boston Tractors Limited in 1968 and particularly the present occupants, Warners Midlands plc which bought the property in 1976 as the headquarters of an expanding colour printing business, now employing more than 300 staff.

The **Vestry Hall** was built in North Street as a Calvinist chapel in 1867 but the sect fell into debt and was forced to close in 1890. It was later bought by H Company, the 2nd Battalion, the Lincolnshire Regiment, for use as a drill hall and the unit remained there until early in 1914 when they vacated the premises and in July that year, the building was sold at public auction for £340 to the trustees of the late Thomas Carlton, a former draper of North Street, and made available to the Abbey Church for vestry meetings, hence its present name. During the Great War of 1914-18, the hall was turned into a military hospital and in the second conflict of 1939-45, it became a first aid post and headquarters of the local Home Guard. There were several subsequent uses, as a youth club and a venue for social events, until being sold in 2004 and it has since been turned into a private residence.

Monkstone House at No 12 West Street is among the oldest domestic buildings in the town dating from 1620 and would doubtless have been occupied by one of the town's more affluent citizens, later the lifetime home of the late Mr Jack Rayner, a teacher at Bourne Grammar School who died in June 1990 at the age of 73. His speciality was woodwork and he filled the main rooms with intricate wood carvings of foliage and small animals, particularly mice, converting the drab interior into the splendour of a richly decorated Elizabethan home. The house has been used as an Indian restaurant since 1993.

PROMINENT PEOPLE

Oger the Breton (c 1086) was undoubtedly the biggest landowner in the history of Bourne. He was a Frenchman, also known as Ogerus Briton, who came to Britain with the invading army of

William the Conqueror in 1066 and was rewarded for his loyalty with holdings dispossessed from the English. When the Domesday Book was published in 1086 giving the results of the new king's great land survey, he had a total of 19 entries, all in the Bourne area and so the indications are that he was a very important Norman knight. His home was most likely a manor house alongside St Peter's Pool, now occupied by the Wellhead Gardens, a site popularly believed to be that of a castle although the solid stone foundations that have been discovered would also fit the proportions of a moated and fortified manor house.

Orm the Preacher (c 1180) also worked at Bourne Abbey a century earlier than Robert Manning but his presence here has only been revealed during recent research. His homily collection known as *The Ormulum* has been well known to linguists and language historians ever since the 17th century but its source has only recently been established as Bourne Abbey. Orm's language provides a glimpse of the English vernacular of the time and before it was strongly influenced by the French. It is assumed that the manuscript remained at Bourne Abbey until the dissolution of the monasteries between 1536 and 1540 and after various owners, is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford University.

Robert Manning (1264-1340) is perhaps the most notable of all our citizens in that he is credited with putting the speech of the ordinary people of his time into the recognisable form that we have today. He is best known as Robert de Brunne because of his long time residence as a canon at Bourne Abbey where he completed his life's work and in the process, popularised religious and historical material in a Middle English dialect that was easily understood by the people of his time. His best known work was *Handlyng Synne*, a book of great value because it gives glimpses into the ways and thoughts of our countrymen 600 years ago and even more, shows us the language then in common use.

William Cecil (1520-1598) became the first Lord Burghley after serving Queen Elizabeth I for forty years, during which time he was the main architect of Britain's successful policies of that

period, earning a reputation as a master of renaissance statecraft with outstanding talents as a diplomat, politician and administrator. He was born at a house in the town centre at Bourne that is now the Burghley Arms and a plaque on the outside reminds us of this event.

John Jackson (1585-1612) was Vicar of Bourne at a time when there were many recusants, that is clergymen unwilling to conform to the doctrine and practices of the Church of England. He was one of eighteen in the Diocese of Lincoln who caused trouble because of their non-conformist tendencies by refusing to wear a surplice or observe certain ceremonies during services such as giving the sign of the cross and failing to follow the Book of Common Prayer. He was suspended from the church in 1611 but was already seriously ill and died the following year.

Job Hartop (1550-1595) was a farmer's boy working on the land near Bourne but hankered after a life of adventure and ran away to sea when he was 12 years old. After a short apprenticeship with a gunpowder manufacturer in London, he signed on with the English admiral Sir John Hawkins and sailed the Spanish Main in the company of the young Francis Drake. He was captured by the Spanish on his third voyage and spent ten years as a galley slave and thirteen years in a Spanish prison but escaped and made his way back to Bourne where he spent his final days recounting his adventures in the town's taverns, although the privations he suffered had taken their toll and he died at the age of 45.

Jeremiah Ives (1692-1741) originated in Bourne but his family moved to Norfolk when he was still young. In 1726, he became Sheriff of Norwich and was elected mayor in 1733. He kept two homes during this period, one at Norwich and another at Bourne, and travelled between the two. Ives married Alice Black of Norwich in 1714 and had a son, also called Jeremiah, who was born here circa 1729 and also became a mayor of Norwich.

Dr William Dodd (1729-1777) was an Anglican clergyman, a man of letters and a forger. He was also the son of the Rev William

Dodd, Vicar of Bourne from 1727-56, and graduated with distinction from Clare College, Cambridge, before moving to London where his extravagant lifestyle soon landed him in debt and worried his friends who persuaded him to mend his ways. He decided to take holy orders and was ordained in 1751, becoming a popular and fashionable preacher but was always short of money and in an attempt to rectify his depleted finances, forged a bond in the sum of £4,200. He was found out, prosecuted and sentenced to death and publicly hanged at Tyburn on 27th June 1777.

Bryan Browning (1773-1856), the architect, is best remembered for his design of Bourne Town Hall, built in 1821 by public subscription and still in use today. He also designed the House of Correction at Folkingham and the workhouses at Bourne, Stamford and Spalding. Browning was a dedicated villager whose family made their mark on Thurlby over a period of two centuries and several members are buried in the churchyard.

William Bampton (1787-1830) knew his calling from an early age and joined the Baptist Church when he was only thirteen, deciding that he would dedicate his life to the ministry but chose to become a missionary and in 1820, his offer to serve in India was accepted. "This afternoon, I have solemnly devoted myself to the service of God among the heathen", he wrote in his diary. He took instruction in medicine and surgery, vital training for the missionaries of the time, was married and ordained, and sailed for Bombay in 1822. Once in India, he learned the language, went into the bazaars, dressed in Indian costume and spoke to the people, telling them the story of Christianity, of the life and work of Jesus and of the message of God's love for each one of them. But his mission did not last long. The hard work and unhealthy conditions took their toll and he died in 1830 but is remembered by Baptists today for his missionary zeal and is ranked with the foremost Christian philanthropists.

Joseph Dodsworth (1797-1877) ministered to the parish of Bourne as curate and then vicar for 55 years and was instrumental in bringing the railway to the town in the mid-19th century, being

one of the sponsors of the newly formed company to build the track to connect with the main line at Essendine in 1860. He was also one of the original investors in the town's gasworks and a supporter of popular education, regularly organising winter evening sessions of penny readings for the public. During his time as vicar, he was also generous in his personal gifts to the church, donating the stone and marble reredos in 1866 while the east window of stained glass commemorates members of his family and the centre panel was installed in his memory.

Jane Redmile (1800-1883) was the daughter of a yeoman farmer from Dyke whose unyielding faith, selfless service and sense of charity singled her out as a special person in her lifetime and her memory shines undimmed today as an example of the perfect life, perhaps even one approaching the state of grace we have come to know as saintliness. After a difficult childhood when she became breadwinner to her five brothers and sisters, Jane spent her life in continual labour in the cause of others while pursuing her religious faith at the Baptist Church in West Street, Bourne, founding chapels at Morton and Dyke and opening a grocery shop in Eastgate to help the deprived, yet still finding time for an intensive programme of self-education to improve her mind. In her final years, when known in the town as Aunt Jane, she was frequently sought out by young people wanting to speak with her and although far removed by reason of age, she felt sufficiently young in heart to be one of them.

John Lely Ostler (1811-1859) was born into a distinguished family at Grantham who claimed the celebrated 17th century Dutch artist Sir Peter Lely as an ancestor. He did not move to Bourne until a few years before his early death at the age of 48 but in that time, he became one of the biggest land and property owners in the district, supporting charitable causes, including schools. Such was his reputation that an elaborate monument was erected in the market place in his memory although it has since been moved to the town cemetery.

Robert Mason Mills (1819-1904) realised the market potential of

the fresh water supply that was freely available beneath Bourne and was soon extracting it from underground springs and selling it throughout the world. His aerated water business became part of the town's prosperity during the 19th century, giving employment to many and earning his business a Royal Warrant for supplying Queen Victoria's son, the Duke of Connaught, who bought it for its supposed medicinal and health giving qualities.

Charles Worth (1825-1895) was born in this town, the son of a local solicitor who lived at Wake House in North Street which survives today as a community centre. He left Bourne when still a boy to seek his fortune in Paris where he became an internationally known designer of women's fashion and the founder of haute couture. His reputation became such that the French government awarded him the Legion of Honour and when he died, 2,000 people, including the President of the Republic, attended his funeral.



Jane Redmile, Robert Mills, Charles Worth and William Wherry

William Wherry (1841-1915) was one of the most unselfish men to serve this town. He thought so much of his fellow man that he continually tried to make life better and this burden that he took upon himself might well have hastened his end. He was forced to retire from public life because of ill health at the age of 74 when his numerous offices and positions of responsibility numbered almost 100. If Bourne needs an example of a man of stature, then he is the one.

John Thomas Swift (1855-1939) is only remembered today by his book about the town and locality, *Bourne and People associated with Bourne*, published in 1909, but few copies survive outside the

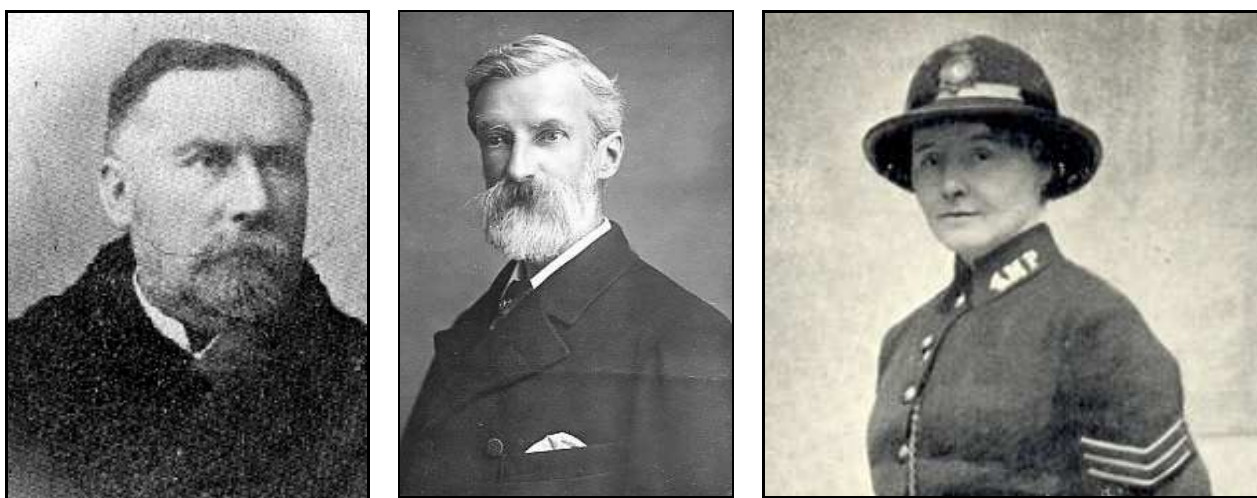
reference sections of our public libraries and recent research has superseded much of what he wrote. He was active in local affairs, sitting as a magistrate and serving as a member of Bourne Urban District Council, being elected chairman in 1908-09, and was subsequently elected to Kesteven County Council, now replaced by Lincolnshire County Council, and he later became an alderman. Swift was also responsible for the first detailed research into the list of past abbots and vicars of Bourne from the 12th century which is still accepted today and during his lifetime was frequently called upon to adjudicate on disputes and discussions involving the history of the town.

Robert A Gardner (1850-1926) was a bank manager in Bourne and also a talented artist whose work was exhibited in the Royal Academy. He never aspired to public office but his interest in the community inevitably resulted in a number of appointments, notably as a magistrate and chairman of the Bourne bench. But he is best remembered for his paintings and many of his works survive to this day, mostly in private ownership although some can be found hanging in the Red Hall.

John Joseph Davies (1856-1920) was one of the great schoolteachers in the history of Bourne who steered the former Abbey Primary School through its formative years. He was headmaster for 33 years during a period of changing social conditions, a pupil roll often in excess of 500 boys and girls and many of them coming from deprived backgrounds. He was appointed headmaster of the original Boys' Council or Board School in 1887 and during the next three decades, 2,000 boys came under his influence and in later years he kept in touch with many, notably those who served in the Great War, keeping up a regular correspondence until they returned home. Local history was a hobby which led to his book *Historic Bourne* being published in 1909, a natural adjunct to his freelance journalism, being the correspondent for most of the newspapers that circulated in Bourne and a frequent contributor to many London publications.

William Henry Redshaw (1856-1943) was brought up in the

family's saddlery trade but preferred photography and in 1874, at the age of 18, he set up his own business, using his father's premises in North Street. Photography was still in its infancy and regarded as little more than a passing phase, but his studio was an immediate success. His work was mainly portrait photographs although he also produced views of the town that were used as picture postcards, many of which survive to this day to remind us of how much it has changed. His other accomplishment was growing flowers and vegetables and he spent hours in the garden of his home at No 41 George Street and was a frequent prize-winner when he exhibited his produce at local shows.



Robert Gardner, William Redshaw and Lilian Wyles

Dr William John Gilpin (1864-1943) moved to Bourne in the late 19th century to take over the practice at Brook Lodge in South Street and became one of the first people in the town to own a car. During the Great War of 1914-18, he was appointed commandant of the military hospital run by the Red Cross which was established at the Vestry Hall in North Street from November 1914 until December 1918 during which time 945 wounded soldiers from the front line were cared for and he was awarded the MBE for his services in conducting the unit in such an efficient manner. There were fears for his health in 1917 when he contracted blood poisoning while carrying out a post mortem examination and although he was seriously ill for a time, he recovered and was back at work within weeks.

Cecil Walker Bell (1868-1947) was a member of an old established legal firm that practised in Bourne for 150 years with offices at No 18 West Street. After qualifying as a solicitor, he took over the business from his father and held many of the leading public legal

posts, including that of coroner for South Lincolnshire. He was a keen military man, commanding the local Volunteers for many years and reaching the rank of major, and was also active in the social and musical life of the town. Mr Bell served as people's warden at the Abbey Church but in 1933 he was successfully sued for libel by the vicar, Canon John Grinter, and in 1940, he left the town and retired to Eastbourne and never returned.

Thomas Whymant Atkinson (1874-1954) bequeathed property and land which enabled the development of the Wellhead park and War Memorial gardens in the years following the Second World War of 1939-45. He spent more than half a century devoted to farming and the community, as union officer and advisor, councillor and justice of the peace, serving for 52 years on Bourne Urban District Council, subsequently joining South Kesteven Rural District Council on its formation. He was also a member of Kesteven County Council from 1910, being elevated to the aldermanship in 1921, and in 1945, he became High Sheriff of Lincolnshire, an appointment he regarded as not only an honour for himself but also for Kesteven and the Bourne area particularly.

Frederic Manning (1882-1935) wrote what is considered to be one of the finest novels dealing with the Great War of 1914-18 and much of this work was completed while staying at the Bull Hotel in Bourne, now the Burghley Arms, and later went to lodge at a house in Burghley Street. Manning was an Australian who chose to live here after a spell at Edenham where he stayed with the vicar, the Rev Arthur Galton, who had been his tutor. His book, *Her Privates We*, was at first published anonymously, to much critical acclaim, but eight years after his death, it was published in 1943 under his own name and is still in print almost 70 years later. In the book, Manning acknowledged his affection for this town by calling his hero Private Bourne.

Lilian Wyles (1885-1975) was a major influence in the acceptance of women into the police force. She was the only daughter of the Bourne brewer, Joseph Wyles, and after a spell of duty on the streets of London with the new women patrols to assist young

girls at risk, was promoted inspector in 1922, becoming the first woman officer of the Metropolitan Police's CID department.

Charles Pask Matthews (1886-1956) became the first headmaster of Bourne Grammar School when it opened in 1920. The school originally began with three other staff and 50 pupils, meeting first in the Vestry Hall because the buildings were not ready for occupation, but in subsequent years he was mainly responsible for its establishment as a major educational force in the district, guiding it through the crucial early days and eventually seeing it firmly established with a promising future before retiring in 1945. Mr Matthews was also a skilled scientist and in 1940, while the Second World War was in progress, he put his extensive knowledge at the disposal of Bourne Urban District Council for the testing of meat affected by poison gas.



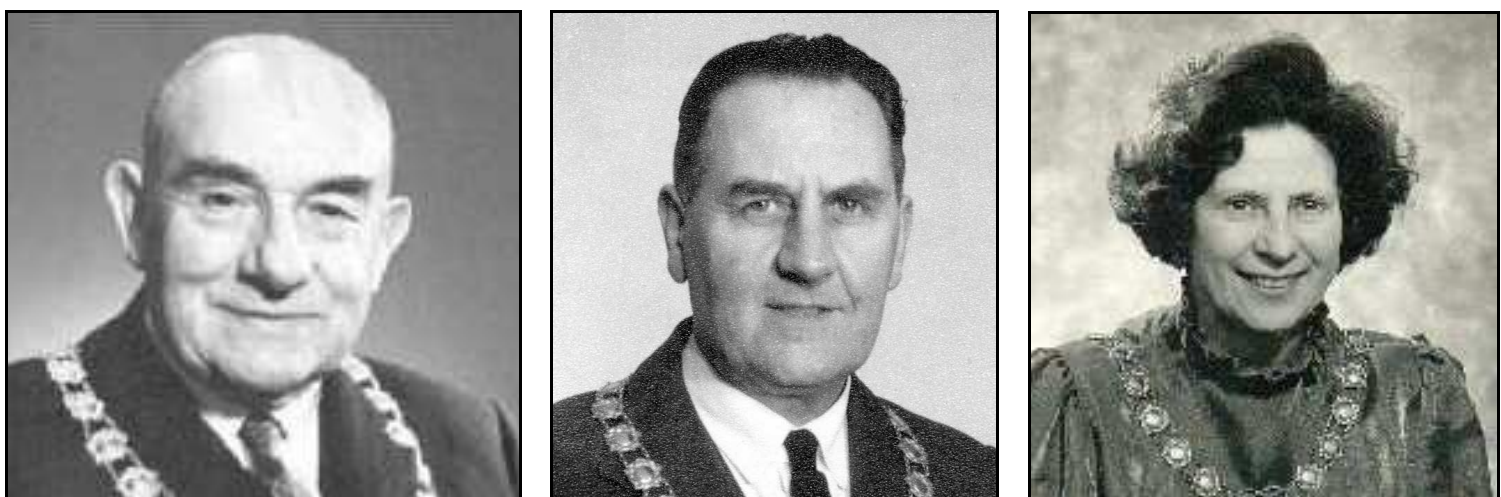
Charles Sharpe, Horace Stanton and Raymond Mays

Charles Sharpe (1889-1963) was a farmer's boy from Pickworth, near Bourne, who ran away from home and joined the army. During the Great War of 1914-18, an act of conspicuous bravery earned him the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest decoration for valour, and he subsequently inspired many young men to enlist. He received his award from King George V at Windsor Castle on 24th July 1915 and during that year he also visited Bourne to speak at a public meeting in the Market Place rallying young men to volunteer for military service. On return to civilian life, he had several jobs, notably as a physical training instructor for boys at the Hereward Camp approved school who regarded him as a role model, and on his death, he was given a military funeral.

Horace Stanton (1897-1977), a local solicitor, gave a lifetime of

service to this town and it is to him that we are indebted for his foresight in planning the War Memorial and its gardens and for acquiring the Abbey Lawn for the benefit of the town. He also commanded the district's Home Guard detachment during the Second World War. There were few aspects of life in the town that he did not influence and the high esteem in which he was held was echoed at his funeral service when the vicar, the Rev Gordon Lanham said: "If you would see his monument, look around."

Thomas Raymond Mays (1899-1980), son of a local businessman, achieved fame in the world of international motor racing, both on and off the track. After a successful career as a driver, he opened workshops in Bourne where he developed the BRM, the car that eventually became the first all-British model to win the world championship in 1962. Mays, who lived at Eastgate House in Bourne all his life, was honoured with a CBE in 1978 for his services to motor racing but the business he founded no longer exists in Bourne and the workshops where he built his record breaking cars were converted for use as an auction saleroom.



Lorenzo Warner, Jack Burchnell and Marjorie Clark

Lorenzo Warner (1901-1995) started his working life as a newspaper delivery boy and the business he began with a newspaper shop in Abbey Road continues in Bourne today as Warners Midlands plc, one of the most prestigious printing companies in this part of Britain and still run as a family concern. He was also active in many areas of community life including the Methodist Church, Bourne Cricket Club and Bourne Urban District Council, becoming their chairman for the year 1970-71, while his life in business is proof that hard work and a dedication to duty can bring its own reward.

Jack Burchnell (1909-1973) was among the last of the old style councillors who put the people before personal gain and reputation. He devoted more than a quarter of a century to this town and was responsible for instilling a new sense of pride in the community by inaugurating both the Civic Sunday and the Civic Ball, events that survive to this day, as well as saving the Red Hall at a time when many councillors wanted it demolished but his dedication and hard work ensured that it has been preserved.

Marjorie Clark (1919-2007) was the longest serving councillor in Bourne with more than 40 years of public service to her credit. She moved to the town with her husband in 1959 to run a public house, the Burghley Arms and then the Nag's Head, and was elected a member of Bourne Urban District Council in 1961, later becoming the first woman chairman of South Kesteven District Council from 1990-92. She was also a member of the town council, being elected Mayor of Bourne twice, in 1984 and again in 1999 at the age of 81, but eventually stood down in 2007 because of declining health. Council work was always her main interest. "I have never specialised in any particular field but have taken a deep interest in them all", she said, "whether it be the roads, housing, public health, welfare and even the Christmas lights. I like to think of myself as a dedicated councillor representing the people who have voted for me all these years for that is what I was elected to do and that is what I have always striven to achieve." Her daughter, Penny, who gave the eulogy at her memorial service in Abbey Church, said: "If there is a committee in heaven, she will be on it."

WHO RUNS BOURNE?

The administration of our local affairs dates back to the village meetings of early times and it is barely a hundred years since the last of them, the vestry meetings, were replaced by elected councils. Their formation, particularly the parish council, has now become an integral part of our life yet can be traced back over the centuries through the development of our villages to Saxon and Norman times.

One thousand years ago, communications were poor and central government often weak and so there was little national control. As a result, the Lord of the Manor usually controlled the villages. Eventually, he was joined by the parish priest and sometimes the schoolmaster and between them they established a kind of ruling clique because in small villages they were likely to be the only people who could read and write.

By the early 17th century, vestry meetings were being held in the parish church after Sunday morning service, dealing with church affairs as well as looking after the old, the poor and the infirm, appointing church wardens, sextons and even village constables. Their authority became so complete that it was quite natural for them to be given the responsibility of levying the poor rate, the first effective local taxes. The earliest assessments were written into the account books kept by churchwardens and parish overseers. They usually gave the householder's name and the amount payable for his property. Later, printed books were used, listing the houses street by street, the value of the property, the householder's name and the amount assessed.

The squire, the parson and sometimes the schoolmaster ruled the village in the late 19th century but popular education was spreading and more people wanted a say in managing local affairs and this was achieved through the 1894 Local Government Act, championed in Parliament by the Prime Minister, William Gladstone, and so parish councils were formed putting the administration of our affairs in the hands of elected councillors.

In Bourne, our own parish council began in 1894 but was superseded by Bourne Urban District Council in 1899 which continued for the next 75 years until local government reorganisation of 1974 when it was given special status as a town council with the power to elect a mayor. This privilege is purely decorative and has no more authority than any other parish council while effective control of the town's affairs now rests firmly with the district and county authorities. All are financed through the council tax which is levied annually on home owners

according to the size of their properties, the bulk of it going to the county council with a lesser amount to the district council and a token sum to the town council.

Lincolnshire County Council is in overall control of roads, schools and libraries, the fire brigade and the police authority, social services, museums and art galleries, emergency planning and many other spheres of activity. The council, based in Lincoln, has 77 elected members, all of whom are paid through a system of allowances, and has a workforce of more than 12,000 people making it the biggest employer in the county.

South Kesteven District Council is responsible for housing, waste, leisure and recreation, land use and planning applications. The council is based in Grantham and has 58 elected members, all of whom are paid through a system of allowances, and employs more than 700 people.

Bourne Town Council has limited powers, confined to the Christmas lights, the cemetery, street names and similar parochial issues, but it does have an input into all planning matters affecting the town and its members are usually the first to be approached by anyone with a problem or a complaint. The authority employs five people and there are 15 elected councillors, none of whom are paid, and who nominate a chairman each year, in order of seniority, who also becomes mayor.

The term mayor is an ancient one but today is mainly ornamental and involves taking the chair at council meetings and attending public functions as a representative of the town council, garden fetes, concerts, dinners, coffee mornings, and the like, and therefore involves a constant round of meeting people and shaking hands, culminating with the Civic Ball at the end of the term. Nevertheless, the office of Mayor of Bourne is a sign of achievement of effort in local affairs and one that is within the reach of everyone if they feel sufficiently dedicated to help their community by becoming a member of the town council, an opportunity that is open to all.