ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

No. 66 AUTUMN 2023

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EDITORIAL

Katherine Barclay

Reading Gaol – the former HM Prison Reading – which was opened in 1844, is Grade II listed, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott and William Boynthon Moffatt. During both world wars, it was used as a place of internment, and later became a young offenders' institution. It was closed in 2013. Though it is said to cost at least £250,000 a year to maintain, settling its future has proved decidedly protracted (it was not put up for sale till 2019), partly because of the earlier history of the site.

It is set on the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Reading Abbey, a Cluniac house founded in 1121 by King Henry I. Before the completion of his abbey, Henry died (in Normandy) in December 1135, and in 1136 he was buried in front of the High Altar. Henry's tomb did not survive the destruction after Dissolution, though parts of the abbey became a palace where Elizabeth I often stayed; that was sacked in the civil war.

In 2019 the Autumn meeting of the Institute included a visit to Reading Museum and the Abbey ruins (for more details, see *Newsletter* 59), especially to see the redisplayed collection of carved Romanesque capitols (showing the richness of the lost buildings) and results of comprehensive conservation of the Abbey ruins under Reading Borough Council in 2017–18. There was considerable discussion among the group and our guides about the future of the prison site; at that time the location of Henry's tomb was less precisely known – possibly beneath a prison car park. 'Save Reading Gaol' was advocating for the development of the building as a community and arts venue. Museum of London Archaeology have conducted archaeological investigations at the prison, but the results are not available to the public – the excuse of commercial sensitivity has been cited. Though other royal burials which followed Henry's may be within the prison precinct, it is now felt more likely that the site of Henry's tomb is at Forbury Gardens Day Nursery in Abbot's Walk, which occupies the 1911 flint buildings of the old St James's school.

In 2021, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) rejected the £2.6 million offer from Reading Council to buy the prison for use as a cultural hub. Notably, the author Oscar Wilde was imprisoned at Reading in 1895–7; his letter written there to Lord Alfred Douglas was later published as *De Profundis*, and his last work (1898) was *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. And on the east-facing outer prison wall there is a confirmed Banksy artwork (2021) of a prisoner escaping down knotted sheets with a typewriter dangling below.

On 12 September, MoJ said they were close to completing the sale, but had not confirmed the bidder. Rumours include a commercial foreign buyer, and yet that it will be used for charitable purposes. It should be made accessible to all: https://savereadinggaol.uk

Archaeological Achievement Awards

These awards, which are now run by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) with the support of a steering group, celebrate archaeological achievements from across the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

This year there are five categories, including a new one, with an emphasis on a range of cross-cutting themes that are designed to show how archaeology relates to wider society, health and wellbeing, and place. The Institute is continuing to sponsor the Early Career Archaeologist Award. Judges include representatives from across the sector.

Award Categories:

Public Dissemination or Presentation

Engagement and Participation

Early Career Archaeologist

Learning, Training and Skills

Archaeology and Sustainability (new this year)

Nominations closed on Friday 15 September. The next awards ceremony will be held in the De Grey Rooms, York on Friday 24 November 2023.

See more at www.archaeologicalawards.com

Council For British Archaeology Festival 2023

The CBA annual Festival of Archaeology was held from 15–30 July 2023, with the theme 'Archaeology and Creativity'. It was again a mix of on-the-ground and online events, with some items still available to watch on YouTube. This year the Institute supported Youth Takeover Day, of which the Early Careers Special Interest Group Conference (organised by the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists) forms part. The dates for the 2024 Festival of Archaeology are 13–28 July and at the time of writing the theme is not known.

CURRENT ARCHAEOLOGY AWARDS

The 2024 awards will be presented at *Current Archaeology Live!* 2024 on 24 February at University College London's Institute of Education. Each category is the Best of the Year for: Research Project, Rescue Project, Book, or Archaeologist. Voted for entirely by the public – there are no panels of judges – the awards celebrate the projects and publications that made the pages of the eponymous magazine over the past year, and the people judged

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE RESEARCH GRANTS

The Institute awards the following grants annually:

Tony Clark Fund	Up to £500 for archaeological work and dating
Bunnell Lewis Fund	Up to £750 towards archaeology of the Roman period in the UK
RAI Award	Up to £5000 towards archaeological work in the UK

Please write to the Administrator @ RAI c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE for an application form or visit our website, www.royalarchinst.org

Closing date for applications: 11 December 2023. Awards announced in April 2024.

to have made outstanding contributions to archaeology. The shortlists, and how to vote, will be on their website soon at https://archaeology.co.uk/vote.

RAI Dissertation Prizes

The RAI awards prizes for dissertations on a subject concerned with the archaeology or architectural history of Britain, Ireland and adjacent areas of Europe. In odd-numbered years, the competition is for the best dissertation submitted by a Master's student. In even-numbered years, the Tony Baggs Award is given to the best dissertation submitted by an undergraduate in full-time education. Nominations are made by University and College Departments. The winner will receive £500 and the opportunity for a paper based on the dissertation to be published in the *Archaeological Journal*. The chief criteria considered are (a) quality of work and (b) appropriateness to the interests of the RAI as reflected in the journal. The prize will be presented at the Institute's December meeting.

RAI Cheney Bursaries

As a result of a bequest left by Frank Cheney, the Institute has a small fund of money to enable students to attend conferences or RAI meetings. An allocation is available annually from which individuals can apply for a maximum sum of £200. Please check with the Administrator that money remains in the yearly fund before you apply. Students who wish to apply for a bursary should email to admin@royalarchinst.org.uk or write to the Administrator, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE, at least six weeks before the event they wish to attend, stating: the institution in which they study, the event they wish to attend, the sum of money requested, a breakdown of how the money would be spent and a summary (up to 250 words) of why they would like to attend the event and in what way this would be useful to them. Successful applicants may be asked to produce a brief report of the event for the Institute. No bursary was awarded in the last year.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note that **non-members** are **not covered** by the Royal Archaeological Institute's Public Liability Insurance and they **must arrange their own insurance** to enable them to attend Institute Meetings.

Places are limited, so please book promptly.

In 2023 there will be **no** Annual Conference.

Forthcoming in 2024 (postponed from 2020)

Spring Meeting at Newark, led by Mark Gardner (details to be confirmed)

More information will be made available on our website as soon as possible. Once events are confirmed, full information and booking forms will be on the Institute's Meetings Programme page, http://www.royalarchinst.org/meetings.If you would like further details of any meetings sent to you, please send your email or postal address to the Administrator, RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE or admin@royalarchinst.org, or to Caroline Raison, RAI Assistant Meetings Secretary, 48 Park Avenue, Princes Avenue, Kingston upon Hull HU5 3ES or csraison@gmail.com.

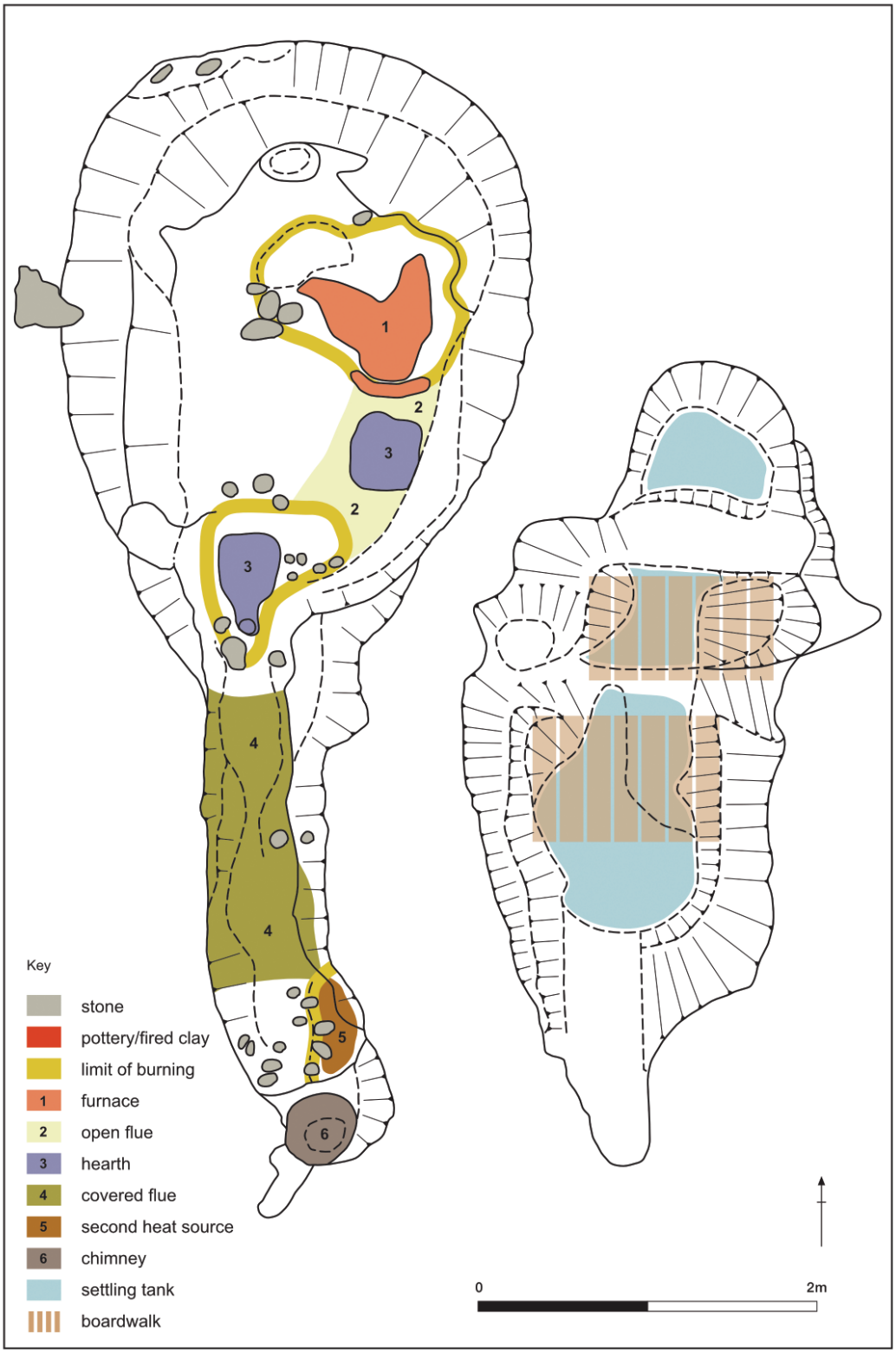
Report of the Spring Meeting at Harrogate in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 14–16 April 2023

Lindsay Fulcher, Julia Haes, Brian Kerr, Sue Shaw, Isobel Thompson, Andrew Williams

Rain fell heavily on the afternoon of Friday 14 April, delaying many RAI members on their journey to Harrogate, our base for the weekend. Some were so unfortunate as to miss **the excellent lecture** – for the first evening began with a walk to the library in torrential rain to hear a presentation on 'A well-seasoned site', excavations at Street House, near Loftus on the Yorkshire Coast. And it was well worth the soaking, as Stephen Sherlock gave us a fascinating illustrated talk on how the foundations of the only Early Neolithic salt-making site yet found in Western Europe were uncovered (Sherlock, 2021), pushing back the earliest known date for salt working in Britain by more than a thousand years.

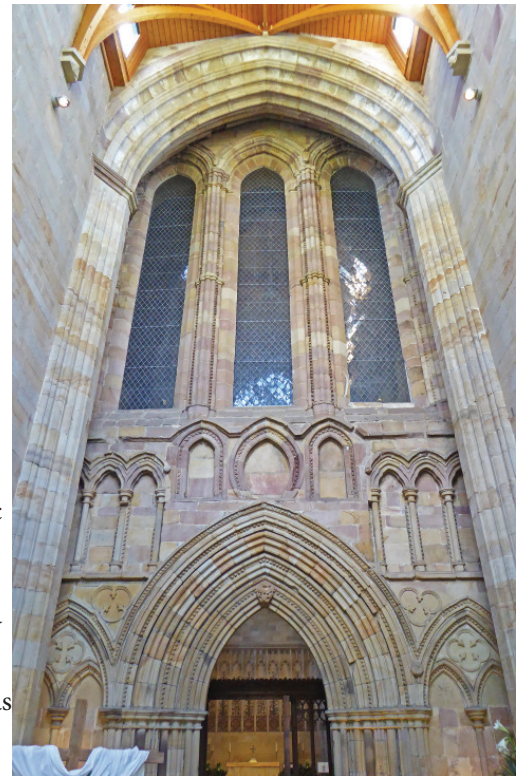
Stephen explained how this site was ideally situated near the sea and salt-water could be carried up to it from the beach. The site has survived in good condition – because it lies *c.* 2m below present ground level and is sealed by a white clay-like layer. The white deposit is the calcium carbonate, formed during the early process of evaporating seawater, which hardens into a compact clay-like substance. No finds were discovered in the white layer but, beneath it, in and around a cobbled surface, around 70 flints – cores, blades and flakes of broadly Neolithic date – and two grinding stones were found. A flue, associated with the salt-manufacturing process, a possible hearth and other features were also found. The ovoid-shaped, clay-lined furnace, which provided the main source of heat to the hearths, had stones at the base that served as the conduit through which the heat was drawn. The furnace was also probably used like a primitive kiln, to fire briquetage vessels found on site. The use of the furnace as a kiln and the manufacture of the salt vessels at Street House, dating from the Neolithic period, are significant and unique features in this country.

View north showing proximity of the Street House site to the sea (© Tony Hunt)



The Street House site after excavations in 2021 (S. Sherlock)

Over several excavation seasons, the Street House site, first revealed in 2016, has yielded up 4500 finds: Early Neolithic flint tools, ceramic vessels and environmental evidence, such as hazelnut shells and seeds. Then there is the exciting evidence pointing to the fact that salt was manufactured here: a furnace, three open hearths with trivets (stands), one intact vessel (a trough-shaped briquetage vessel), a flue and chimney, ceramics, kiln supports and furniture, as well as the X-ray fluorescence evidence, indicate salt both at the site and within vessels. As Stephen concluded: 'All of this is scientifically dated to the Early Neolithic period and provides comprehensive evidence that is almost unparalleled for this time. This leads me to suggest that this is not a temporary "hobbyists attempt to make a batch of salt" but is salt manufacture on an industrial scale.' It was even traded to different parts of the country.



The original thirteenth-century west front at Bolton Abbey (M. O'Brien)

Happily, on Saturday morning the sun was out and we boarded the coach for our first stop. **Bolton Abbey** is a misnomer, doubtless adopted after the Reformation: the medieval religious foundation was a priory, a house of Augustinian Canons founded *c.* 1154, bounded on two sides by the River Wharfe. It was built and rebuilt in various phases, and still under construction when the priory was dissolved in 1539. A new west tower for the church had been begun in 1520.

The 1st Earl of Cumberland, Henry Clifford, acquired the estate from the Crown in 1541. It passed to the 1st Earl of Burlington in 1635 when he married the Clifford heiress, and in 1753, from the Burlingtons to the Dukes of Devonshire, who retain it. The Devonshire ownership shows: the site is immaculate.

While the gatehouse and some adjacent buildings were incorporated into Bolton Hall, most of the priory buildings form a highly picturesque ruin. The exceptions are the thirteenth-century nave of the church and the unfinished west tower built on to it. The story goes that the last prior persuaded Thomas Cromwell's men that the nave was in use as the local parish church, hence its survival. As the tower was unfinished, unroofed until the 1980s when a new structure was added incorporating clerestory windows, the original thirteenth-century west front of the church survives behind it.

The exterior of the church and tower is relatively ornate, the interior less so. The six windows in the south wall showing scenes from the life of Christ were designed by Augustus Pugin in the 1860s for the 6th Duke of Devonshire. Pevsner does not mention it, but the first ceiling boss at the west end of the nave is a green man.

Among the most popular visitor attractions at Bolton are the stepping stones, originally a river crossing for lay workers at the priory. Following a recent storm, they are out of use. Replacing them is no simple matter, requiring new stones to be quarried, and an Environment Agency licence authorising contractors to enter the river. The process is under way, but who would be a landowner with such responsibilities?

Thence to **Skipton**. The castle was established towards the end of the eleventh century, held by Robert de Romille, and at the outset it appears to have been an earthwork enclosure with timber defences. There are traces of twelfth-century fabric in the walls and the chapel, suggesting a substantial phase of masonry construction, but most of this has been removed or hidden by the very extensive rebuilding of the early fourteenth century.

Skipton and other castles in the North of England saw substantial castle-building activity in the period after the death of Edward I in 1307 – John Goodall suggests that Lords were spending the money gained from the Scottish wars.

Roger de Clifford, the 1st Lord Clifford, received the lordship of Skipton from Edward II in 1310, and he strongly fortified the inner bailey in stone with a large gatehouse and tall D-shaped towers, similar to those at Alnwick, and the outer gate may also be part of these works, as is the fourteenth-century kitchen. Before he died at Bannockburn in 1314, he also carried out building works at his other castles at Brough and Appleby.

Henry Clifford, the 10th Lord Clifford (d. 1524) was a participant in the Battle of Flodden in 1513, and at Skipton he is said to have kept three brass cannon, formerly belonging to James IV, with barrels 13 feet long and each weighing over 2 tons.

In 1525, his son Henry Clifford was made 1st Earl of Cumberland and built the long east range of the castle in 1535, containing the Long Gallery; this range was repaired in 1659, and is occupied to this day. There are traces of fifteenth-century details in the polygonal tower at the end of the range, including an ogee-headed window. Skipton was one of only two castles held for the King during the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536–7, and both it and Scarborough were besieged. The Earl of Cumberland was made a Knight of the Garter for his defence of the castle in the King's cause.

Skipton (Brian Kerr)

The next Henry Clifford, 2nd Earl of Cumberland, undertook a variety of improvements to the castle, particularly around his elevation to the peerage in 1628, when he created a grotto in the Outer Gatehouse. He was a prominent Royalist in the Civil War, and prepared his main castles in Yorkshire, including Skipton, for defence in the King's cause. At the Castle Studies Trust conference at Winchester in June, Dr Tristan Griffin focused on the 2nd Earl's work at Skipton and showed how he used the castle to build networks among the landowners of the West Riding. This networking bore fruit during the war, when these relationships translated into Royal service. In discussion after his paper, it was asked why Skipton had been able to hold out so long against sieges, and Dr Griffin suggested that those three great guns (wherever they had come from) were mounted on the towers, and could outrange any guns that Parliament could bring to bear on the castle.

The castle was a major Royalist stronghold in the North; it resisted attacks until 1649, when on 20 November a Parliamentary force under Colonel Richard Thornton began a sustained siege, which lasted until the castle was surrendered on 21 December. The castle was ordered to be slighted by Parliament almost immediately, to ensure that it could not be held against them again, and while it was repaired by its owner, Lady Anne Clifford, in 1657–9, it is easy to distinguish the geology of medieval fabric from the later repairs, especially in the gatehouse and the adjacent watchtower. In the gatehouse the flanking towers have been dismantled by picking down to the top of the first floor. It was a condition of permission to rebuild that the replacement walls were to be much thinner, to ensure that the roofs of the rebuilt towers could not support the weight of artillery. This is clearer on the inside of the gatehouse and in the towers of the inner ward, where the rebuilt walls are perched on the outer face of the much thicker medieval structure. Skipton is a valuable case study for slighting as it was rebuilt so quickly, and the evidence for the scale of destruction wrought in 1649–50 is still clearly visible in the surviving fabric.

Lady Anne Clifford was perhaps the last champion of the castellated form in England until the gothic revival from the eighteenth century onwards. She repaired or rebuilt several family castles after the Civil War, including Appleby, Pendragon, Brough and Brougham, and of these Appleby and Skipton are still occupied today.

Our next stop was **East Riddlesden Hall** which was, and still is, essentially rural; its setting, outbuildings and contents reflect a considerable agricultural endeavour and ambition for self-sufficiency over many centuries.

The main entrance frontage shows the various phases of building. The hall range, in the centre, probably dates from the sixteenth century, although parts may be earlier, and it was substantially remodelled in the 1640s. It then underwent further changes, now only visible as ruins, in the late seventeenth century. The main house is of two principal storeys, with a garret, basement and multiple mullioned windows typical of West Yorkshire manor houses of this period. Remodelling included the two-storey porches at the front and the back, which have distinctive rose windows.

The earliest evidence for activity in the area was residual flint tools found near the 'Starkie Wing'. The putative line of a Roman road crosses the River Are just below the hall, and evidence of early mediaeval activity is based on eighth- or ninth-century cross fragments.

East Riddlesden Hall: unfinished embroidery (J. Haes)

Riddlesden is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

For the Hall we see today, we need to move through those many centuries to meet James Murgatroyd, who left the biggest mark on the estate. He had made his fortune in the Halifax woollen cloth industry, and bought the manor and 2000-acre estate in 1638 for about £6000, thus adding agriculture to his portfolio. He was a keen builder, having already built or remodelled other houses for his family. He organized most of the renovation work done and his alterations to the house were extensive and ostentatious, such as those rose windows, popular additions of the time.

Following his death, the Murgatroyd sons, James and John, disputed ownership, and John mortgaged the property to Edmund Starkie, becoming joint owners from 1672. Starkie took full possession in 1708, making changes including the Starkie Wing and installing the gate posts still standing today. The estate settled down to a century of stability under this ownership.

The Hall was deeply affected by the Industrial Revolution: the Leeds and Liverpool canal cuts through the estate. Mills of every kind developed in the area, the evidence of which is still visible on the soot-stained walls of the building.

For the following 120 years the estate belonged to absentee owners, the Bacon and Bence families, and a succession of tenant farmers occupied it until the early twentieth century. The house was subdivided to accommodate up to three families, but with no more significant architectural changes, and the condition of the house deteriorated.

The Starkie Wing was torn down in 1905, leaving only one of its walls. The Mayor of Keighley, William Brigg, and his brother John saw the importance of the property and to prevent demolition they bought it for £2000 in 1934. They hoped to garner financial public support but since this did not materialize, much of the estate was sold, including land, canal wharves and cottages. The fate of the estate remained uncertain until the Brigg brothers donated it to the National Trust on the understanding that it would be conserved and the land surrounding it could be used for recreation by the local communities.

The rooms of the house offer interest: the rose windows, seventeenth-century wood panelling, decorative plaster ceilings, and domestic paraphernalia such as tester beds for owners, cradles for their babies and a truckle for their servant. The most significant displays on our visit were to illustrate the skill of the women who had lived there: the black work,

stump work, samplers and crewel embroidery were impressive. There were also curiosities such as a Cadogan teapot: a lidless vessel that is an imitation of an inverted Chinese wine pot and filled through the bottom.

We cannot leave the hall before acknowledging the ghost of the Grey Lady: a wife who was caught doing things she did not ought with a local farm hand. Her husband locked her in her room, and she died there. Why she did not climb out of the window will remain a mystery. The youth was never seen again. The Hall has been used for TV productions including *Wuthering Heights*, and the lovely formal garden for *Anne Boleyn*.

A boating pond sits at the front of the house, with a very fine medieval tithe barn, originally all wood, and with many original features, not far beyond. It contains examples of farm machinery and carts, and a note about arks, both pig and grain. The Bothy, adjacent to the house, contains a tea room matching RAI expectations. Above the door are two reliefs: King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria, with the motto 'Vive le roy', leaving little room for doubt about the Murgatroyd family affiliation.

On Sunday, we were again lucky with the weather. **Knaresborough Castle** is a site which, owing to its demolition and subsequent stone removal, landscaping and collapse, is quite difficult to read today. The castle comprised an inner and outer ward, the King's Tower, numerous service buildings and, according to Leland, eleven or twelve towers. By the late nineteenth century, these towers had been reduced in number to six, with further losses due to collapse up to the 1940s. Demolition and landscaping has resulted in the infilling of the castle ditches, and the site has been landscaped as a public park. With the exception of the keep, the eastern 'gate', and the two south-eastern towers, virtually the entire curtain wall circuit and most of the towers are no longer extant. Fortunately, we do know more about the layout of the castle from excavations and from geophysical survey.

The earliest history of the royal castle of Knaresborough is unfortunately vague. The Pipe Rolls record an expenditure of £11 in 1129–30 in the King's works at Knaresborough; this is the earliest proof of the castle's existence. The location of this work is unknown, and no Romanesque masonry has been recovered from the site.

King John spent a considerable sum of money (£1294) on the castle from 1204–14. This included the construction (or reconstruction) of the curtain wall with D-shaped towers, the widening of the ditches and the creation of tunnels or sally-ports leading into them – three similar features survive at Windsor, dating from the 1220s.

For much of the thirteenth century the castle was held by the Earls of Cornwall, and the castle came to the Crown when that branch of the family died out in 1300. Edward I then repaired the castle and renovated its accommodation, and a new gatehouse was begun in 1304, with two towers and accommodation behind. More extensive work was carried out under Edward II when he gifted the castle to his close friend Piers Gaveston, newly created Earl of Cornwall. The Great Tower has been analysed by Philip Dixon, and we were fortunate to have him on the tour. He described the Great Tower as an architectural symbol of their friendship and of the lordly status of its owner; characterized as 'the Castle as Theatre'. This was a work of outstanding design and craftmanship. The building was under the supervision of two masons, Brother William, a Trinitarian friar, and Hugh of Titchmarsh, a

London mason, who managed the project through to its completion in 1312. It was a polygonal building of three storeys above a basement; formal access was via an external stair which rose from a vaulted porch to the first floor. The magnificent first-floor hall contains a large throne niche in one wall, heated by a fireplace and lit by a large and richly decorated window. The upper floors are largely gone, but there is documentary reference to a chapel, and a sixteenth-century drawing shows carved figures on the battlements. The complex form and geometry of this tower is said to look back to the great gatehouses at Denbigh and Caernarfon, with a close parallel in the Eagle Tower at Caernarfon which some of us visited last year. Philip outlined the fate of Gaveston, and the role played in his downfall by Thomas, 2nd Earl of Lancaster (who held Pontefract as well as many other castles). Philip suggested that Knaresborough influenced the design of the Earl of Lancaster's castle at Dunstanburgh.

A slighted perimeter drum tower at Knaresborough (Brian Kerr)

King Edward III granted Knaresborough to Queen Phillipa in 1331 as part of her marriage settlement, and in 1372 it passed to John of Gaunt and became part of the Duchy of Lancaster. In the early fifteenth century the castle ceased to be actively used by the monarchy but continued to be the administrative centre for the Honour of Knaresborough.

In the Civil War the castle was held for the King; it was besieged by Parliamentary forces in July 1644 and surrendered in December of that year. Some damage seems to have been inflicted immediately after surrender, with the Gatehouse damaged by Colonel Lilburn's troops. In 1648, on instructions from Parliament, the castle was thoroughly demolished. Nearly the entire circuit of the curtain wall and all buildings except the courthouse and part of the King's Tower were destroyed. Labour from the vicinity was used and the work seems to have been at least nominally monitored by the military, with less than successful results. Major General Lambert, a Yorkshireman from nearby Craven, observed that the said inhabitants do neglect to send in men to assist in that work, and such labourers as are sent from any towne do for the most part neglect the service, coming late, going away early, and standing idle whilst there …

By January 1650 the commissioners who surveyed Knaresborough reported that

> upon the demolishing of the said Castle all the Materialls (excepting the stones) were by certaine Comissioners (for that purpose deputed), disposed of, since which tyme the Inhabitants of the aforesaid Burrough and others neer unto adjoining have carried away the best of the said stones for theire owne private use.

There is historical evidence to suggest that this wholesale removal by the local population was not a phenomenon spread over time, but rather occurred in the relatively short period of time after 1648 and before the 1670s. The form of the slighting is unusual – the outer faces of the perimeter drum towers were retained, but their accommodation, along with the curtain wall, was demolished entirely. It is possible that the elements of the towers were retained to demarcate the bounds of the castle and to mark the authority of the legal administration. The court and prison buildings survive, and now house the excellent museum.

Having enjoyed the medieval castle and fine views of the Nidd gorge, we were transported rapidly downhill to the Low Bridge and Abbey Road. This is a pleasantly traffic-restricted road running for a mile along the base of the cliff, on the north bank of the river. Our goal was **the Chapel of Our Lady of the Crag**, a tiny room cut into the magnesian limestone above a bank covered in spring flowers. Unfortunately, the gate was padlocked, although we could see the chapel door and appreciate something of its medieval setting. This seemed far removed from the dramatics represented by the castle, but the limestone for its construction came from a quarry just here.

The chapel dates to the early fifteenth century: in 1408 John the Mason was granted a licence to excavate and make a chapel 'beneath the quarry'. Inside, it is *c.*12ft long and 8ft wide (4m × 2.75m), with piscina, pillars with floriate capitals, vaulting with bosses, and an altar with canopied niche all carved out of the rock. The exterior has a round-headed door and a window with a bit of crude Perpendicular tracery. On the opposite side of the door is the bizarrely inappropriate life-sized figure of a knight drawing his sword. In his own way he is of some interest, as a product of early tourism (see below, p. 24).

We could also see, high above, a crenellated building called the House in the Rock. Grade II Listed, it was built by a local weaver, Thomas Hill, and his son in the years 1770–86, and has four storeys each of a single room, with the entrance at the top in Crag Lane. It is now a private house. What we saw – and did not see – is an interesting story (see pp. 22–4).

Our penultimate stop was at the Palladian house and parkland of **Nostell Priory**, some 34 miles south of Harrogate. The twelfth-century Augustinian priory was seized in 1540 at the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and passed through five pairs of hands until purchased by Sir Rowland Winn in 1654. Construction of the present Robert Adams-designed house started in 1733, and the furniture, furnishings and decorations made for the house constitute the current collection, many on view on the two floors of the house which were open when we visited.

The displays of furniture, paintings, furnishings and collected items, and the detailed room-by-room knowledge of the guardians, are both so vast that one is left with an overwhelming need to concentrate on a few highlights, such as the 'world-class' collection of Chippendale

furniture, in particular, the medicines cabinet with its secret drawers; the 2-metre high, intricate doll's house designed by Susannah Winn and her sister Katherine, with many original tiny masterpieces made in the 1730s by silversmiths, upholsterers and painters, at great expense; the long-case clock, by local lad John Harrison, all of the working parts of which are made of wood; the gilt dinner service kept in a barred room within a formidable safe.

Lunch, tea and ice cream (in ideal weather) were partaken of in the stables courtyard as well as in many corners of the 300-acre estate. Especially delightful was the massive walled garden which, like the writer's allotment, was fully primed and ready to blossom forth. It was a perfect RAI stop: history built upon with a V&A-worthy collection, meriting a return visit.

At **Pontefract Castle** the remains that we can see are impressive, marking the site of one of the great Royal castles of the North, but the thoroughness of the demolition work carried out in 1649–51 means that we have to rely on historic illustrations for an impression of its magnificence. The site was cleared in the Victorian period when in 1881–3 a public park was created, involving large-scale clearance and earth-moving. Major excavations were carried out by West Yorkshire Archaeology Service as part of a Community Programme project, and this work along with information from the Victorian excavations was published by Ian Roberts in 2002. More recently, conservation work in 2016 revealed the site of the Inner Bailey Gatehouse, and with funding from Historic England this was excavated by DigVentures in 2019–20.

The sequence starts with an eighth- to tenth-century Christian cemetery, and the earliest phase of the first castle chapel may belong to this period. There is some limited evidence for the earthwork and timber castle of the eleventh to twelfth century, in a motte and bailey form. Philip Dixon suggested that the siting of the castle was influenced by its location on a major north–south route, avoiding the river marshes which lay to the east.

The strengthening of the defences in stone began in the mid-twelfth century under the de Lacy family, with a round-headed arch surviving in the S-W Curtain. The 2002 report suggests a masonry ward with rectangular mural towers, with alterations to the chapel and the construction in the bailey of a hall with cellar. The building of the unusual quatrefoil Great Tower on the motte seems to have been begun in the mid- to late thirteenth century, influenced by the design of Clifford's Tower in York, which was probably begun in the 1240s. Under John of Gaunt from 1374, the Pontefract Great Tower was enlarged and enriched with a spectacular display of turrets, battlements and chimneys. He also started the rebuilding of the outer walls, which continued under his son Henry IV at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries, notably in the Swillington Tower, which was built outside the line of defences but connected to them by means of a wooden bridge. The fifteenth-century Great Kitchen resembles John of Gaunt's kitchen at Kenilworth. On the death of John in 1399 his exiled son Henry Bolingbroke seized the throne and deposed Richard II, who was imprisoned at Pontefract and murdered here in February 1400. Under James VI and I, Pontefract, as the greatest Royal castle in the North, was one of the few to be kept in good repair, with £3000 spent between 1618 and 1620.

The castle was an important Royalist stronghold during the Civil War, and was besieged three times. These were substantial sieges, with lines surrounding the castle strengthened

The keep at Pontefract Castle seen from the south-west ((Brian Kerr)

with forts and redoubts, and there is evidence of mining and counter-mining. The first siege began in December 1644 and lasted until the following March, when a Royalist force relieved the siege. The second siege began almost immediately, and lasted until the defeat of the Royalist army at Naseby in July 1645. It was then garrisoned by Parliament, although Royalists seized back control in June 1648. Cromwell began the final siege in November 1648, and following the execution of the King in January 1649, negotiations began which were concluded on 24 March 1649, when the castle was handed back to Parliamentary control. The town immediately petitioned Parliament for the slighting of the castle – the sieges had caused great damage to the town, exemplified today by the ruined section of All Saints' Church which was badly damaged during the siege. The petition cited the loss of 200 buildings, and town authorities wanted the risk of further warfare removed. Parliament gave the order to slight the castle on 27 March, and work started on 5 April. Unusually, the detailed accounts for the demolition work survive, along with those for Montgomery Castle and, a recent discovery, Sheffield Castle.

The accounts for the demolition of Pontefract were kept and controlled by a group of seven trustees who were Aldermen of Pontefract, and these have been analyzed by Dr Lila Rakoczy as part of her PhD on castle slighting in the Civil War. The expense of the demolition work was £777 4s 6d, of which the greatest part of the cost, £530 16s 2d, was paid for the dismantling of stone walls. The stone produced no revenue at all; much was doubtless reused much later, but none was sold in the immediate aftermath. So the most expensive element of the demolition produced exactly zero revenue. Sales of timber, glass and metal did raise some money, but by far the most profitable element was lead, which produced sales of £1640 out of a total revenue of £1779. After deduction of labour costs this gave £1000 to the town of Pontefract as previously agreed, and a measly £2 to the West Riding Committee.

The accounts tell us a great deal about the organisation of the work, but they also illustrate the dangers – extra money had to be paid to encourage the workers after the removal of timber had caused the collapse of several towers, and there is also a reference to a maimed workman. This was difficult and dangerous work, carried out by skilled teams who were contracted to remove elements of the castle.

We are grateful to Philip Dixon, who kindly shared his thoughts on Pontefract Castle with the group, and to our organisers Peter Ginn and Caroline Raison for devising a varied and intriguing meeting, with plenty of reasons to return.

Sherlock, S. J. 2021, 'Early Neolithic Salt Production at Street House, Loftus, North East England,' *Antiquity*, **95**, issue 381, 648–69.

LECTURES

Attending Lectures at Burlington House

We have returned to meetings at Burlington House, with live lectures and tea beforehand, but while the pandemic is not over, we have to continue to exercise some caution, and it remains possible that regulations may change. We appreciate that some members may feel reluctant to resume attending such meetings in person, and so we intend to continue live-streaming of lectures.

Access to Lectures Online

To view the Institute's forthcoming lectures online, if you have not already done so, please contact the Administrator with your email address at admin@royalarchinst.org, and before each lecture you will be sent the link.

Royal Archaeological Institute Lecture Programme and Abstracts: 2023/4

Meetings are held from October to May, on the second Wednesday of the month, at 5.00 pm in the Rooms of the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE. In May, the lecture will be preceded at 4.45 pm by the Institute's Annual General Meeting. Again this year there will be no short presentations by early career archaeologists; instead, the Institute sponsored the early career researchers conference held as part of the CBA Festival of Archaeology.

Tea will be served at 4.30 pm, or before the AGM, at 4.15 pm.

For enquiries, the Institute's mobile number is 07847 600756.

2023

11 October

New Fieldwork at Hinton St Mary, Dorset: The Mosaic in Context

Dr Richard Hobbs and Dr Peter Guest

This talk will present the results of three seasons of fieldwork at the site of the discovery of the Hinton St Mary mosaic, uncovered by chance sixty years ago behind the blacksmith's forge. Limited excavations conducted after the mosaic was discovered proposed that the mosaic was probably part of a courtyard villa, the dominant villa plan of the late Roman period. The new fieldwork presents a rather different perspective and suggests that the 'villa' interpretation may need revising.

8 November

Footmarks. An Archaeology of Movement

Dr Jim Leary

Can we ever know what it was like to move in the past, to understand its meanings and complexities? Unlike many other disciplines, ones that can observe and interview the moving subject, archaeology has only the silent witness. This silence, though, is not to be misconstrued with stillness, and the evidence for past mobilities surrounds us. Focusing on mobility provides a dynamic approach to archaeology, and this presentation will discuss some of the evidence for mobility within the archaeological record and explore ways in which archaeology can engage better with it. What mobility can contribute to the understanding and interpretation of past landscapes will be addressed, with a move away from archaeology's traditional focus upon place and location.

13 December

Life, Death and Worship at HM Tower of London

Alfred Hawkins

The Tower of London is one of the most important and sensitive historic sites in the world. Now a Scheduled Monument and UNESCO World Heritage Site, it has been a royal palace, fortress, prison, and the home of numerous national institutions, but the site is better known for its mythical status as a macabre mausoleum for traitors and the location of some of England's most dramatic events. These stories of death, treason and torture each relate in some way to the Tower's church – the Royal Peculiar and Chapel Royal of Saint Peter ad Vincula. This, though, is not the main story behind one of the Tower's most important buildings. This talk will discuss new research and recent excavations funded by Historic Royal Palaces and the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society to explore the development of the building from its pre-Conquest origins until the present day, shedding new light on a building so often known only through the eyes of a few internments and the legacy of Victorian mythologies.

2024

10 January

Archaeology in a Nature and Climate Crisis

Dr Hannah Fluck

We are all aware that we are in the midst of a global nature and climate crisis, and discussions of the urgency of responses, for nature recovery, for looking after the natural world, dominate media and public dialogue. However, it is less clear where and how archaeology fits within this context. What is the role of an archaeologist in a nature and

climate crisis? How can we balance caring for our cultural and natural heritage? As the biggest private landowner in the country and a conservation charity with responsibility for nature, beauty and heritage for everyone, for ever, we at the National Trust are exploring the answers to these questions on a daily basis. This presentation will draw on those experiences to try to pose some answers, and some challenges for an archaeology that is fit for such a tumultuous future.

14 February

The Justinianic Plague in England: Archaeological Contexts and Consequences

Professor John Hines

The 'First Pandemic', bubonic plague, which struck Constantinople in AD 542, is well described in some contemporary sources. Historical evidence of its spread across Europe to Britain and Ireland is less precise, but archaeogeneticists have successfully identified the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium responsible for the disease, and in multiple cases at the Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Edix Hill, Cambridgeshire. Although Byzantine sources provide a precisely dated archaeological horizon, several of those graves suggested an earlier context. Relevant radiocarbon evidence from continental Europe is mostly consistent with a TPQ of AD 542, albeit with anomalies consistent with a pre-542 outbreak.

Additional radiocarbon dating at Edix Hill also confirms the expected TPQ. The apparent anomaly is explicable from two angles, both of considerable significance. Firstly, statistically identifiable variance in the precision of radiocarbon results can create a misleading picture. Concurrently, comparative examination of grave-assemblage sequences in Cambridgeshire and East Anglia reveals a stronger disjunction between patterns there than previously recognized. That disjunction, however, must have preceded the pandemic, and its explanations may lie in evolutionary 'processes' in cultural practice and/or have been catalysed by the crisis of the severe climatic downturn in the years from AD 536. At present, Edix Hill is the only site from Britain where the evidence could enable us to investigate these impacts in detail at a communal level.

13 March

Iron Age and Roman Silchester: Fifty Years of Research in Perspective

Professor Michael Fulford

Once thought to be a worked-out site following the Society of Antiquaries' excavations in 1890–1909, excavations at Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum) since the 1970s have shown remarkable preservation of the archaeology through all its periods of occupation from late Iron Age through to late Roman. Thanks to major continuing developments in environmental archaeology and material culture studies, excavation and its subsequent analysis have enriched our understanding of both public and private life, and the buildings in and around which those lives were played out. This lecture will attempt to highlight the more important discoveries and place them in the wider context of urban life in late Iron Age and Roman Britain.

10 April

Life (and Death) on the Edge? Regionality, Connectivity and Networks in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Cambridgeshire

Dr Katie Haworth

For archaeologists working on the wealth of material culture from early medieval

(fifth- and sixth-century) cemeteries of southern and eastern Britain, markedly regional distributions of artefact types are immediately familiar. Cambridgeshire is particularly interesting in this regard, with cemeteries producing evidence of a mixture of distinctive artefact types and dress fashions typical of both Norfolk–Suffolk to the east and the Midlands and Thames valley to the west. The traditional view has been that artefactual distributions can be used to write cultural histories, largely concerned with migration and population displacement. Today, however, the question of early medieval ethnicity is approached from a more nuanced perspective. Equally, advances in archaeological science are being marshalled to investigate the question of migration, independent of traditional reliance on grave-goods as indicators of origin. There remains an important place within early medieval archaeology for using material culture on a regional scale to think about questions of community and connectivity. The distribution and use of key artefact types will be reconsidered, including brooches and beads, as a means to examine the regional networks and connectivity that emerged during the fifth and sixth centuries, the contexts of production and exchange of this material culture, and its use in the construction of identity.

8 May

The President's Lecture
Stone Heads in the Roman Military Zone and What They Tell Us About People

Lindsay Allason-Jones

The conundrum of how one can tell the date of a carved stone head is one I had to wrestle with when preparing the *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani* Volume I, Fascicule 11. This lecture discusses when human heads were first carved in Britain, why they are still carved and what they tell us about the human mind throughout the ages.

British Archaeological Association Meetings

Royal Archaeological Institute members are invited to attend the meetings of the BAA; please see https://thebaa.org/meetings-events/lectures/annual-lecture-series/ for the 2023/4 programme. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month from October to May, at 5.00 pm in the rooms of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Non-members are asked to make themselves known to the Hon. Director on arrival and to sign the visitors' book.

London and Middlesex Archaeology Society (LAMAS)

Lecture Programme 2023/4

Lectures will take place from 6.30–7.30 pm. Please check the Society's website and social media for details of location, and whether it will be Zoom only, or hybrid, so held in-person and on Zoom. Titles and dates are given overleaf.

Non-members are very welcome at a charge of £2.50; all lectures are booked on Eventbrite via the Society's website, https:/www.lamas.org.uk/lectures.html.

2023

10 October

Stamped Roman Timbers from London and Elsewhere: Tracing Evidence of Economy and Emperors

Sadie Watson and Damian Goodburn

14 November

A Tale of Two Fords? An Alternative Model of Roman Road Infrastructure in Southwark and Beyond

Becky Haslam

12 December

The Failure of London: The Long Fourth Century

Dominic Perring

2024

9 January

Life, Death and Worship at HM Tower of London

Alfred R. J. Hawkins

13 February

AGM and Presidential Address

Mapping Medieval London

Vanessa Harding

Please note that the AGM will start at 6 pm and the Presidential Address will follow

12 March

The Thames Tunnel

Katherine McAlpine

9 April

Syon Abbey Revisited: Reconstructing Late Medieval England's Wealthiest Nunnery

Bob Cowie

14 May

Joint Prehistoric Society and LAMAS Lecture

Paleo-London, Thinking about the Ice-Age archaeology and Environments of the Capital

Dr Matt Pope

MISCELLANY

Request

If members have links to local or learned societies anywhere in the UK, could they please register them with the Administrator; local contacts are so helpful in the running of meetings.

Exhibition

'**Becoming Roman – Silchester, a Town of Change**', 10 February–28 April 2024 at the Sainsbury Gallery, Willis Museum, Basingstoke

The antiquarian excavations at Silchester gave us a remarkable collection of artefacts but with little or no insight into their context: Silchester was a town without a history. Modern stratigraphic excavation has enabled us both to see change over time and to characterize life at particular points in the development of the town from the late Iron Age through the creation of the Roman city to its abandonment between the fifth and the seventh century. Arranged thematically, the exhibition will display key finds from the recent excavations which illustrate the settlement of the late Iron Age with its widespread links across southern Britain and continental Europe, its transformation into a

Roman city, and aspects of daily life through to the town's abandonment. The exhibition will include family-friendly interactive activities.

The RAI office

The telephone number for the Administrator is 07847 600756, the email is admin@royalarchinst.org and the postal address is RAI, c/o Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE. The RAI has no office in London, but the Administrator will usually be available at this address on the second Wednesday of each month from October to May, between 11.00 am and 3.00 pm.

A King's Award for Enterprise

Archaeological Research Services (ARS Ltd) have received a King's Award for Enterprise, one of only 148 organisations awarded the honour in the UK in the first round given under HM King Charles III. Our member Clive Waddington (ARS Ltd Managing Director), said: It really is a privilege to lead our team, and also to fly the flag for Britain's world-leading archaeological profession which contributes so much to our national life, but rarely gets much recognition.
This Award recognises their development of geoarchaeological, remote sensing and particularly landscape-scale geochemical survey in archaeological prospection and evaluation. These non-intrusive services improve site detection, including 'hard to find' archaeology, while also improving safety, reducing carbon emissions and costs, and speeding up delivery.
https://www.gov.uk/kings-awards-for-enterprise
https://www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com/

Subscriptions

The current rates *by direct debit* are: Ordinary member, £35, Associate £15 or Student, £20. Life membership, at £750 or £525 if aged over 60, represents good value for both the member and the Institute and it shows a member's commitment to the Institute.

Gifts

Under the gift aid scheme, if you are a taxpayer, the government will refund to the Institute, 25p in the pound of the value of your subscription. If you would like to help, please ask the Administrator for a form.

Please consider making a donation or a legacy, and, if you wish, stipulate the area of our work to which it should be directed. A sum of £25,000 will increase our annual grant giving by £1,000. A legacy to the Institute, an exempt charity, is extremely tax-efficient.

The Institute's website

From our website at www.royalarchinst.org all readers can download booking forms for our meetings, and access site-specific notes from previous Summer Meetings. Please send any feedback or suggestions for future improvements to the Administrator, admin@royalarchinst.org.

Access for members

If you are a full member, and have not yet got your online log-in for the members' area of our website, please contact the Administrator with your email address. You will be sent a username and password.

KNARESBOROUGH'S ABBEY ROAD, AND ITS CHAPELS

Isobel Thompson

During our Spring 2023 meeting to the Yorkshire Ridings we visited the site of the first of Abbey Road's chapels (17 on map, and see above, p. 13). Formerly known as the Quarry Chapel, it received its current name, Our Lady of the Crag, only in 1916, at reconsecration. It is Grade I Listed, but the official description is misleadingly brief and awaits updating. The hurried inspection before Listing did not even examine the interior; for this it refers to an article by an Abbot Cummins (1926). Cummins' stated aim was to sort out longstanding confusion between *two* medieval shrines cut into the cliff, a muddle 'discreditable to local scholarship and inconvenient to the public'.

Cummins thought that the carving of the knight outside the door was 'obviously of modern cement', although possibly with a stone core, and was told that the head was a recent replacement. However, in 1739 a print had been published showing the knight already in place. He was presumably carved at some time in the later seventeenth or early eighteenth century, and his likely context lies on the other side of the gorge.

In 1630 Charles I sold the ancient royal hunting park on the south side of the river to Sir George Slingsby. His grandson Sir Henry Slingsby landscaped this estate and laid out a riverside walk, for fashionable visitors – a walk which took in attractions already known as the Dropping or Petrifying Well, and Mother Shipton's Cave (8 on map). These visitors came to 'take the waters', here and in Harrogate. The Long Walk is now a Registered Park, but drinking from the Petrifying Well is *not* recommended.

Abbey Road, Knaresborough

In 1926 Cummins dismissed 'the somewhat vulgar shows of Fort Montague and Mother Shipton', which brings us back to the Chapel side of the river. Fort Montague's more familiar name is the House in the Rock (16 on map and see above, p. 13), the most fanciful of many 'tenements' once to be found in the cliff face (also owned by the Slingsby family).

Long after the Reformation, the Quarry Chapel was still named as such in local records, and the trouble over its identity only started when Gibson's 1695 edition of Camden's *Britannia* associated it with St Robert of Knaresborough. Abbey Road is named for Knaresborough Priory of the Holy Trinity and St Robert (Trinitarian, an order set up to gather alms towards redemption of captives from the Holy Land). According to the Victoria County History (Page, ed., 1974), St Robert of Knaresborough was born Robert Flower in the later twelfth century. From a wealthy York family, he spent most of his life as a hermit (albeit with attendants) here in the Nidd gorge. 'The most interesting traditions about him relate to his power over animals and his kindness to the poor.' Before his death in 1218 he was visited by King John, who (amongst others) granted him land. Pilgrims began to visit Robert's grave and by 1252 he was regarded as a saint, although never officially canonised.

On the riverbank near the eastern end of Abbey Road (a mile downstream from the Quarry Chapel) is 'St Robert's Cave and medieval hermitage', dating to *c.* 1180. This site is both Listed and Scheduled, and is officially described as

> a very rare surviving example of a medieval hermitage, which includes both the hermit's cave and living area, as well as the remains of a chapel. Although the chapel survives only as ruined foundations, the monument as a whole is unique.

It is unique because of its association with a hermit famous across Europe. Much later, 'the cave became a popular tourist attraction after the discovery in 1746 of the body of Daniel Clark, for whose murder Eugene Aram was hanged in 1759' – an incident used by Lord Lytton for his 1832 novel.

St Robert was buried in his chapel but was soon moved to the Trinitarian priory, which survived damage by Scots raiders who burnt much of Knaresborough in 1318, but was dissolved in 1538. Its site, along Abbey Road about halfway between the Quarry Chapel and St Robert's hermitage, was partly excavated in 1862 and 1949, but any remaining fragments are presumed to be in private gardens.

Bulwer-Lytton, E., 1832, *Eugene Aram: A Tale*. London.
Abbot Cummins, 1926, 'Knaresborough Cave-Chapels', *Yorks. Archaeol. J.* 28, 80–8.
Camden, W. (ed. and trans. E. Gibson), 1695, *Britannia*. London.
Page, W., ed., 1974, 'Friaries: The Trinitarian Friars of Knaresborough', in *A History of the County of York: Volume 3*, pp. 296–300, *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/yorks/vol3 [accessed 4 September 2023].

The entrance to the Quarry Chapel, Knaresborough (A. Williams)
(see above, pp. 13, 22–3)

ROYAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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NEXT ISSUE Copy for the next issue must reach the editor by the end of January 2024 for publication in April 2024.

THIS ISSUE'S COVER PICTURE: Approaching Bolton Abbey (M. O'Brien). Taken during the Institute's Spring 2023 Meeting to the Yorkshire Ridings (see above pp. 5–16, 22–3)