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Dick Turpin - his Yorkshire Legend

Cawood Castle and its Heritage in North Yorkshire

It Came from Outer Space and landed in the Yorkshire Wolds
This well known 17th century thatched cottage in Thornton-le-Dale has appeared on countless calendars, chocolate boxes, biscuit tin lids and jigsaws.
On behalf of all the staff at The Yorkshire Journal past and present, we wish all our readers a Happy New Year 2015.

Above: Battling through the winter snow on the North York Moors Railway

Cover: Hutten-le-Hole in winter snow, North Yorkshire

Editorial

Last year The Yorkshire Journal sadly lost Andrew Simpson who was the editor and the inspiration behind the e-journal from the start. His death followed the illness of two of our writers, fortunately they are slowly on the way to recovery. A further difficulty arose when our web provider was unable to improve and update our website. At this juncture it was decided to cease publication. When our website temporarily ceased publication we received a number of e-mails enquiring what had happened to The Yorkshire Journal. One of these e-mails was from Keith Heywood who subsequently, very kindly offered to make the full archive of the Yorkshire e-journal available on-line at http://theyorkshirejournal.wordpress.com.

After negotiations it was decided that the existing staff at The Yorkshire Journal would try to restart publication when it was possible. The Autumn issue 2014 was almost complete, so we were able to include this late issue. Hopefully we will continue to publish The Yorkshire Journal when we have sufficient material available for future issues.

We are now in a position, regretfully rather late, to include a winter issue 2014 which includes some really interesting articles for our readers. Gary Peacock visits the Community of the Resurrection, at Mirfield in West Yorkshire. Although the Community Church of the Resurrection forms a familiar landmark few people have visited it or know anything about the Community of the Resurrection, in whose 22 acre grounds it stands. Gary explains its foundations and history from its beginnings to the present day.

Jeremy Clark looks into Dick Turpin and his Yorkshire Legend. Jeremy points out that Turpin was no gentleman. He never owned a mare called Black Bess and he never made the celebrated ride to York. The legendary Highwayman met his end in York after a career of theft, smuggling, highway robbery, terror and murder. He was tried and executed in York, assuring his place in English history and being forever linked with the city of York.

Cawood Castle in North Yorkshire became the Archbishop of York’s residence from the 12th century and is associated with Cardinal Wolsey who is believed to have been the inspiration behind the Nursery rhyme “Humpty Dumpty”. In 1466 ‘The Great Feast of Cawood’ took place. Sarah Harrison visits Cawood Castle and recalls all these and more historical events.

In the winter of 1795 a meteorite dashed through the sky and landed near the village of Wold Newton in East Yorkshire. Marcus Grant explains the importance of this event which is commemorated by an obelisk on the exact site where the meteorite fell to earth. This meteorite was the largest one recorded to have fallen in Britain.

But there is much more to these articles, please read and enjoy them. We welcome your comments.
The Community of the Resurrection, at Mirfield, West Yorkshire

By Gary Peacock

Mirfield is a small historical town in West Yorkshire located between Brighouse and Dewsbury. If you look across the valley from Upper Hopton towards Battyeford your eyes can’t help but be drawn to the magnificent church on the other side of the valley. The Community Church of the Resurrection with its verdigris lustered green copper roof and twin “pepper pot towers” forms a familiar landmark; but in recent years few local people will have visited it or know anything about the Community of the Resurrection, in whose 22 acre grounds it stands.

However, throughout the worldwide Anglican Church, Mirfield and the Community and College of the Resurrection would be very familiar.

Since 1902 the Community College of the Resurrection has trained people for ordination to the Anglican faith from all over the world. The Community was founded by Bishop Charles Gore 1853-1932. During his formative years Gore had come to realise that the present day Church and much modern knowledge had its roots firmly in the monastic orders of the past. He dreamed of a new modern order of priests whose work would be pastoral, evangelistic and scholastic.

While Gore was Principle of Pursey House, Oxford in 1889 he was joined by three like-minded priests and his dreams began to come to fruition. Over the next few years they grew in number to six and on 25th July 1892 they made their first profession of vows in Pursey House Chapel and with this the Community of the Resurrection came into being.

Left: Bishop Charles Gore 1853-1932

The rule of the new community was only loosely based around that of orders from the past. Brethren would make vows of obedience for only thirteen months at a time rather than life and these would be renewed yearly. It was expected though that at the time of renewal brethren would have the intention of remaining permanently. They should be free to leave at the end of every year. They should be obedient to the senior. (Senior being the title Gore chose to go by rather than the more conventional title of Superior.) They would make a vow of poverty and hand over all their material possessions and income to the Community’s funds, but were allowed to keep capital. They had to intend to remain celibate but did not make vows for life. They were to dress as ordinary priests wearing cassocks with neither sandals or girdles. New entrants to the community would be known as probationers rather than novices.

The rule gave structure to the community but also gave the option for the individual to choose their own path later.
After a brief time located at Radley in Oxfordshire, where Gore was the vicar, the rural location hadn’t proved a great success. Gore wished that the Community should find a new home for the Community’s mother house and college and that should be “where the industry is”. In 1898 at the suggestion of the Bishop of Wakefield they secured a home in the “Industrial North” at Mirfield called Hall Croft. This was a somewhat tawdry stone mansion in quite considerable grounds built in 1871 by the late Mr Hague Cook a wealthy local mill owner who had become rich by supplying uniform cloth to both sides during the Franco-Prussian war. Quite amusingly the Bishop himself had refused it as his Bishop’s Palace previously and the diocese now needed it disposed of!

In the grounds of the mansion was the former Hall Bank quarry. Not only was this to supply some of the raw materials for later expansion on the site but part of the quarry formed a bowl like amphitheatre. It didn’t take a lot of rudimentary reworking to install a stage to one side with the cliff behind forming a natural backdrop and stepped seating up the bank at the other side. All this came to be known as the Quarry Theatre. For many years to follow, not only would open air sermons and other religious activities take place there, but also public meetings and plays regularly be staged.

A young Mirfield boy by the name of Patrick Stewart was to make one of his first public performances here too before boldly going on to far greater things! It was said that the acoustics were so good that you could speak from the stage in just ordinary tones and be heard everywhere by the three thousand or so people seated around the quarry.

Left: Mirfield-born Hollywood actor Sir Patrick Stewart

Right: Cast of “Murder in the Cathedral” held in Quarry Theatre in the 1930s
The plays continued until 1976, when for a variety of reasons the community closed the theatre and it became overgrown. The Community of the Resurrection have been given permission to restore the derelict open-air theatre. The restoration will include recycled plastic seating, a grassed area in front of the stage, and a retractable rain-cover over the stage. It is planned to have the theatre ready for use in the summer of 2015.

Initially members of the community were small numbering just 10 or so brethren. This rapidly increased, and in 1907 there were nearly fifty fathers in the community.

Although moving to the “industrial north” had been Gore’s wish, a site at Mirfield put them very much in the middle of Protestant “non-conformist” territory, especially amongst the working classes. No doubt the unmarried clergymen dressed in their long cassocks and belts attracted a deal of curiosity and suspicion to the goings on of the community.

A twist of fate eventually put paid to the suspicions when, while the Fathers were holding a meeting to raise funds for the building of the new Leeds University Hostel, a visiting group of ultra-Protestant Kensitites gathered outside the Black Bull to protest against and condemn the activities of the community. They handed out pamphlets declaring: “Englishmen to Arms! Refuse to subscribe One Penny to this Monkery!

Christians! Churchmen! Englishmen! Beware of the Mirfield Monks! The community seeks to entrap our wives into hateful confessional!” Quite a large crowd gathered and the situation was only defused when one of the fathers stood on a chair and addressed the crowd directly to explain the aims and objectives of the community. Apparently the charm with which he delivered this address easily won over the locals and they dismissed the protests of the Kensitites.
Over the following years the fathers and their activities were largely accepted into the community with many locals attending “quarry services” or theatrical events there. In those early years building work to make the site suitable for Gore’s intention was rapidly taking place. The College building, with its distinctive tower, was completed along with the Retreat House, whilst the original House was extended.

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Left: The newly completed Retreat House

In 1902 Gore accepted the appointment to become Bishop of Worcester and disappointingly to some he left the fledgling Community to take up his new position. Walter Frere (1863–1938) became the new Superior, a position he was to hold from 1902-1923. Frere was eminently qualified for his new role having been at Gore’s side from the very early days of the Community. It was under his guidance that many of Gore’s dreams for both the community and college would come to fruition.

In the same year Frere, at the request of the Bishop of Pretoria, sent three of the fathers to South Africa to work with the 200,000 native Africans employed in the gold mining industry. From this the mother house continued to spread its work further afield eventually having branch priories in Barbados, in South Africa at Johannesburg, Alice and Stellenbosch and in Rhodesia at Penalonga.

Right: Bishop Walter Frere (1863-1938) Gores successor as Superior from 1902.

With the founding in 1903 of the Fraternity of the Resurrection, later to be called Companions, made up of those who wished to be connected with the Community and to share in its work, the Community of the Resurrection became truly global with groups in all corners of the world. Frere himself would go on to be appointed Bishop of Truro in 1923, a position he held until 1935. Unlike Gore, during this period he remained a member of the community by making his residence in Truro a Church of the Resurrection branch house, so becoming the first monk since the reformation to become a Church of England Bishop. Upon resigning his position he returned to Mirfield. Gore may have been the founder of the community but it was Frere who was very much the maker.

Above: The Calvary Garden was built by the Fathers using stone from the quarry, it looks out over the valley below.
At this time many young men from the working classes were effectively barred from becoming priests because they had neither the funds nor suitable background to attend Oxford or Cambridge. The opening of a college by the community would be the path for many young men from poorer backgrounds to the priesthood.

Left: The Community Burial Ground where departed members of the community lie buried under simple wooden crosses.

When the first the six students arrived at the college in 1902 the buildings were still a work in progress and would eventually be completed in 1905. By this time the students would number fifty. The completed college was opened by Bishop Gore on the 22nd of July 1905.

Left: The College of the Resurrection with its tower in the background. Why does it have a tower? The reply often given was “All good colleges have a tower!”

Below: The College of the Resurrection with its tower in the background has changed little since it was completed in 1905.

The aim of the college was to train ordinands who could not afford a university degree through the normal path. On completion of their degree they would then spend a couple of years engaged in theological studies under the wing of the community. The students pledged to pay back the community after their ordination £25 per annum for every year they attended the college and not engage to be married until the whole sum was repaid.

Left: The entrance to the College of the Resurrection is now the Reception.

The curriculum included one or two years study at Mirfield followed by three years in residence at the “Hostel of the Resurrection” in Leeds while studying at the university. This was followed by a further two years at Mirfield engaged in theological studies.
Let’s move away from Mirfield now to a few miles up the road and the Hostel of the Resurrection in Leeds. In 1904 the College became affiliated to Leeds University where students would study for their degrees. During these years of study, accommodation would be provided in a suitably located hostel. Initially things started on a fairly small scale when two houses were purchased by the Community on Spring Field Mount near to the University for this purpose.

Right: The Hostel of the Resurrection built for the students of the College of the Resurrection while they completed their degrees in Leeds. Now ‘The Priory’ is now used as student accommodation

From this fairly rudimentary beginning far greater things were being planned and in 1907 the two houses were demolished. The grounds were cleared and work started on a new purpose built hostel and by 1910 it was complete.

The design was entrusted to Mr Temple Lushington Moore one of England’s most original and influential church architects; he created a truly magnificent building. The new hostel built in a “Tudor and Edwardian Gothic” style was also to become known as “The Priory of St. Wilfrid”. Modelled roughly along the lines of an “Oxbridge College”, with a tower, chapel and, although only walled to three sides, an interior ‘quadrangle’ style courtyard. The college would eventually accommodate 50 students. Work on additions to the building were to carry on until 1928. Temple Moore died in 1920 and some of the final details were completed by his son in law and business partner Leslie Moor.

Left: The Gatehouse of the Hostel of the Resurrection. (Leeds)

Right: The Hostel also known as “The Priory of St. Wilfrid”. It was designed by Temple Moore roughly along the line of an “Oxbridge College” it was opened in 1904 by Lady Frederick Cavendish

Eventually the cost of operating such a grand building became too great for the community to bear and it was acquired by the University in 1976 to become the University of Leeds’ School of Continuing Education. After standing empty for some time it now seems once again that the building will return to its original purpose, it is soon to be converted to private sector student accommodation.
Returning now to the magnificent church back in Mirfield; it had always been the intention of the Community to build a Community Church. Services were being held in a temporary chapel in one of the upper rooms of the house. Work commenced on the new church in spring 1911. The project was ambitious in the extreme, an elaborate church on a scale to rival the great monastic places of worship from the past was planned. In July 1911 the foundation stone was laid by Bishop Gore at a service attended by a congregation numbering several thousands.

Left: The Community Church that Sir Walter Tapper intended to be built, however the final building was completed many years late and to a more simplified design.

Design of the church was entrusted to Sir Walter Tapper a renowned ecclesiastical architect. The new church was to be built of red Runcorn sandstone in a Gothic Revival style, in 1912 the first section of the church “The Chapel of the Resurrection” with its copper barrel roof was completed and the first Eucharist was celebrated there on September 12th 1912.

Unfortunately after that section of the church was completed things did not go to plan. Funds for such an ambitious project had run short and finalising the design details with this in mind was proving problematic.

However this was all soon to be overtaken by world events when, with the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, all building work stopped and for the next twenty years the church was to remain in this uncompleted form.

Left: An aerial view of the grounds

In 1935 the decision was made to resume building the church. Sir Walter Tapper had died earlier that year so Tapper’s son Michael was commissioned to complete the church. Although some funds were now available this was at the time of the great depression and there were still concerns over finances. In light of this the final design by Tapper junior was to be scaled back and simplified somewhat from what his father had originally envisaged.

Right: Chapel of the Resurrection before the rest of the church was completed
Finally, in 1938, twenty seven years after building had started the church was completed. The interior was largely finished in white plaster with very few adornments, the original plans had been far greater but the end results were still impressive. Bishop Gore had died in 1932 and his ashes were buried in the Community Church.

*Left and below:* The Church was finally completed in 1938 after the death of Walter Tapper the completion being overseen by his son Michael

Up until recently a commemoration day was held every July to mark the opening of the college when the community would open its doors to guests from far and wide besides local people. These events were often attended by large numbers of guests. I can well remember Stocks Bank Road being lined with parked coaches of visiting guests.
Above: The completed Community Church even in its revised form is still a very impressive building.

Left: The High Altar looking towards the Chapel of the Resurrection.

In its final reduced form the Community Church is still a truly imposing building even when viewed from afar, but if you ever have the opportunity to visit it up close you will find the church dwarves any other building in Mirfield.

Today the Community of the Resurrection has 18 Brothers and shares its life with the College of the Resurrection; the theological college which has 30 resident students training for the priesthood, and a retreat house which can accommodate up to 50 people.
Community Church from East End in snow

In snow the former Hall Croft incorporating buildings of the Community of the Resurrection

For more information about Mirfield go to - A Second Look - Mirfield Scenes Past & Present - compilation of old Mirfield pictures, local history and much more! It is the website of the Mirfield History Archived by Gary Peacock at –

Dick Turpin is probably the most famous highwayman of all. His name immediately conjures up an image of a dashing, daring, powerful man, wrapped in a heavy dark flying cloak, wearing a cocked hat, his face hidden by a mask, a pistol in his steady hand, mounted upon his swift horse making a non-stop, (in less than 24 hours) gallop from London to York on his faithful mare Black Bess; in order to cheat the law and establish an alibi. The truth is however, that Dick Turpin was not the handsome romantic figure that legend holds him to be. Turpin was no gentleman. He never owned a mare called Black Bess and he never made the celebrated ride to York. The legendary Highwayman met his end in York after a career of theft, smuggling, highway robbery, terror and murder. He was tried and executed at York in 1739, assuring his place in English history and being forever linked with the city of York.

Although Dick Turpin was not a Yorkshireman, being born in Hempstead, Essex in 1706, he has strong associations with York, in that he spent the latter part of his life as a horse dealer (horse-stealing would be more correct) in East Yorkshire and was tried and executed in York for horse theft. His true story was more squalid than the legend of the dashing highwayman and his horse Black Bess.

Dick Turpin (Richard ‘Dick’ Turpin) was the son of an innkeeper and as he grew up, was taught to read and write by James Smith, the schoolmaster of Hempstead. It was his ability to write which led to his death on the gallows. He met his end with the flamboyant courage of a true highwayman. Apprenticed to a butcher, Dick set up in the trade on his own when he reached twenty-one and married Elizabeth Millington. Dick was not an honest butcher, buying his supplies from dubious sources. His career in butchery soon came to an abrupt end when he was caught stealing cattle from a local farmer.

In the early 1730s he made his way to Epping Forest and joined the infamous Essex Gang, or Gregory’s Gang, a band of deer-stealers and housebreakers who were known to be involved in many brutal robberies around the county of Essex. They invaded and robbed isolated farmhouses and detached country residences, taking cash, gold plates, and other valuables and ill-treated their victims most brutally. A favourite method of the gang was to hold their victim over an open fire until he, or she revealed the whereabouts of hidden wealth.

A number of women were made to suffer this torture. However, during his exploits with the Gregory gang, it has been said that Dick did not involve himself in many of their acts of violence. Though he must have been witness to much of the terrorising and cruelty practiced to persuade people to give in to their demands, and was not above using death threats during his own ventures. He appears to have been more of a highwayman than a gangster.

This intolerable situation involving the Gregory gang resulted in a royal proclamation. A £10 reward was offered and the amount was later increased to £50, for information and a free pardon for giving King’s evidence.

A number of the gang were eventually caught in a London tavern; Dick Turpin, however, escaped. Of the three who were caught, John Wheeler turned King’s evidence and the other two were hanged.
Eventually the remainder of the Gregory gang was smashed. Now Turpin turned to highway robbery with Thomas Rowden a former member of the Gregory gang. After a busy period of highway robbery Dick parted company with him. One evening he tried to hold-up a gentleman traveller who turned out to be a fellow highwayman called Tom King who knew Dick. They became partners in crime and committed so many hold-ups that nervous inn-keepers refused to give them lodgings and they were forced to seek refuge elsewhere.

Left: *Turpin holds up a gentleman traveller who turns out to be a fellow highwayman Tom King. They became partners in crime*

In Epping Forest they discovered a well concealed cave large enough to accommodate themselves and their horses. From the cave they could observe travellers on the road and from time to time would rob all and sundry. A reward of £100 for the arrest of Turpin inspired Thomas Morris, a gamekeeper of Epping Forest, to capture him. When Morris approached the cave, Turpin shot him dead.

Right: *This illustration depicts Dick Turpin and Tom King Stopping the Royal Mail on Hounslow Heath*

Left: *The murder of Thomas Morris at Epping Forest*

The murder brought forth a Royal Proclamation offering a reward of £200 for the apprehension of Turpin, described as “about thirty, by trade a butcher, about five feet nine inches high, very marked with smallpox, his cheek-bones broad, his face thinner towards the bottom, his visage short, prettily upright and broad about the shoulders.” After a string of robberies, Dick and Tom King parted company in dramatic fashion when Tom was apprehended by the innkeeper of the Red Lion over an incident concerning a stolen horse. “Shoot him, or we are taken!” Tom shouted to Turpin, who then fired at the struggling pair, but accidentally shot Tom, who died a week later. This mistake, together with the killing of Thomas Morris the gamekeeper, resulted in Turpin being pursued by huntsmen with dogs. Turpin galloped off. With Essex in hue and cry after him, he decided to flee north to escape arrest and to seek new pastures.

Right: *Turpin shoots his colleague Tom King by mistake during a struggle with an innkeeper*

This is the point in his career when Turpin’s association with Yorkshire began, and where many fictional reports about the famous ‘ride to York’ make their appearance.

Below: *Turpin rides to York*

Dick, having escaped to Long Sutton, finally made it to East Yorkshire, where he felt he would not be known. He lodged in a village on the bank of the Humber estuary under the assumed name of John Palmer and financed a fancy life-style by stealing horses and posing as a horse trader.

Turpin had stolen several horses while operating under the pseudonym of Palmer. He regularly crossed the Humber committing crimes and stealing horses. In July 1737 he stole a horse from Pinchbeck in Lincolnshire, and rode it to his father’s at Hempstead. Leaving the horse behind, implicated his father who was subsequently committed to gaol in Essex on 12 September 1738 charged with horse theft. However, following his help in preventing a jailbreak, the charge was dropped on 5 March 1739.
Turpin returned to Brough, on the Humber estuary having stolen three more horses from a Thomas Creasy. Creasy finally managed to track them down and recovered his horses in autumn 1738. It was for these thefts that Turpin was eventually tried.

Turpin’s end came unexpectedly on 2 October 1738, his downfall being triggered by a stupid act on his part. He deliberately shot a gamecock belonging to his landlord at the Ferry Inn in Brough, East Yorkshire. When a witness, John Robinson reprimanded him over this, Turpin replied, “If you wait till I load my gun, I’ll shoot you too.” Robinson informed the landlord of the incident. Three East Riding Justices of the Peace (JP’s), George Crowle (Member of Parliament for Hull), Hugh Bethell, and Marmaduke Constable, travelled to Brough and took written depositions about the incident. They threatened to bind him over to keep the peace, but Turpin refused to pay the required surety for his good behaviour, as a result of which he was committed to the House of Correction at Beverley.

Turpin’s bizarre behaviour led the three JPs, to make subsequent enquiries as to how “Palmer” had made his money, suspecting that his lifestyle was funded by criminal activities. Turpin claimed that he was a butcher who had fallen into debt, and that he had disappeared from his home in Long Sutton, Lincolnshire. When contacted, the JP at Long Sutton (a Mr Delamere) confirmed that John Palmer had lived there for about nine months, but that he was suspected of stealing sheep, and had escaped the custody of the local constable. Delamere also suspected that Palmer was a horse-thief and had taken several depositions supporting his view, and told the three JPs that he would prefer him to be detained. The three JPs, now presumed that the case was too serious for Palmer to remain in custody at Beverley House of Correction, so Turpin was consequently transferred to York Castle in handcuffs on 16 October 1738, to appear before for the Assizes.

From his cell at York Castle, Turpin wrote a letter to his brother-in-law, Palmer Rivernall, who lived at Hempstead, asking for help and signed it “John Palmer”. Rivernall was married to Turpin’s sister, Dorothy. The letter was not prepaid and Turpin’s brother-in-law not recognising the handwriting of the address refused to accept it and pay the sixpence postage demanded. This letter put the noose around Turpin’s neck.

On its return to the local post office, the sealed letter was seen by Smith the schoolmaster who had taught Turpin to write, and he recognised the handwriting. He alerted JP Thomas Stubbing, who paid the postage and when the letter was opened it was discovered that John Palmer was the notorious Turpin. Smith travelled to York Castle on 23 February and identified John Palmer as the notorious and much-wanted highwayman Richard Turpin. He received the 200 guineas (about £27,000 in today’s money) the reward originally offered by the Duke of Newcastle following Turpin’s murder of Thomas Morris.

The Trial

The Duke of Newcastle wanted Turpin tried in London, but after much debate Turpin was tried at York Assizes.

Left: Thomas Pelham-Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, pressed hard to have Turpin tried in London

At his trial “a great concourse of people flocked to see him, and they all gave him money”. Turpin seemed very sure that nobody was alive that could hurt him.

Turpin was tried at York Assizes, the proceedings began three days after the winter Assizes opened, on 22 March. Turpin was charged with the theft of Thomas Creasy’s horses: a mare worth three pounds, a foal worth 20 shillings, and a gelding worth three pounds. The indictments stated that the alleged offences had occurred at Welton, on 1 March 1739, and described Turpin as “John Palmer alias Pawmer alias Richard Turpin”. Technically the charges were invalid because the offences had occurred at Heckington, in Lincolnshire, not Welton, and the date was also incorrect; the offences were in August 1738.

Presiding over the trial was Sir William Chapple, a senior and respected judge in his early sixties. Among the seven witnesses called to testify were Thomas Creasy, and James Smith, the man who had recognised Turpin’s handwriting. Turpin offered little in the way of questioning his accusers. When asked about Smith, he claimed not to know him.
When questioned himself, Turpin told the court that he had bought the mare and foal from an inn-keeper near Heckington. He repeated his original story of how he had come to use the pseudonym Palmer, claiming that it was his mother’s maiden name. When asked by the judge for his name before he came to Lincolnshire, he said “Turpin”.

Without leaving the courtroom the jury found Turpin guilty of the first charge of stealing the mare and foal, and following further proceedings, guilty of stealing the gelding. Throughout the trial Turpin had repeatedly claimed that he had not been allowed enough time to form his defence; that proceedings should be delayed until he could call his witnesses, and that the trial should be held in Essex, the judge replied: “Whoever told you so were highly to blame.”

The judge summing up told Turpin that “your country have found you guilty of a crime worthy of death, it is my office to pronounce sentence against you”, thereby sentencing him to death.

**Execution**

Before his execution, Turpin was frequented by visitors, the jailer was reputed to have earned £100 from selling drinks to Turpin and his guests. He faced the gallows bravely, in a new suit, frock coat and boots he bought for the occasion. On the day before his execution he hired five professional mourners for three pounds and ten shillings (to be shared between them) to follow him up the scaffold as he put on a show for the large crowd.

On 7 April 1739, followed by his mourners, Turpin and John Stead (a horse thief) were taken through York by open cart rumbled over the cobbled streets to Knavesmire, York’s equivalent of London’s Tyburn. Turpin behaved himself with amazing assurance, bowing calmly to the cheering crowds that had gathered to witness his grim end. York had no permanent hangman, and it was the custom to pardon a prisoner on condition that he acted as executioner. On this occasion, the pardoned man was a fellow highwayman, Thomas Hadfield.

Turpin was left hanging until late afternoon, before being cut down and taken to a tavern in Castlegate. The next morning, the body was buried in the graveyard of St George’s Church, Fishergate, opposite what is now the Roman Catholic St George’s Church. On the Tuesday following the burial, his body was dug up and stolen by body-snatchers and taken to the garden of a surgeon, who paid for corpses for illegal medical dissection. But York people discovered what had happened and descended in an angry mob on the surgeon’s house. Turpin’s body was once again buried, but this time with quicklime. The doctor and the body-snatchers were arrested and fined.

Turpin’s body is supposed to lie in St George’s graveyard, although some doubt remains as to the grave’s authenticity. His grave can be seen in an otherwise unremarkable graveyard at the back of St George’s churchyard in a mainly residential part of York. However, Turpin’s gravestone is the only one upstanding from the ground.
Black Bess and the Legendary Journey to York

In legend, Dick Turpin and Black Bess, his faithful mare, are synonymous for their fabled 200-mile (320 km) overnight ride from London to York, which is an impossible feat. The story was made famous by the 19th-century author William Harrison Ainsworth in his novel Rookwood (1834). In fact in those days it took the best stage-coach four or five days to make this journey. However, according to Ainsworth’s novel Turpin knew the road and could take short cuts across fields and moors. “From the start, Dick Turpin rode at speed. One stumble and this wild ride would swiftly end. At last, in the light of early dawn, he saw the towers of York Minster. But Black Bess by then had lost her strength. After a few more miles she stopped suddenly and shuddered. Then she sank slowly to the ground and died.” This twist in the tail appealed more to readers than the rest of the story. Ainsworth also described Turpin as a likable character who made the life of a criminal appealing.

Right: As imagined in William Harrison Ainsworth’s novel Rookwood

In actual fact it was the Yorkshire highwayman John Nevison also known as William Nevison who, in 1676, after committing a robbery earlier that day in Kent and urgently needing an alibi set off on the ride of his life reaching York in around 15 hours. Nevison, was one of Britain’s most notorious highwaymen, a gentleman rogue supposedly nicknamed “Swift Nick” by King Charles II after his renowned ride. However, to accomplish this feat, Nevison had to use more than one horse.

John Nevison was born and raised at Wortley village near Sheffield. After a life of crime he was eventually captured and hanged at the Knavesmire in March 1684 and buried in an unmarked grave in St Mary's Church, Castlegate in York.

Ainsworth’s legend of Black Bess was repeated in works such as Black Bess or the Knight of the Road, a penny dreadful, published in 1866–68. In these tales, Turpin was the hero.

Left: Black Bess or The Knight of the Road (c. 1866–1868)

Turpin became a legend after his death. However, Dick Turpin the legend, is a different kind of Dick, romanticised by a continuing stream of ballads, books, plays, films and television productions.

The prison where Turpin spent his final days is now part of York Castle Museum

Below: On the left is the York Castle Museum, right is the York Prison now part of the museum
York Prison, which opened in 1705, has been carefully brought back to life, it is however, a gloomy place with shafts of daylight slipping through the bars, casting shadows on the old stone floor. The permanent exhibition, plots the rise and demise of some of the Prison’s most notorious keepers and criminals. It is these characters that greet visitors during a walk within the prison walls. State of the art technology brings history to life inside the prison. The Museum is using the latest audio-visual technology to project actors recounting the terrible tales of long-lost men and women onto the cell walls. They appear like haunting hallucinations. Dick Turpin is one of these.

Right: An actor projected on the cell wall representing Dick Turpin telling his story

The North Yorkshire Police have also made the first ever e-fit of Dick Turpin, 274 years after a warrant for his arrest was first issued. It will form part of the exhibition at the museum. Although Dick Turpin is one of the most infamous highwaymen, very little information on what he actually looked like survives. There are no drawings or paintings of Turpin created during his lifetime. The museum have worked with North Yorkshire Police to create an e-fit of Turpin, just like they would do from a description of a criminal today. E-fit technology was used to produce the first accurate picture of Dick Turpin.

Right: The first ever e-fit of Dick Turpin created by the North Yorkshire Police for the exhibition at the York Prison museum

Above: Inside the condemned cell in York Prison Museum
Cawood Castle

The impressive three-storey gatehouse with its mediaeval oriel window and angled sides above the entrance arch to the first floor with heraldic shields. Adjacent is the two storey red brick and stone Banqueting Hall.

Left: Inside the Banqueting Hall constructed of red brick and stone. Fireplaces can be seen in the corner on the ground and first floor - it is open for the August Bank Holiday weekend Craft Fair.
Cawood Castle and its Heritage in North Yorkshire

By Sarah Harrison

The historic village of Cawood is situated on the west banks of the River Ouse in North Yorkshire, about 7.5 kilometres north-west of Selby and about 17.8 kilometres south of York. Just to the north of Cawood the River Wharfe flows into the River Ouse. The village lies at the crossing of the B1223 Selby - Tadcaster road and the B1222 Sherburn in Elmet - York road which goes over the River Ouse and is the only bridge in the village. The new swing bridge was opened in 1872, but before that the only means of crossing the river was by ferry. In fact Dick Turpin is said to have forded the river when he escaped to York in his legendary 200-mile ride!

One of the most important discoveries to be made at Cawood is a Viking Sword which is shrouded in mystery. It was found in the River Ouse, near Cawood Castle in the late 1800s and is in such very good condition that some strange wording can still be seen along its blade. The sword dates from 1100 at the end of the Viking period and the beginning of the medieval period and remained in private hands for 50 years. It has been acquired by The Yorkshire Museum, York.

The Castle

The first manor house at Cawood was probably built by the Saxon King Athelstan on the site of the present castle ruins. In 937 King Athelstan granted the manor house to Archbishop Wulstan and in 963 King Edgar granted the Sherburn in Elmet estate, which included Cawood, to the Archbishop of York. Cawood became an archiepiscopal residence by the 12th century. The first prelate who resided there was William de Grenfeld, Lord High Chancellor, who died at Cawood, and was buried in the Chapel of St. Nicholas, in York Minster.

It was Archbishop Giffard who acquired a licence from King Henry III in 1272 to furnish his manor house with battlements, therefore converting it into a castle. Although Cawood Castle could and did serve as an armed stronghold in time of conflict, it was essentially a well-appointed and comfortable palace, the name implying the status of the building rather than its habitual function.
Cawood Castle was visited by many kings which increased its importance, and it became known as the “Windsor of the North”. King John, visited it for hunting game in nearby Bishop’s Wood in 1210 and 1212. In 1255 King Henry III and his wife, Eleanor, stayed at the castle en route to Scotland. Edward I stopped off here on his way to subdue the Scots, who were attempting to free their country from English rule. King Edward II stayed at the castle in 1314 after he was defeated in the Battle of Bannockburn. He and his queen stayed here in 1316 and again in 1322, and King Henry VIII stayed at Cawood Castle with Catherine Howard in 1540 when she was a bride.

*Right: The three-storey gatehouse and the adjacent two storeyed hall*

The castle’s estate extended towards the river, which had a toll ferry to cross it and along its bank were various wharfs. These provided a useful source of revenue for the archbishops. A further important income came after the construction of the Bishop Dyke, a canal which runs between the castle and Sherburn Street. It was constructed to transport building stone from the quarry at Huddleston near Tadcaster. The stone was moved on from Cawood by the River Ouse, much of it supplied the building works at York Minster during the 14th century and Cawood was a busy port for many centuries.

**The Great Feast of Cawood**

The most significant event in Cawood’s history took place in 1466, in honour of the enthronement of George Neville as Archbishop of York. To demonstrate the riches and power of his family a ‘Great Feast’ took place at the castle. George Neville was a talented and learned man, although his meteoric rise within the church was largely due to family connections. He was the young brother of Richard Neville the Earl of Warwick. The ‘Great Feast’ was designed to convey a clear statement of Neville’s power, at a time when Warwick’s relationship with Edward IV was deteriorating.

*Above: This small medieval feast serves to illustrate how great the Cawood Feast would have looked*

The scale and luxury of the occasion were extraordinary, records from the feast show that a substantial quantity of food was consumed, including 104 oxen, 6 wild bulls, 400 swans, 1000 capons and 104 peacocks; 25,000 gallons of wine were consumed with the meal. As well as indicating the power of the Nevilles the menu gives a valuable insight into 15th century English fare. It is said to have been a feast larger than the King’s coronation feast. Among the reported 2500 guests was the King’s brother, the Duke of Gloucester, who later became King Richard III, the feasting went on for several days with guests entertained like kings.

Thomas Savage became the Archbishop of York in January 1501 and resided at Cawood Castle until his death in September 1507. Thomas Savage’s body is buried in York Minster where his effigy remains.

**Cardinal Wolsey**

In 1529 Cardinal Wolsey was stripped of his government office and property, including his magnificently expanded residence of Hampton Court. This was because he was unable to get permission from the Pope for Henry VIII to divorce Catherine of Aragon so he could marry Anne Boleyn. However, Wolsey was permitted to remain Archbishop of York, which he had been for 16 years. He came to Cawood in 1530 and had been living at Cawood Castle during the summer, and part of the winter.
However before he could be installed as Archbishop in York he was arrested. He was charged with high treason, by the Earl of Northumberland, and Sir Walter Welsh.

Right: Sampson Strong’s portrait of Cardinal Wolsey at Christ Church 1610

The Earl had orders to conduct him to London, for trial, but Wolsey fell ill on his way and died at Leicester on the 29th November 1530 aged about 60. He therefore fulfilled Mother Shipton’s prophecy, that he would see the towers of York Minster but would never be enthroned there. (This story has been published in the journal, *TYJ 1 Spring 2010*). He is also believed to be the origin of the “Humpty Dumpty” nursery rhyme.

When Queen Mary deposed the Archbishop Robert Holgate in 1553 on various charges, her soldiers ransacked the castle and it was only partially reoccupied. During the Civil War in 1642 the castle was initially held by the Royalists but it was eventually captured by the Parliamentarians. However the Earl of Newcastle briefly recaptured it again for the Royalists in 1644. But it was shortly recaptured by Lord Fairfax and was used as a prisoner of war camp. Once the war ended the castle was abandoned and destroyed by order of Parliament, with only the farm buildings and parts of the wall remaining. The cellar was filled in with rubble and soil. Stones from the destroyed castle were used in the construction of the surrounding houses. However, the foundations of some buildings do remain as well as the castle’s cellar which was excavated in the 19th century.

The Castle Buildings and Grounds

Today the only surviving buildings of the archiepiscopal palace include the impressive three-storeyed Gatehouse and an adjacent two storeyed Banqueting Hall, both are Grade I Listed buildings. The rear of the gatehouse has a beautiful mediaeval oriel window or bay window with angled sides called canted above the arch to the first floor with heraldic shields. The gatehouse was constructed with Magnesian limestone from the Huddlestone quarry. The hall was constructed of red brick and stone. They were built by Archbishop John Kempe in the mid-15th century and both buildings have been restored.

Left: The impressive three-storey gatehouse and the adjacent two storey red brick banqueting hall

At the front is a pedestrian archway and a carriage archway both are contained under a large segmental arch. Above is a band with heraldic shields and capping. Three centre shields project slightly to support a bay window, or mediaeval oriel window.
Contemporary descriptions of Cawood Castle suggest it was a large complex of buildings clustered around one or two courtyards. The remaining gatehouse was the formal entrance through which visitors passed into the palace. An inventory in 1423 at the death of Archbishop Bowet describes a hall furnished with tables, seats, tablecloths and cushions, a library containing 33 volumes, pantry, spicery, livery, plate room, kitchen, brewhouse, bakehouse, butlery and stables. There would have also been a chapel. Other buildings would have stretched back to the river banks and the castle was surrounded by gardens and orchards, although very little is preserved today.

Many of the archbishops made alterations over the years but Cardinal Wolsey began what might have been the most extensive, since it is said that he employed as many as 300 workmen per day. Sadly the work was not completed as he was arrested for high treason and died on November 29th 1530, just two months after arriving at Cawood.

The Cawood Castle “Garth” which means, “garden” in Saxon, is the remains of a large mediaeval enclosure situated to the south of the castle, which originally extended far beyond its present size. It has two moats, five fishponds, earthworks, and the remains of a rare mediaeval garden and orchard. The Garth may also have been used for industrial purposes connected with the castle, including brick and pottery making, and a blacksmith’s workshop. It is bordered on the west by the medieval canal the Bishop dyke, used for many years to transport building stone from Sherburn to the River Ouse.

Today Cawood Castle Garth is in the centre of the village and is home to a population of rare Great Crested Newt and at its centre is a pond, built as a skating pound in the 19th century. Castle Garth was bought by the parish council in the 1980s in order to keep it as an open space in the heart of the village and to safeguard its history for the future.

Humpty Dumpty

Nursery rhymes have been carried down through the years by generations of school children. However, behind such seemingly childish oral traditions can often be found a serious story rooted in historical fact. It is widely believed that Cardinal Thomas Wolsey was the inspiration behind Humpty Dumpty. It would seem that he was in the habit of walking the walls of Cawood Castle, his greatest joy being to sit on the high tower wall, from where he would view what is York Minster today, looking forward to the day of his glorification.
The most obvious connections are, Humpty Dumpty, meaning short and dumpy as Wolsey was, Sat on a wall, doubtless the walls of Cawood Castle’s high tower. Had a great fall, his final fall from the King’s grace. All the King’s horses and all the King’s men, sent to arrest him. Could not put Humpty together again, because sadly he died.

Above: Plan of the gatehouse and below: photos inside the gatehouse (Courtesy of Landmark Trust)
It Came from Outer Space
And Landed in the Yorkshire Wolds
By Marcus Grant

An extraordinary phenomena of nature occurred in the winter of 1795. A meteorite dashed through the sky on a mild but overcast Sunday afternoon at about 3pm. It whizzed over villages in a north-west direction. The people who heard the strange noise of the mysterious object moving through the clouds as it passed over the villages were unable to identify what it was and wondered where it came from. Eventually the meteorite fell to earth on the Yorkshire Wolds between the villages of Wold Newton and Thwing in East Yorkshire. The sound of a loud explosion was reported by several people as it fell.

The meteorite fell on land owned by Major Edward Topham (1751-1820), who lived in nearby Wold Cottage. In fact the meteorite fell within two fields of his home and was so named the Wold Cottage Meteorite. Topham was not actually present when the meteorite fell as he was away in London. He returned home soon after the event and wrote a letter detailing the fall and accounts taken from his workers to a Mr. James Boaden, managing editor of the Oracle newspaper in London. This letter was published in the 12 February edition of the paper. Topham was also a local Magistrate, and in this role he obtained sworn statements from eyewitnesses and interviewed numerous other persons who had heard sounds in the area at the time.

One of these eyewitnesses was a 17 year old ploughman called John Shipley, employed by Topham. He was so near where it landed, that he was struck very forcibly by some of the mud and earth as the meteorite plunged into the ground. Shipley saw a black stone emerge from the clouds and fall to the ground about 30 feet from where he was standing. He rushed to the spot and found a large stone that lay in a pit in the soil and had impacted into the underlying limestone. He described it as warm and smoking and smelling of sulphur. Another eyewitness was Topham’s shepherd who was within 150 yards of the spot. The vicar of Wold Newton’s two sons also saw the meteorite approach the earth and immediately ran up to Wold Cottage to investigate the unusual occurrence. On discovering the landing site they saw a warm and smoking stone. Several locals who saw and heard the meteorite fall described it as a dark body passing through the air but they were unable to identify what it was.

Right: Edward Topham by John Russell, c.1795

On impact the meteorite cut through 12 inches (300 mm) of topsoil and penetrated a further 7 inches (180 mm), into the chalky rock. It created a large crater approximately 1 yard (0.91 m) across. In fact the meteorite had embedded itself so firmly in the rock that two workers had to assist John Shipley in digging out the stone.

After the meteorite had been removed from its pit, Topham had it brought to his home to record its vital statistics. The width the meteorite measured 28 inches (71.1 cm) and its length 36 inches (91.4 cm). The stone initially weighed 56 pounds (25 kg), which has been diminished to a small degree by different pieces being taken from it be given as presents to different literati of the country.

Topham later arranged to exhibit the stone in Piccadilly, London, across from the well-known Gloucester Coffee House. Anyone who was prepared to pay the entrance fee of 1 shilling was able to see the stone itself and also the original testimonies of Topham and his workers. They also received a leaflet as part of the entry fee with an engraving of the stone and a written account of the story.

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The Wold Cottage meteorite eventually ended up being sold for a nominal sum of 10 guineas to James Sowerby (1757-1822) in 1804. Sowerby had established a museum next to his house in London and had acquired the meteorite for display there. Sowerby was obviously very proud of this particular addition to his museum as it was included in the background of a portrait of him painted by Thomas Heaphy in 1816. The Wold Cottage meteorite was acquired in 1835 by the British Museum (now the Natural History Museum, South Kensington) in London where it can be seen.

Left: James Sowerby by Thomas Heaphy 1816. The Wold Cottage meteorite can be seen on the right

Right: The Wold Cottage meteorite on display in Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London

If fact the Wold Cottage meteorite was the largest meteorite observed to have fallen in Britain.

In 1799 Major Topham erected an obelisk on the exact site where the meteorite fell to earth on the 13th December 1775 at 3pm. The structure is situated in the middle of a field on the outskirts of Wold Newton, built of red bricks 4 feet (1.2 m) square and 25 feet (7.6 m) high, with an engraved tablet on one face. The inscription on the stone panel, is now almost obliterated by the ravages of wind and weather, were the words:

Here
On this spot, December 13, 1795
Fell from the atmosphere
An extraordinary stone.
In breadth twenty-eight inches
In length thirty-six inches,
And
Whose weight was fifty-six pounds.
This column
In memory of it
Was erected by
Edward Topham
1799
The obelisk is situated in the middle of a field between the villages of Wold Newton and Thwing on the Yorkshire Wolds in East Yorkshire.

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The obelisk is on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Wold Newton which lies deep within the beautiful countryside of East Yorkshire on the Yorkshire Wolds. It is situated approximately 9 miles (14 km) south of Scarborough and 9 miles (14 km) north-west of Bridlington.

It is interesting to note that the meteorite landed in an area of prehistoric importance and mysteries. Immediately to the east of the landing site and about 2 kilometres away is Willy Howe, a large Neolithic (3500-2000 BC) round mound or barrow. Over the years Willie Howe has been associated with stories and legends. The most famous one is about a fairy banquet and a gold cup. The full story has been published in the Journal (TYJ 3 Autumn 2013) Approximately 7 kilometres directly to the north is Folkton Carr, where in 1889 a spectacular set of three small chalk drums were excavated from an Early Bronze Age round barrow. They are unique in the archaeological records, no other objects like them have so far been found in the British Isles from the prehistoric period. Their function and meaning is still not known. So the problem of their precise cultural significance remains unresolved. The full story has been published in the Journal (TYJ 2 Summer 2014)

Left: The inscription on the stone panel, is now almost obliterated by the ravages of wind and weather

Below: The obelisk was built exactly on the site where the meteorite had fallen to earth on the 13th December 1775. The structure is situated in the middle of a field on the outskirts of Wold Newton and built of red bricks
Wold Cottage meteorite landmark, Wold Newton, on the Yorkshire Wolds East Yorkshire
Cawood Castle covered in winter snow with its impressive three storey gatehouse and adjacent two storey Banqueting Hall.

Notice the huge icicle on the pipe at the side of the gatehouse near the top.

*Photo by Pamela Ross*