

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is not intended to be a complete history of Bourne that has been attempted elsewhere, notably on my CD-ROM A Portrait of Bourne which is the most comprehensive account to date and containing one million words of text and more than 3,000 photographs. To produce this in printed form would therefore be an impossible task and require several volumes to fill, thus making it economically unviable. I have therefore chosen to select highlights from our history, each an interesting and complete story with its own historical setting, none of which has been recounted in such detail in previous accounts of the town. There will, therefore, be omissions for those seeking information about specific people and events but that which has been left out has only been done so through reasons of space and not by a neglect of their importance.

I have divided the narrative into six sections, people, places, events, disasters and public services, which are all obvious, but after some consideration added Bourne at war because research has provided so much information about these momentous times and the people who lived through them that they deserved to be together, from the imperial conflicts of the Victorian age through to the two world wars of the last century. The book is intended to be a serendipity of our history and heritage and although it can be read straight through from cover to cover by the dedicated reader, it can also be used for random selection or serene dipping, the reader knowing that whichever passage he chooses will not affect the continuity and therefore spoil the enjoyment. Tales of Bourne from Past Times is intended firstly to entertain and then to inform and if this leads to more extensive reading on the subject from other sources then so much the better.

I am grateful to the many people who have helped me during my researches in the last ten years particularly Dr Michael McGregor for his most generous supply of old photographs, Jim Jones, my near neighbour, member of the Civic Society and custodian of Baldock's Mill, who has scoured the building from top to bottom to retrieve pictures and documents of interest, Councillor Don Fisher who has provided books and other papers that have been a valuable source of reference as well as advising me on dates, events and people, Graham Luesby who has allowed me to copy from his extensive collection of old photographs and Jonathan Smith who has given valuable advice on many occasions. My thanks are particularly due to my wife, Elke, for her encouragement and constant inspiration while her proof reading of every word and the checking of every photograph became an essential ingredient in our progress and so this book is as much hers as it is mine.

Rex Needle

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