

*TWO ESSAYS
ON
OLD THORNE*

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Thorne Local History Society
Occasional Paper No 26: 1997

Two Essays on Old Thorne

This study was first published by Dr. Taylor forty Years ago, since when it has been out of print. We are grateful that we have been permitted To reprint it as an Occasional Paper.

Acknowledgments

Encouraged by the comments of the people who read my essay on a Master Mason and Builder, published serially in the Thorne Parish Magazine between February and November 1956, I have decided to present it before the public once more, but this time in a connected form in an attempt to remedy the principal defect which was pointed out to me by several critics whose opinion I greatly respect.

I am adding to it some notes on a Builder's agreement kindly lent to me by my friend Mr. J. W. Thorley – and a Bill for work done in 1821, for the loan of which I am greatly indebted to another friend. I would like to acknowledge their kindness in placing these papers at my disposal and giving me their consent to publish the contents.

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I am also adding some notes on the account book of Mr. William Armitage, Chemist, of Thorne – and here I would like to express my grateful appreciation of the kindness of the family of the late Mr. and Mrs. Robert Read who rescued the book and have allowed me to study it and prepare another essay from it.

At the suggestion of Mr. Tate I have also decided to include the letter from Dr. J. J. Littlewood to Mr. George Kenyon as we both agree that there are still many people in Thorne who respect and esteem the character and memory of the late Canon Littlewood, and for this reason if for no other, could not fail to find the letter of interest. It was originally published in Thorne Parish Magazine in January 1956 and it is, so far as I know, one of the very few personal letters which have survived from those very distant days in Thorne.

I would also like to thank the Headmaster of Thorne Grammar School for the contribution of a Foreword, and, as always to express my grateful appreciation of the kindness and constant interest and frequent advice of Mr.

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Tate, without which such a publication would be impossible, and my appreciation of the excellent work and interest shown throughout by him and his staff.

I would also like to express my admiration for the prompt way in which the Business Service Bureau at Doncaster wrestled with the M.S. and produced a typescript acceptable to the Printers.

I wish to thank Mr. H. M. Taylor for his help in preparing the notes and reading the proof sheets. I intend to devote the proceeds of the booklets sold to the general funds of Thorne Parish Church for any purpose which the Vicar and Churchwardens may approve.

J. S. TAYLOR

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INTRODUCTION

I am happy to write this brief introduction to the latest of Dr. Taylor's most interesting local historical studies. He has chosen as his subject-matter some miscellaneous notes found in a day-book of a Thorne chemist, and out of this apparently unpromising material has succeeded in creating a vivid picture of some aspects of life in a bygone Thorne.

This booklet provides a picture of the town's life seen through the eyes of a Thorne tradesman, and read in conjunction with Dr. Taylor's previous studies serves to fill in further our knowledge of a way of life which has all but passed away. For the hundred years which have elapsed since William Armitage began to keep his notes have seen greater changes than any other century in our history: and during this period the history of Thorne reflects very precisely in miniature the effects which the Industrial Revolution had on the way of life of the country as a whole: for the character of the town has almost completely changed from that

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of a quiet market town with a busy quayside to that of an important centre of the mining industry: and one cannot but feel a sense of nostalgia when one reads of the days when tobacco cost 5½d. for two ounces and when sailors were not an uncommon sight in the town's streets.

This volume should prove of considerable value and interest, not merely for the facts which Dr. Taylor has preserved from oblivion, but also for the skilful manner in which he kindles the reader's imagination to picture for himself a mode of life to our children may well seem as remote as the Middle Ages.

I commend it warmly both to the general reader and to the social historian.

The proceeds of the sale of this booklet will be devoted to the same worthy cause as has already benefited by the sales of Dr. Taylor's other publications-the general expenses of Thorne Parish Church.

P.T.GRIFFITHS

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A Chemist

1848 -The year of Revolutions- which left its mark on almost every country in Europe in a succession of upheavals and bloodshed, was marked in England by the presentation of People's Petition before the House of Commons, and, in general, by very slight disturbance, in welcome contrast to the Continent. It is likely that very little of the wave of unrest reached Thorne, but other matters were very disturbing the minds of people there, and they represented a succession of changes in the old order more noticeable and far-reaching when viewed retrospectively, than would have seemed obvious at the time.

The town had been recently lit by gas; the Corn Market was flourishing; the canal and river trade was still apparently flourishing, too; but in 1847 the South Yorkshire Railway had bought Shares of the River Dun Navigation Company, and two years later was to buy Shares of the Stainforth to Keadby Canal Company, and this was a clear indication of the power and influence of the new

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railways when they found themselves facing the opposition of the Canals, even though there was as yet no railway development in Thorne.

In 1848, however, the Great Northern Railway Company obtained an Act of Parliament for the construction of a railway from Doncaster to Thorne and from there to Crowle, Epworth and Gainsborough, thus crossing the Moore near Thorne. At the same time a scheme was on foot to improve the Moors by conveying warp from the banks of the River Don in trucks on railway lines, and spreading the warp thus conveyed on the peaty surface. The recession of the railways which began in 1847 made the proposed Great Northern Railway's extension impossible, but as the Participants of Hatfield Chace has already agreed to allow the warping of a thousand acres of the Moors from which the peat had been removed, and it was quite clear that railway extensions were not to be available, the improvement of the Moors was only to be effected by actually allowing the river to flow over the Moors and to control it by the construction of drains, banks and sluices-this scheme of making use of the Don's tides for the

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depositing of warp on the moors was evolved and carried out by a Company of Engineers making use of much local labour, without having recourse to the railways at all.

With these matters in their minds it is unlikely that the people of Thorne concerned themselves with any affairs outside their own neighbourhood and improvement of the vast assets which lay close to their hands; and to the most far-seeing it would have been obvious that the coming of the railways could not be long delayed even though there was a temporary recession, and in spite of the inevitable decline of the river traffic, the river could be made to enrich the land by conveying layer upon layer of warp with each succeeding tide over the hitherto unprofitable and barren moors, with no limits to its possible extension except those imposed by geography.

With such an alteration of their ways of life about to descent upon them there was much that they could look back upon with satisfaction and pride, for the Commons has been enclosed, the population had increased and with it prosperity

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and its outward signs in the form of gas lighting, corn markets new road and the daily arrival of coaches and carriers' carts in the town to coincide with the Shipping movements from Thorne Quay-and now all was to be superseded by projects and processes which were full of promise but almost too vast for their comprehension. It could be said that that with the passing of Lord Melbourne in 1848-the last Statesman who represented in his own person the traditions of the last days of the Havoverian Kings-the 18th Century had passed with him and such advances as had made in England during the days of these kings were now to be dwarfed by even greater changes. Probably in few other parts of England was the cleavage between past and future more marked than in Thorne at this time.

The old ways of business in the market town of Thorne did change so rapidly and to us, who nowadays are accustomed to a chemist's shop with plate glass display cases, polished wooden shelves, mirrors, and gaily coloured packets of almost every commodity exposed for sale, it would be strange to find a small shop in the

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centre of town, which besides being a chemist's shop, contained merchandise of almost every description from drugs and pills and veterinary preparations, to seeds, paints, grocery, oil, brushes, haberdashery and even wines; and was also connected with a ropery preparing cordage for the ships which traded from Thorne Quay.

On May 29, 1848 William Armitage began to keep a Day Book which, as such, was not continued for many years, where the items of his business transactions were recorded, but at the other end of the book, when reversed one finds a succession of "Prescriptions and family recipes" carefully recorded with names and dates and continued until the end of February 1899. The prescriptions and family recipes in spite of their age and the fact that they do not, in general, contain drugs now in common use in these days of propriety remedies and patient medicines, and undoubtedly in keeping with sound medical practice. They were probably derived from the days of the unambitious country surgeons and apothecaries who served their years of apprenticeship and then travelled the country lanes on foot or horseback to attend their

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patients, and later wrote some of the prescriptions by candlelight while they were still attired in their heavy riding boots with spurs, and with their large many-caped coats with heavy cuffs and broad metal buttons impeding their movements-On many occasions, too, their pistols and holsters would have been brought in from the stable to lie beside Dr. Sydemham's 'Medicine', and Mr Benjamin Gooch's 'Surgery'-before they could relax and remove their wigs and rest by their firesides contented with the thoughts of one more day's work accomplished and a safe return from the lonely farms and miry roads with their dangers from footpads and highwaymen.

Many names and addresses and reappear and in themselves they recall a bygone Thorne. 'The Marquis and Granby' and 'The Royal Oak' Inns which are now no more; the Old Hall which was demolished almost 100 years ago; 'The Don Inn;' Thorne Quay and the description of a man as a 'Sailor' recall the old seafaring life at Thorne; Ditchmarsh, which recalls the old names of farms in the low-lying fields by the river; the Toll Bar which recalls the days when

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simple journey to Thorne involved the payment of a toll if one used the turnpike roads.

There are several names of sea captain-one of them from Goole-a gentleman from London, and a 'Jubilee Singer' who required treatment on March 12, 1888; and three prescriptions for Cholera in 1849 which recall the disastrous epidemics of that years, when it was recorded that of the 131 deaths in that years, 5 were as a result of Cholera.

There was no end to his wares-he makes a note of his stock of seeds In 1848, and of candles supplied with this comment

'Mould Candles at 7/- costs me with Warfage and carriages 1/10' - for all his goods would have to be brought by river or canal or carriers' cart. He brewed his own ginger beer, and records the supplies to Mr. Smith of 'The Windmill' costing between 2d. and 7d. and at the same time records the allowances for empty bottles also he records the sale of single bottles which were possibly consumed in his shop.

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In the Day Book the first entry is for Mr. Barrow, the farrier, who on May 29th was supplied with horse blisters. Then are recorded sales of yellow ochre, sago, mixed tea (black with green, and spelt 'thea') coffee, chicory, Lucifer matches and castor oil, 'Hair oil' at 3/4, Radish seeds at 2d., 'a smelling bottle at 1d.' He can supply a calf mixture made up to 1 pint, a horse powder and a tonic for fowls, 2 oz. of tobacco for 5½d., cigars for 6d, a whitewash brush for 1/-, Turpentine 4d. and bees wax 1d. and for the ferryman of Fishlake 'Dark blue paint at 6d. a paint brush for 1/6, and a paint pot for 1d.' Mr Knowles, the druggist, buys '1 dram of Compound Extract of Sarsa' and Dr. Lea buys 'pomatum 6d, Bear's grease 6d., and a small tooth comb 6d.'

The items are too miscellaneous to mention them all, but his shop could have supplied almost all of the needs of his customers who came for drugs, as he had Worcestershire sauce at 1/6,-a pair of side combs for a lady 6d, custard powder at 2d., and a small 8ionch riddle for 4d.

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There was probably little control over the sale of laudanum and morphia and there still many who regarded opium as the cure for agues -he sold much of it- and it must have recalled a distant past and would these names- ‘Tincture of Foxglove,’ ‘Fountain Water,’ ‘Wine of Colchicum,’ ‘Spirit of Rosemary,’ ‘Hartshorn’ and ‘Leaches’ which probably had been written on pieces of paper now yellow with the ink faded, and still perfumed with the lavender and spices amongst which they had lain folded for many years.

Ropes and Cordage were undoubtedly amongst his wares but the notes about them are on loose slips of paper tucked in between the pages-such as

Lines 48/0	..	..	dis. 5%
Cordage 40/0	” ”
Warps 44/0	“ “

And

Lines 6d. each	Books 6 ^{1/2}
Cordage 42/-	..	”	44/-
Warps 46/-	..	”	48/-

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He had a large supply of British Wines in 1849-
Port and Sherry at 2/- per bottle, red currant 1/4,
British wine, Green Ginger, Frontignac at 1/6,
Calcarella, and Jamaica Ginger Wine at 1/6, and
the humble Gooseberry.

He also had to meet his own expenses such as-

Hatfield Court	.	6d
Boat	..	3d.
Carriage		3d.
Poor Rate		1/6
Lanthren	..	1/6

(and this, even though the town was lit by gas-)

Pallet knife		2/-
Poterage	..	2d.
Hair Cutting	..	2d.
Postage stamps	..	10/-
School feast	..	1/-

and on Dec. 29th 6d. for the Ringers-and 3d. for
the Chapel.

On Monday, September 10, 1849 he makes a
long and careful analysis of the day's sales,

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which were chiefly in penny items-and there are several bills which have been paid-and his profit seems to have been £4. 16.8.

Across these pages passes a long procession of people whose names are otherwise only recorded on tombstones, and in the Parish Registers, and whose daily lives are as obscure now as their entries in the registers; but each would have had something to tell; for the lives of all made up the ceaseless flow of activity of the little market town, and some who have travelled far beyond their limits of Thorne-and could write-had sent back news of the parts of England and the wold which were only otherwise known by road-books and the curiosities brought home in the sea chests of merchant ships. A letter from one of this throng has survived.

Barton Hill

Ap. 5th 1846

“Dr. Eleanor,

Your letter came to hand on the 2nd directed to Mr. Kimberley. I should have written before

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now but have been under marching order for Filey for the last three weeks. Mr. C excepting possession of the land daily. I was at Malton yesterday and whilst there Simon came up to inform him of their being already to make a start on Monday so I leave here tomorrow and will let you know my direction as soon as I get fixed. Mr. Kimberley leaves Barton Hill for Castle Howard on Wednesday. I am very sorry to hear of Father's being so lame but hope he is not confined to the house. Malton Fair was this last week Horses were sold at very large prices. I did 21£ for a mare for Father but did not get it.

Mr. Cranshaw gave 33 for a Mare which I thought dear at 15£. The Mr. Carnagan you spoke of in your letter was writing master at Inchbalds he left there and went as Clark to Cartwright of Bawtry.

I don't think there is any advantage in the charge as far as family goes.

I got a letter from Mr. Maxfield and shall answer it as soon as all is fixed at Filey.

I will send Hannah a waistcoat in a week or so

...

Remember me to all
I remain,

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Your aft. Broth!r,
Jno Hill

If you write before I give you my direction address it to our office at Malton.”

This was from John Hill-the son of Isaac Hill of Lock House, agent for the Canal Company-who as a handsome young man had spent his life among horse dealers and in racing circles and while at Thorne had purchased bear's grease for 1/-.

His last letter to his sister was preserved and treasured, as he left Thorne shortly afterwards for the New World and was never heard of again-leaving behind him his Bible, his red silk jacket and pair of portraits in silhouette, and in water colour while on horseback.

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A Master Mason and Builder

The northern side of the ridge on which Thorne is built has today and entirely different appearance from the of 30 years ago, and in some respects even 10 and 5 years ago; for as the names of the new street testify, the old fields which for centuries has been cultivated communally are rapidly disappearing and leaving behind them only their names, Highfield, Millfield, Southfield, Northfield, South Common and North Common. The houses in which lived the men who worked there are now also rapidly disappearing, and where they survive they are regarded as old and inconvenient and are often in constant need of repair; yet at one time were new and a source of pride to builders and young housewife alike, and even today with their weathered red bricks and fluted tiles, and small paned windows reflecting the red of the evening sun or the blue and white of a Summer sky, or even the dull grey of a late Autumn afternoon, they have an attractive appearance when set against majestic elms or straggling orchards.

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Their builders news nothing or reinforced concrete, prefabrication, or asphalt pavements and concrete kerbs, and for them iron kitchen range and marble chimney pieces were objects of pride, and outside were the red brick garden walls finished with coping stones, pump troughs in stone, and yards paved with flags and cobbled stones.

Their bricks and tiles were usually made locally, and if not were conveyed to Thorne by keels on the canal and river-for the railways were unknown, and the carrier's carts could bring only small fittings which were beyond the skill of the blacksmith to make for them, or the iron foundry to mould. Even the very nails, spikes and screws were hand made. All fresh stone had to be conveyed to Thorne by canal and river.

The names of these early builders have largely vanished but their work still remains in the arts that are no longer seen, of finishing gables with corbel steps, and fanlights with tracery and window sills of stone, and embellishments of

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terra cotta on doorways and roof ridges which were themselves often in stone.

Through the medium of an old account book with a tattered parchment cover and marbled end papers, it is possible today to follow these men in their work fairly clearly and to see through their entries what they accomplished.

The Account Book, which is long and narrow, was originally brought for 2/6-and it contains entries of work, wages, charges, domestic notes and rents received for cottage property. It was opened at some place other than Thorne in 1838 and there are many entries of the purchase of plaster of paris and making of casts. The book was reversed however, and entries commenced for work that was obviously done in the neighbourhood of

The first entries indicate the problems that had to be faced before the days of railways and telegraph, and when the postal services were probably very rudimentary.

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1843

	£	s.	d.
pd. For delivery of stone ..	10	6	
. . . . allowance	3	9	
Journey to Althorpe ..	5	0	
Journey to Mexboro ..	7	6	
Self. Apprentice and boy			
2 days each delivery	18	0	
Paid freight of stone .	6	0	0
River Dun Dues .	3	11	9
Thorne Dues	1	8	0

In Thorne work was done for the Unitarian Chapel.

1842

	£	s.	d.
August 6 th to 25 fire bricks	3	½d	
to 25 fire bricks	4	0	
August 9 th to a stone with round nose			
3/7 by 2/6 for fireplace	5	0	
August 11 th to ¼ peck of cement	3	6	
to 10ft of flag at 6d. .	5	0	

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(The Unitarian Chapel, was for all practical purposes, the same building as the present Congregational Church in Orchard Street).

Mr. Hodgson (probably James Hodgson, surgeon), had an elaborate new fireplace installed.

1842

	£	s.	d.
July 27 th -A hearth and back			
16ft. 10 at 7d. ..		9	10
To fixing the same and letting grate in to floor		2	6
July 28 th -Fixing marble chimney-piece			
And brass cramp sand plaster		10	0

They had work also at Crowle, as the coping stones of the churchyard wall probably needed attention.

1842

August 11 th			
To 51 yards of coping, 15½	5	2	2

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Door steps and pump troughs were constantly in demand, as charges for Mr. Durham and others show.

1842

	£	s.	d.
July 29 th			
42ft 8in. of flags to cover cistern at 7d. ..	1	4	10
Sept. 6 th To a trough /- and threshold 1/2 ordered for Mr. Christopher		4	2
July 30 th -A sink 5/3 and trough 5/3	10		6

The stone roof ridges which are now scarce, and the stones let into the walls indicating pride of ownership are frequently mentioned.

1842

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Lightfoot			
July 27 th – A threshold 5ft. ..		5	0
To 20yds. of ridging .	1	1	8
August 3–G. Hasting, a date stone		2	6

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There are miscellaneous entries which are indicative of the state of Thorne when almost all its needs could be met by the tradesman of the town itself.

1842

Sept. 21 – Mr. Durham 15 tiles
9

Dec. 13 – Mrs. Pepper's Stone
(probably a tomb stone) 3 5

6 Nov. 10th – John Coats –
A grindstone .. 3
6

Sept. 21 – G Darley – A chimney pot 1
3

Aug. 9th – Mr. R. Kitching
To a pillar cap .. 2
6

1849

Mr. Roberts – A new ladder 8 0

For purely decorative purposes, the local builders were not at a loss when asked to supply statuary.

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1849

Mr. Mathewman

Jan – To 2 mermaid brackets and
Mary Queen of Scots .. 9

6

Feb. 3rd – 2 mermaid do. . 7

0

2 large scroll do. .. 7

0

1 Dragon do. .. 3

6

Apr. 17th–Cement vase .. 6

6

The 2 cupids with torch 5

6

and 4 Queen of Scots brackets 10

0

May 5th – 1 pair of Marmion brackets 7

0

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He had customers who no doubt required work on a larger scale and whose patronage would be valued.

1842 – Messrs Whitfield & Co. s.
d.

Aug. 9 – To 12 yards of Ridging	13	0
To cutting Stone for Pillar ..		9

and Canal Company.

Aug. 20 – Self and app (rentice)

2 days at Moors ..	14	0
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Aug 25 –Self and app.

1 day at Crook Moor ..		7
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0

Sept. 22 – Self and app.

¼ day loading boat		1
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9

and Thorne Union Workhouse

Sept. 16 – 1 Bushel of Freestone		1
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0

Oct. 1 – To 100 Rubbing Stones .	5	0
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Nov. 1 – A Stone for Entrance		1
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0

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the Trustees of Brooke's Charity		
Nov. 17 – To a threshold ..		5	6
Fixing the same ..		1	0

Among his capabilities was the sinking of wells, one of which he sinks for Dr. Guy.

Self sinking well 3 days ..		12	0
Well frame		10	0
Lead pipe 6/- and sole 1/6		7	6

He has many charges for work done for the Ings Drain Company and among them are these which indicate some of the everyday expense connected with a builder's work.

Toll bars		1	6
pd. Freight of stone	2	10	0
and he supplied a new cart for	6	0	0

In 1851 he has to work at the Ings Bridges and besides being concerned with toll-bars he has to find lodgings for his workmen.

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	£	s.	d.
Sam John & Tom 5 days	1	8	4
paid lodgings		12	6
paid Bars		5	6

There only seems to be one recorded instance of the building of a new house, as in 1849 there is a long list of charges.

	£	s.	d.
1849 – 12,350 bricks at 25s. ..	15	8	9
Nov. 5 th 836 tiles at 3s. ..	1	9	6
leading bricks 18/- tiles 2/0 ..	1	18	6
leading the same		3	6
To 5½ boards 12ft. 3in at 1/6 each ..		8	3
To 17ft. 11in deal for roof Stooths ..		5	8
To 4 deals 17ft x 11in Spars ..	1	2	8
To a 13ft batting for Spars ..		2	2
To 14 x 17ft deal by 11in ..		11	11
To 500 8, nails at 4,		1	8
To 1½ hundred 3d. nails at ..		6	9
To ¼ hundred 5½in. Spikes ..			
& ½ of 4in.		1	4
To 30ft. of 11in. by 1in. board ..			
for lockouples		5	0

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Nov. 3 rd – To 750 Bricks from Jonathans		
August 10 th – 1 load of Sand	..	2
6		
1½ Chaldron of lime and freight of do.		12
9		

He also seems to have transacted business along the lines of a cabinet maker and ironmonger.

1842 – Mr. Wainman		
Nov. 10 th – Pare bed polls	..	5 6
Birch plank	.. ..	6
0		
Maple venere	.. ..	2
7		
Nov. 12 th – 2 Box locks		..
10		
Nov. 18 th – 1 Set of bed screws	..	..
8½		

In his account book he records his own expenses for housekeeping and general business – as in 1847 he records several payments for butter in the region of ½ per lb.

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In 1846 he buys knives and forks for 10/- and a cutler's vice for 8/6 and 'sundry books, paper etc.' for 10/-.

A friend, Mr. C. Green, brings him a ham to be dried and cured and he records its weight as 23½ lbs., and in 1849 he sets some potatoes and his neighbours share with him.

1849, May 2nd

Richard Troop 8 rows

Mr. York 11 rows

G. Armitage 10 rows

S. Sprakes 7 rows

G. Armitage 6 rows

and in 1851 he cuts his haystack and records the weights cut on 11 occasions, which range from 10 to 30 stones. He has dealings with G. Morris when pigs were brought and sold.

1847 – Pig, 10 stone 10lb. .. 3 13 6

1848 – do. 10 ,, 9 ,, . 3 4 0

1849 – do. 12 ,, 7 . 3 2 6

He has to buy hardware at Sheffield for 18/9, and lard – 5/1½ and a bottle of rum for 3/3, and ½ stone of 4½ Sugar for 2/7½.

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He records the rents of cottages as follows:-
1842 – Thos. Walker entered to Mrs. Goodworth's house, March 28th, at 1/1 per week.

Two old demand notes for poor rates have been slipped between the pages.

No. 7, July 4th, 1864.

on £15.6.8 – assessment, at 2/1 I £1 - £1.12.0.

No. 9, July 4th, 1864

on £10.13.4 at 2/1 in £1 - £1.0.6½.

There are also notes of garden rent and tithe payments –

4 year garden rent up to 1850, £1.4.1.

4 year tithe up to 1850, 1/10.

So it can be seen that 100 years ago in spite of transport difficulties, toll bar charges, canal and river charges and relatively high freights, a small town like Thorne could meet all its own ordinary wants and requirements, and that the standards of a country builder, stone mason and carpenter were high.

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In addition to his own trade he, like almost all the other members of the town, had to concern himself with agriculture even if it was on a small scale, so that he could make the best use of the land he rented and support himself as effectively as did his neighbours at a time when in spite of the progress caused by the Industrial Revolution, a small market town was even then much more of an isolated community than it is nowadays, and more developed than it had ever been for several centuries previously.

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Appendix to Essay on Master Mason and Builder

The following is a summary of a beautifully written and meticulously prepared agreement between Mr. James Servant and Messrs. Henry Thorley and William Smith, Bricklayers for the building of what is undoubtedly the old brick boundary wall which can be described as the northern limit of the curtilage of the Ministry of Labour Offices and Telephone Exchange in Thorne, and which follows the course of the culvert of the old Boating Dyke. They agreed to build a wall of 9 inches in thickness, 55 yards in length and 5 feet in height along the centre of the brick culvert, tied into the Paupers' Bridge and finished with triangular coping bricks and seven supporting pillars. They also agreed to find the necessary materials and perform the work for £19.

The agreement was prepared on 2nd March 1854 and pavement was made on March 16th 1854. It is not possible to say whether this means that the

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wall was actually completed in two weeks as the agreement could have been signed after the work was commenced.

* * * *

1821 Mr. Thos. Simpson Dr.			
to George Reed		£	s
d			
Octr. 22. For 22 roods 4 yards			
3 feet Brick Walling 4/- ..		4	10
6			
21 yards 1 ft. Chimney flues – 1/9 .	1	17	4
5 squares 3 feet Tiling – 4/- ..	1	0	1
20 yds 2 feet 6 in. Ridging and			
filliting – 3d ..	..		5
2½			
3 Roods 2 yards 7 feet			
half brick walling – 2/6 ..	..		8
5¾			
214 yards 2 feet 2 coat			
lastering on Walls - -/4	3	11
5			
38 yards 2 coat ceiling			
on laths -/6		19
0			

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34 yards 6 feet Brick floor -/5	..	14
5		
6 Arches -/9	<u>4</u>
<u>6</u>		
	£13	10

11¼

December 6th 1821

Settled GEORGE REED

A letter from Dr. Joseph Johnson Littlewood

Dr. Littlewood, the father of the late Canon Littlewood, was, about a hundred years ago, a physician in Thorne. His first wife, Isabel, died on 31st December, 1862, at the age of 39. Dr. Littlewood married Isabel Jannings at Thorne Parish Church on August 1st, 1867, as his second wife. According to the parish registers at Thorne the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Frederick Barlow Guy; Dr. Littlewood was at that time 48 years of age and his wife 36. The second Mrs. Littlewood was the daughter of

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Thomas Jannings, and is quoted as being a resident at Thorne. It seems likely that after his second marriage Dr. Littlewood decided to leave Thorne, and he purchased a medical practice at Wooburn in Buckinghamshire.

This undated letter to the late Mr. George Kenyon has survived –

Dell House
Wooburn
Nr. Beaconsfield
Bucks.

‘Dear Kenyon,

Will you kindly inform me when Thorpe’s affairs are really to be settled. I cannot get any information from [] who seems quite averse to communicate with me on the subject. We have got over the objectionable part of removing and are more settled in our little new home situated in a lovely neighbourhood.

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I now feel anxious to have my affairs settled in Yorkshire and which are now nearly completed with the exception of Thorpe's a/c, Hall's and Lee's. So if you will assist me and procure me these accounts, which I understood you would do some time ago, I shall feel obliged.

Is [] becoming ill again from the fear of meeting Priestley next month at the Board of Guardians. When Thorpe's affairs are closed I hope you will see that I am not imposed upon by [] as I really have no faith in his promises. I do not think that he has any right to require from me a three month's notice – he has even charged me with mending of panes of glass broken since I left Thorne. As a friend I shall be glad to hear from you about these matters at your earliest opportunity.

Do you ever see the lawyer of Stonegate, I mean Elm House, who keeps so many clerks in his office (dogs). I suppose he still amuses himself by ferretting and shooting on his moors. I hear that Mr. E. Whaley goes to Barnsley soon and that Shaw has retired from the Low Hill Works –

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what wonderful changes have taken place. I suppose you will live at Plantation House. Is it not unreasonable of [] after having put down a new floor in one of the office rooms that I should be required to give a three months notice. I hope you will be able to rectify the matter, and as the solicitor to the 'winding up' of Thorpe's affairs I hope you will see proper justice done me. Wooburn has many paper mills which employ a large population. I have just got the poor law appointment for the parish after having been deprived of it six months in consequence of the conduct of my predecessor. I am also the certifying surgeon to the mills, my duty being to report all accidents, etc.

I must apologise to you and Mrs. Kenyon for my **apparent** rudeness in not wishing you both a 'good bye,' the fact is that I was telegraphed here to come at once as the **locum tenens** of the practice was trying by some unfair advantage to secure a few of the best patients here. I had therefore no alternative but to set off by a late train, arriving here about nine in the morning. I soon got rid of the man and took possession of the practice which is much improving. The

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people are very kind and obliging and do not give me much trouble.

Mrs. Littlewood unites with me in kind regards to yourself and Mrs. Kenyon, and believe me,

Yours very truly
Josh J. Littlewood

P.S. – Has Warren been over to see your son since I last saw him and does he follow up his entomological pursuits. As for my entomology I have not examined a specimen since I left Thorne. Have you got a good pew in the church as you are fully entitled to one.’

From the circumstances of the death of Mr. William Thorpe at age of 77 years – and his burial at Thorne on February 9th, 1867, and the presumption that he is the Thorpe mentioned in this letter a lawyer who lived in South Parade at the house later occupied by Mr. Kenyon and renamed ‘The Maples,’ it is possible to place this letter as having been written after 1867, and probably earlier in the 1870’s.

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Dr. Littlewood is said to have lived in Stonegate House, in the house which is now the Masonic Hall and Stonegate Club, and at the house in South Parade now known as 'The Maples.'

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Published by Thorne Local History Society

Supported by Thorne Moorends Regeneration Project

2014