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The lighthouse is 127 feet (38m) high and there are 144 steps to the lamp room. It was built between 1892 and 1894 because of the high number of shipwrecks that were occurring at Withernsea when vessels could not see the lights at either Spurn Head or Flamborough. It was not designed to be lived in, the tower has no dividing floors only the spiral staircase leading to the Service and Lamp Rooms at the top. The Lighthouse was decommissioned at the end of June 1976 and is now a museum of memorabilia about the RNLI Coastguards and local history. The museum also houses an exhibition on the life of actress Kay Kendall (1926-1959) who was a film star in the 1950s. She was born in the town and died of leukaemia.

Insert: Inside the lighthouse displaying memorabilia of the RNLI Coastguards.
The aim of the Yorkshire Journal is to present an extensive range of articles to satisfy a variety of reading tastes for our readers to enjoy. With this in mind the Spring edition features six more interesting and captivating articles.

The first feature is the Withernsea Lighthouse Museum in East Yorkshire by Tony Simpson. The most unusual feature of this lighthouse is that it is approximately a quarter of a mile inland from the sea. At the end of June 1976 the lighthouse was decommissioned and today is a museum of memorabilia concerning the RNLI, Coastguards and local history. Part of the museum is also dedicated to actress Kay Kendall who was born on the same street as the Withernsea lighthouse.

Then Margaret Mills looks into another aspect of the life of the Brontës and gives an account of the life of Martha Brown who was a servant and friend of the Brontë family. Martha Brown was born in Haworth in 1828 and was the eldest of the 6 daughters of John and Mary Brown of Haworth. John was a stonemason by trade, who also fulfilled the role of church sexton. Although from very humble roots, Martha was a vital link in the Brontë story, so much so that the famous novelist Elizabeth Gaskell sought her help when writing her best-selling biography The Life of Charlotte Brontë.

Stephen Riley continues his fascinating story of Yorkshires railway seaside holiday posters. Bridlington is the next seaside resort on the east coast after Hornsea and Withernsea and once the railways arrived in 1846 it soon became a popular resort. Stephen explains how Bridlington developed into a holiday resort with the success and sad demise of the numerous posters that appeared on railway billboards from the end of Victoria’s reign up to modern times.

For our next story Julian Giles visits Holy Trinity Church, Wensley in North Yorkshire which is not ed for its magnificent art work in wood carvings and brass memorial plaques. The church also displays two interesting fragments of medieval wall paintings on the north wall of the nave. They depicted two separate scenes ‘The Three Living and The Three Dead’ and ‘A legend in the Life of Saint Eloi’. Julian who has researched these medieval wall paintings reports on them in full detail including a history of the church.

Also in Holy Trinity Church, Wensley are several Anglo-Saxon stone carvings, of which two have inscriptions. Jeremy Clark has studied these carved stones and an Anglo-Saxon burial of a man with a sword found in the Wensley churchyard and gives a comprehensive description of them.

For our last feature Margaret Mills reviews the BBC drama production To Walk Invisible which expresses the story of the Brontë sisters’ rise to literary fame and publication against all odds. Brian Wade visits the film locations at Haworth, Shibden Hall, Halifax and Micklegate in York. A full-sized replica of the Brontë Parsonage and its surrounding was built on Penistone Hill above Haworth in order for it to look the same way it did when the Brontës lived there. This purpose built production set has since been dismantled.

But there is much more to these articles, please read and enjoy them. We welcome your comments.
Withernsea Lighthouse Museum, East Yorkshire

By Tony Simpson

In a stormy October 1880, shipping along the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire coast of England had been forced to shelter in the River Humber whilst the storms abated. There were a great number of boats involved, as at this time large quantities of coal was being moved from the North of England down to London and France. On the 28th of October the wind changed direction into a westerly and the storms eased a little. Shipping, anxious to resume their journeys, ventured forth once again into the North Sea, only to find that the westerly wind began to rapidly swing around into a north easterly, and returned to gale force. The storm that followed was disastrous for the shipping along the Yorkshire coast, with an estimated 190 boats washed ashore from Spurn Point up to Scarborough.

Left: The S. T. Leonora ashore at Withernsea 1905. It was just one of the many casualties of the cruel North Sea

Right: The Withernsea Lifeboat Admiral Rous and her crew in 1893. Photograph courtesy Paul Baker

A lifeboat was first stationed in Withernsea in 1862 by the RNLI because of the large amount of shipping traffic entering the River Humber. The first boathouse was built near to the lighthouse, on Arthur Street opposite Walter Street. To be closer to the seafront, the boathouse was moved to Seaside Road where it was used from 1883

At Withernsea the new pier was cut in two by the “Saffron” and also was badly damaged by the “Jabaz”, whilst the Hornsea pier also suffered severe damage due to collisions.

Local “Rocket” crews rescued many sailors, but the loss in life and boats was enough to create a demand for a navigational light, or “Guiding light” to be built between the Lighthouses at Spurn and Flamborough.

Left: This picture shows the aftermath of the coal barge Saffron which punched a 200 foot hole through the middle of the Withernsea Pier during the great storm on the 28th of October 1880
This call for the new lighthouse was not universally popular, many locals along the coast appeared to be doing quite well out of collecting bounty washed up along the coastline. However, then followed a tragedy when the “Genesta” ran aground after hitting the Withernsea pier, with the captain freezing to death in the riggings after his crew had been able to be rescued. At the inquest into his death, the coroner stated that the tragedy could have been avoided had there been a lighthouse at Withernsea.

With coastal shipping between Spurn and Flamborough still being forced to hug the coast to have any idea of their position during inclement weather, and boats still being lost along the beach, the demand for a lighthouse became undeniable. It is thought that Government financial help convinced Trinity House to commence building the lighthouse at Withernsea in 1892.

The following item appeared in the “Hull News”, Saturday, February 3rd 1894.

“For many a year shipmasters in command of vessels plying between this port and the Baltic, have insisted upon the necessity of a lighthouse somewhere on the Holderness coast, and on Thursday, for the first time, this splendid guide for mariners flashed its light over the troubled waters of the North Sea. Many a time has the construction of a lighthouse on this course been advocated, and the representations made from time to time have not been without effect. There has been during the year no more dangerous portion of the Yorkshire coast than that lying between Hornsea and the Humber. Never a winter has passed without vessels, the masters of which had lost their reckoning, going on shore between the points named, and these frequent strandings have always been attributed to the fact that there was no warning light between the Spurn and Flamborough Head. So recent as November last a Grimsby smack was sailed right on shore just two days before that memorable gale that encircled the British Isles on the 18th of that month. This vessel could not possibly have stranded had there been a lighthouse where it now stands at Withernsea. Although the night was dark and rainy when the smack went on shore, lights could been seen at a fair distance, but the skipper had lost his reckoning, and there was no friendly light to guide or to warn, and this fine vessel two days later became a total wreck. For long the London Trinity House resisted the claim made upon them, and the representations laid before them as to the dangers of the coast, but at length, aided we believe by a grant from the Government, they decided to erect a lighthouse at Withernsea. The site chosen is an exceedingly good one as the structure has been erected on the highest land in the neighbourhood.

The tower is a most massive one, rising to an altitude of 127 feet from the basement to the top of the lantern, and seeing that it is a light of the first order, its rays will, in clear weather, embrace a radius of 17 miles. Oil is the illuminant used, and those who were at Withernsea on Thursday, when for the first time the light was exhibited, came to the conclusion that Trinity House have done a grand work, and one that will be appreciated to the full by all who navigate this portion of the North Sea. This is a work that might have been deemed as worthy of a public ceremonial as the launching of a lifeboat, but there was no ceremony whatsoever. The time had come for the lighting up, according to notice given the world over, and quietly, without demonstration of any kind, the eight lights were lighted, and the flashes, two short and one long, would be seen for many a mile in all directions. At the time of sundown, yesterday, there were but few vessels in view, but many would doubtless pass during the hours of darkness, and we shall be somewhat surprised if you do not shortly hear of the light spoken of as a boon to all shipmasters passing along the Holderness coast. In recent years we may mention the Beaconsfield, which reached almost as far north as Flamborough Head before stranding.
There again there was the steamer J. Y. Short, which went ashore mile or two to the northward of Withernsea. A light at that place would have prevented either of those two disasters, and the new light will doubtless be the means of preventing the loss of life and property in the future."

Right: The lighthouse on Hull Road in about 1900.

Photograph courtesy Phil Mathison

The lighthouse was instantly successful, with a total ending of shipping losses along the coast due to navigational problems. The light beam was created by an 8 wick oil lamp, magnified by a revolving lens that floated on a bed of mercury, and rotated by a two hundredweight weight suspended from the top of the tower. The beam could be seen up to 17 miles away, and was later upgraded to electricity in 1936. The magnification system of the beam was so strong that during the day curtains had to be drawn around the unit to prevent the sun’s rays from being amplified and causing fires.

The most unusual feature of the lighthouse is that it is approximately a quarter of a mile inland, a fact that amazes many of the 10,000 visitors that it attracts every year. The reason behind this inland building of a lighthouse displays the long term thinking of Trinity House. Realising that the Yorkshire Coast has one of the fastest eroding coastlines in Europe, they planned for a lifetime in excess of 100 years for the building. In the 1890s there were of course no significant sea defences at Withernsea; they have since been built and leave the lighthouse now comfortably inland.

Left: An aerial view of Withernsea showing the Withernsea Lighthouse about a quarter of a mile inland from the sea with the Pier Entrance Towers on the promenade

A climb to the top of the lighthouse tower will show how much the coastline north and south of the lighthouse has disappeared, leaving Withernsea on land that is rapidly becoming a peninsular.

The Lighthouse was decommissioned at the end of June 1976, when navigational technology meant that the need for the light was no more and the cost of the upkeep of such an outstanding building overweighed any use it may have had.

In the 1980s the lighthouse was purchased by the sister of Withernsea actress Kay Kendall, and began a new life as a museum. It was then signed over to the lighthouse trust to be run as a charity, with the intention of collecting memorabilia concerning the RNLI, Coastguards and local history.
At 127 feet high and 144 steps inside, the lighthouse is one of the most exciting and energetic museums in the country. Those brave enough to climb up to the top are rewarded by breath-taking views over the North Sea, the East Yorkshire countryside and across the River Humber into Lincolnshire.

Right: The Lighthouse with its gardens. In the summer months holidaymakers sit out and enjoy the peace and quiet of lovely gardens whilst having coffee and cakes.

Since the lighthouse opened to the public in 1990, approximately 10,000 visitors a year come and climb the staircase up to the top, before visiting the museum and finally relaxing in the café and gardens after their exertions.

Right: A view from the top of the lighthouse looking towards the North Sea along the coast. The Pier Entrance Towers can be seen on the right in the far distance.

Left: The inside of the tower. Unlike other lighthouses, the accommodation for the lighthouse keeper was a cottage attached to the lighthouse, which meant that the tower had no floors, making the climb to the top an exciting event for the nervous.

Left: Café with picture of the actress Kay Kendall who was born on the same street as Withernsea lighthouse. Part of the museum is dedicated to her life and career.

The Withernsea Lighthouse Museum is open from Easter to October, there is a small entrance fee.
Martha Brown a Loyal Servant and Friend of the Brontë Family

By Margaret Mills

The story of the Brontë family of Haworth, West Yorkshire is a mixture of tragedy and triumph. The three daughters of the family who survived to adulthood – Charlotte, Emily and Anne – became famous novelists whose work is still loved and revered all over the world. Their only brother, Branwell, never published a book, but shared the family’s literary abilities.

*Right: This is a digitally restored version of the original painting of the three Brontë Sisters by their brother Branwell, painted circa 1833. It is known as the “Pillar Portrait”, because of the pillar which is where Branwell has painted himself out of the picture, the outline of his figure is just visible. His three sisters are from left to right: Anne, Emily and Charlotte.*

Aspects of the lives of 19th century servants are rarely documented, but in small households and over a period of many years, some servants acquired the status of friends of their employers. Martha Brown was born in Haworth in 1828, and was the eldest of the 6 daughters of John and Mary Brown of Haworth. John was a stonemason by trade, who also fulfilled the role of church sexton, taking care of the church building and graveyard. His work would bring him into the regular orbit of the Brontë family, and the Browns lived in the Sexton’s house, close to John’s place of work at Haworth Church and the Parsonage, presided over by the widowed Reverend Patrick Brontë, vicar of St Michael & All Angels Church at Haworth and father of the Brontës.

*Left: A self-portrait of Branwell Brontë circa 1840*

Over a period of many years, each of the Brown daughters would help out at the Parsonage as servants, doing the domestic tasks essential to keep the house running smoothly, but Martha was the only daughter who ever lived-in. From the time that she was 11 or 12 years of age, Martha shared a small bedroom with the elderly Tabby (Tabitha) Aykroyd, the other Parsonage servant. Loyal Martha would remain at the Parsonage for over 20 years, until 1861, when the last of the Brontës had died.

© The Brontë Parsonage Museum
The Sexton’s house now known as Haworth Church Cottage. It was built by John Brown in about 1832 on the eastern end of the Old Church School Room, directly opposite the church and about 100 yards from the Parsonage. John Brown was a stonemason as well as the church sexton he was responsible for maintaining the building of the church and the burial ground, where he dug graves and carved memorials. Most of John Brown’s daughters worked at the Parsonage at one time or another, cleaning, washing and running errands, but Martha was the only one to live in.

Arthur Bell Nicholls lodged at the Sexton’s house for nine years before his marriage to Charlotte Brontë, and it was here that he read Shirley. Roars of laughter and stamping of feet were heard as he read about the character based on himself, which caused Mrs Brown to think he had “gone off his head”.

Right: The Reverend Patrick Brontë circa 1860 was vicar of St Michael & All Angels Church at Haworth and father of the Brontës. He supervised John Brown’s work

Like Tabby, Martha enjoyed the trust and confidence of her employers, and would become particularly close to Charlotte who, after 1849, was the sole surviving sibling of a family of six children. With only an elderly servant and a young girl as live-in help, it was essential that the Brontë girls take on some of the less arduous household tasks themselves, and a strong and affectionate working relationship was forged as a result of this co-operation between the daughters of the house and their domestic help.

Martha, then barely out of her teens, would share the anxiety and terror of the Brontë family at Branwell’s gradual disintegration into the wreck of the promising young man who seemed destined for success. Those who have visited Haworth Parsonage will appreciate that sleeping in the tiny servant’s bedroom so close to the bedrooms of her employers, Martha could not help being aware of Branwell’s drunkenness and drug-taking, his fits of what seems to have been delirium tremens, and the resulting uproar in the house. Branwell would be dead at 31, his frail body unable to resist any longer what appears to have been consumption. The same complaint would be the likely cause of the deaths of his sisters Emily and Anne, both occurring within a year of his own demise.

This ink sketch by Branwell Brontë, depicts a skeleton of death summoning the man laid in bed for a 'fight' of sorts. The unresponsive, miserable man who is either sleeping or with his eyes shut, is believed to be Branwell. He died in the same year that this was drawn 1848, and this is his last known work. The outline in the background, right, depicts Haworth church and graveyard: another symbol of death. The title of this work is ‘A Parody’. © The Brontë Parsonage Museum
But there were still episodes of happiness. During the 1840s, Martha shared the family’s pride and joy at the publication of Charlotte’s *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley*, Emily’s *Wuthering Heights* and Anne’s *Agnes Grey* and *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, although pleasure at her employers’ literary success would have been muted by the deaths of Branwell, Emily and Anne during the same decade. In 1853, Charlotte published *Villette*, and Martha would have viewed – perhaps with some concern – an increasing number of Brontë admirers who began to make pilgrimages to the Parsonage, in order to see the home of the three women authors from a remote Yorkshire township, who had created timeless masterpieces of English literature.

In June 1854, it was Martha who scurried from house to house in Haworth, asking the householders for permission to collect flowers from their gardens. Her task was to use the flowers to deck the interior of the Parsonage as part of the wedding celebrations for the marriage of the Reverend Brontë’s only surviving child, Charlotte. Charlotte was marrying her father’s curate, Arthur Bell Nicholls*, and at last there was some cause for celebration after some of the sadteness of the previous years. Perhaps as she walked around Haworth, Martha thought of how much she (and others) had initially disliked and distrusted the Reverend Nicholls when his intentions to her mistress became clear.

*Right: Arthur Bell Nicholls photographed in 1854 on his honeymoon in Ireland.*

Those feelings were now in the past, and it was clear that Charlotte had made her own choice. The Reverend Brontë had been deeply opposed to the marriage, but Charlotte had won the day, ably assisted by her husband-to-be, a man who had waited patiently for 7 years to propose, and had generously agreed that he and his wife would reside at the Parsonage after their marriage, in view of Charlotte’s father’s advanced age and frailty.

The marriage ushered in a brief period of happiness, but alas, it was to be all too brief. The early months of the year 1855 saw Martha once again going about her domestic duties with Tabby in a house where illness was seldom absent. Martha it was who once again waited by a sickbed, helping to nurse Charlotte this time. It is likely that Charlotte’s illness was related to her pregnancy, and the symptoms that confined her to her bed included excessive sickness and dehydration. It was Martha who signed her name as one of the witnesses to Charlotte Nicholls’ Will, perhaps one of the final services she could render her dying mistress. She would shortly be out collecting flowers once again – but this time, they were to strew around the lifeless figure of her only surviving mistress.

After Charlotte’s death in March 1855, Martha remained at the Parsonage (Tabby was now also dead), caring for the last 2 members of the family she had served so faithfully from childhood. Martha shared with Mr Nicholls the care of the ageing Reverend Brontë, who had reluctantly relinquished most of his clerical duties to his clergyman son-in-law.

On the death of Reverend Brontë in June 1861, Martha’s devotion was not forgotten. Her employer had left her the sizeable sum of £30, in acknowledgement of her long and faithful service. Nor was Mr Nicholls ungrateful, asking Martha to come back with him to his homeland in Northern Ireland. Dismayed and disillusioned by his treatment from the Church Authorities, and their rejection of his wish to formally take over the post lately occupied by his late father-in-law, Mr Nicholls had no wish to remain in Haworth.

Did Mr Nicholls intend that Martha relocate to Ireland permanently? The simple answer is that we cannot be certain, but Martha, the woman who until now had served one much-loved set of employers and probably rarely (if ever) ventured out of Haworth, braved a trip across the sea to settle in Northern Ireland at the new home of her employer. She would return to her family home in Haworth again in 1862, possibly to care for her mother (her father had died in 1855). That there had been no falling out with Mr Nicholls is proved by their regular correspondence for the remaining years of her life, and the fact that even after Mr Nicholls re-marriage, to his cousin, Mary Bell, Martha continued to pay visits to their home in Northern Ireland.
During the 1860s, Martha’s own health began to deteriorate and after the death of her mother, she moved in with her sister, Ann, and Ann’s husband, although the family atmosphere appears to have been unhappy, making it unbearable for Martha to remain. She moved back to Haworth, and occupied a small cottage in Sun Street, dying there in January 1880, when she was buried in St Michael & All Angels churchyard, close to the Parsonage, the scene of her years of devoted service to the Brontë family. She was reportedly suffering from stomach cancer.

Martha had in her possession keepsake items given to her by members of the Brontë family over the years, and of these she was immensely proud, showing them to visitors who happened to call. She never married, and there appears to be no record of any romances, serious or otherwise, in her life. In one respect a sad and possibly lonely end, but what memories she must have treasured: her part in the Brontë family story was related in the hugely successful biographical work, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, published by eminent author Elizabeth Gaskell in 1857. This work has never been out of print, so it is a fitting end to her story that Martha’s loyalty, devotion and importance to this famous family are rightly recorded for all time.

The Haworth Parsonage was built in 1779. It became the Brontë family home in 1820 until Patrick Brontë’s death in 1861. Then between 1872-78, Patrick’s successor, the Reverend John Wade, added a gable wing. In 1928 the building was purchased, at a cost of £3,000, from the Church Trustees by Sir James Roberts, who then presented it to the Brontë Society to provide a home for their museum. The ‘Brontë Parsonage Museum’ was officially opened on 4th August 1928.
Bridlington Railway Seaside Holiday Posters

By Stephen Riley

Bridlington like Hornsea and Withernsea (see Hornsea and Withernsea Railway Seaside Holiday Posters by Stephen Riley in the winter issue 2016 of TYJ) is situated on the Holderness Coast in East Yorkshire. It is the next seaside resort on the east coast after Hornsea located about 24 miles (39 km) north of Hull, 12 miles (19.3 km) north of Hornsea and 10 miles (16 km) south of Filey. In 1811 Benjamin Milne discovered a flowing spring of fine fresh water in the harbour and a natural mineral chalybeate spring about a quarter of a mile north-west of the Quay in a small pleasant garden near the ‘Subscription Mills’. It was because of these springs that the small fishing port developed in the 19th century to become a seaside resort. But it was not until after the arrival of the railways that Bridlington soon became a popular resort not only for industrial workers from the West Riding of Yorkshire but other parts of Yorkshire and further afield.

The Bridlington railway station was opened on 6 October 1846 by the York and North Midland Railway as the terminus of their line running from Hull station. An extension northwards to Filey station leading to a junction at Seamer railway station connecting with the York to Scarborough Line was opened just over a year later. The railway station was actually built between the Quay at the northern side of Bridlington, where the fishing fleet and the tourist areas were located and about a mile inland is the old town, thereby separating the two places. The old historical town was once known as Burlington and in this area the Priory Church of St Mary, the associated Priory Gatehouse and the site of the old market are located.

Bridlington expanded as a resort at the start of the 20th century largely as a result of the railway. Direct trains ran from the industrial heartlands via Selby and Market Weighton in the summer. The new holiday market led to a huge expansion of the resort and the need for a larger station to take the long excursion trains. In 1912 the Bridlington station was extensively remodelled when the Edwardian Baroque style was used, and a new roof in lightweight NER-style was installed. The concourse is spacious to cope with the large numbers of people who came for their holidays. An additional building for refreshment rooms was added alongside the concourse in 1922–23.

Left: Map of the Yorkshire Coast Line illustrating the railway line linking Hull to Scarborough

Right: Bridlington Railway Station
Once the railways arrived the land around the station was quickly developed and the two areas of the town were brought together and Bridlington became the town we know today. The first hotel in Bridlington, the George Hotel actually opened in 1802 which preceded the coming of the railways, but it was the 1850s onwards when the resort’s reputation was made. Not surprisingly, being such a holiday destination, the town had an overabundance of posters appearing from the end of Victoria’s reign right up to modern times.

Bridlington was a fun, family seaside town. Travel posters marketed its vast, beautiful beaches, perfect for bathing and its fun, friendly atmosphere, absolutely the place to go.

In 1910 the North Eastern Railway (NER) produced two posters which included details of the types of tickets offered to passengers.

The poster on the left is titled ‘Bright, Breezy, Bracing Bridlington’ and shows a view of the beach and promenade crowded with holidaymakers. The domed building on the left is the Spa Theatre, the first theatre here was destroyed in a fire in 1906, and W. S. Walker was commissioned to design the replacement, which opened in 1907. Neatly laid out gardens and a bandstand are in front of the Spa Theatre. Besides seagulls an aeroplane can be seen in the sky flying over the resort and on the sea is a pleasure boat. The long sweeping bay can be seen ending at Flamborough Head in the far distance. Just about every Edwardian amiable beach entertainment has clearly been included in this poster. The caption below details the types of tickets offered by the NER. The artist of this all-encompassing poster is unknown.

Right: This poster was produced by North Eastern Railway (NER) to promote the range of tickets offered to the coastal holiday resort of Bridlington. The poster shows a beach scene with children playing and making sand castles on the sands. A child is in foreground holding a shell to her ear with a caption that reads, ‘What are the wild waves saying – Come to Bridlington’ It also promotes boating, bathing, golf and fishing. The artist of this impressive poster is also unknown.

From the 1920s until the nationalisation of the railways after the Second World War, the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), which served Yorkshire became one of the most important poster producers. The LNER developed its own distinct elliptical logo incorporating its initials and was the leader in graphic design with its use of good artists for its advertising posters.

Left: The LNER distinct elliptical logo

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In the 50 years after the building of the railways, the population more than doubled and was overwhelmed with people who came from all parts of Yorkshire. One of the earliest visitors to the resort was Charlotte Brontë, in September 1839, this was her first ever visit to the seaside, she was 23 years of age at the time. The first of the stone seawalls was built in 1867, northwards from the small fishing harbour, and in 1886, the ornate Alexandra Hotel was built, it was demolished in the mid-1970s. The first parade with gardens was laid out, and ten years later, the seafront ‘stuccoed’ terraces were finished. By the end of the 19th century, all the seawalls, the Spa complex and the imposing promenades were ready, and ‘Social Bridlington’ was on the map. Now the railway advertising could really begin.

Right: Front view of Alexandra Hotel in about 1949

This LNER poster on the left was produced in 1925 and was re-issued again in 1928. It presents an image of Bridlington as a place of endless fun, with a number of people in a rowing boat attired in swimming wear. At the centre of the poster is a young lady proudly standing at the front of the boat with a flowing bathing robe, her right arm is stretched up high holding a beach ball. The artist is William Barribal (1873-1956), who in addition to designing railway posters for LNER, also worked as a figure and studio painter as well as a print illustrator. He held regular exhibitions between 1919 and 1938.

Right and on page 15: A pair of LNER posters by artist Henry George Gawthorn (1879-1941) of 1927. He was active in the first decade of LNER, and was a favoured artist of William Teasdale, LNER Advertising Manager, though not signed exclusively to LNER. As a result he also produced a few posters for the Southern Railway.

This railway poster like the one on page 15 clearly illustrated the elegance, affluence and well-being of Bridlington. It features smartly dressed people, with ladies carrying parasols to guard against the sun, leisurely strolling along the promenade past neatly laid out gardens and a bandstand. In the near distance is the Spa Theatre.
A view of Bridlington’s promenade in 1895 before the first Spa Theatre was built in 1896. It can perhaps be compared with the Gawthorn railway poster above. The promenade was built between 1866 and 1869, which extends northwards. It has a high sea wall with the pavilion in the centre. The tide below the sea wall is out allowing people to walk on the sands. In the distance are crowds of holidaymakers on the beach and in the sea. Much further in the distance are white cliffs of Sewerby that offer fine views of Bridlington.

The poster on the right is the second one by H. G. Gawthorn and dates to 1927. This poster is certainly a stunner, his composition, colour choices, style and movement is superb. There is interest and liveliness everywhere. The view is further along the promenade to the one shown on page 14, but looking back towards the harbour. Again it features smartly dressed people strolling leisurely along the promenade and people are sitting along the sea wall. In the distance is the Spa Theatre. A funnel of a pleasure boat with smoke streaming out is probably moored against the quay. Both posters carries one of the early logos used by LNER.

Left: This is a rarely seen poster, it appeared in 1936 and it is interesting to compare this poster with Henry Gawthorn’s painting of the same area a decade earlier, shown on page 14.

The sun must have really shone in that era, judging by the number of coloured umbrellas visible. But what is interesting about this poster is the number of people on the promenade to see the passing of the Prince’s Parade. Also that the Red Cross of St. George is proudly flying, along with the Union Jack and other flags. This is an era where we have lost a lot today. The sense of pride in the country then compared to now is quite different. It shows in the artwork of posters and it most certainly shows in behavioural patterns today. This poster and many others in this series of ‘Yorkshire Seaside Posters’, show the Yorkshire Seaside along the East Coast at its very best.

Clearly seen is the new ‘art deco’ design of the Grand pavilion. This theatre, which was refurbished in 1926, burned down in 1932. It was hastily rebuilt in ‘double-quick’ time by the design shown here. This LNER poster of the Prince’s Parade, Bridlington was issued in 1936, the artist is Kenneth Shoesmith (1890-1939).
The Harbour

The next group of LNER posters are of the harbour area of the town. The somewhat damaged LNER poster on the right is probably one of the first to illustrate the harbour. It is dull, flat, lifeless and uninspiring for a poster promoting rail travel to Bridlington. It shows a group of holidaymakers strolling along the pier where a flag can be seen flying. Moored in the harbour to the left can be seen a number of boats.

The poster is dated c1924 and the artwork is by Graham Petrie.

The next poster on the left is dated 1928 and is by artist Fred Taylor (1875-1963). This bold poster shows many boats in the harbour preparing to take visitors on a short trip.

These boats in Fred Taylor’s poster appear to be local sailing cobles, normally used for fishing but which could be used for short trips into the bay in summer.

In the poster on the left we are standing behind visitors taking in the business of the harbour in the late afternoon. The poster shows many boats around the harbour including the arrival of a large pleasure boat. Pleasure boats were once a Bridlington icon.

This poster is dated 1930 and artist is John Littlejohns (1874-19??)

Although sailing cobles continued to compete with the large pleasure steamers they took a lot of the trade away from them.
Left: This postcard shows a large pleasure boat arriving into the harbour with a crowded of visitors on the pier waiting its arrival. A group of sailing cobles at the bottom of the postcard can be seen waiting for passengers. These sailing cobles soon went out of business, they could not compete with the more comfortable pleasure boat.

The poster on the right shows a view of the entrance to the harbour from the sea with rowing boats, sailing boats and a pleasure boat moored against the quay. In the background can be seen the Spa Theatre and promenade.

This poster is dated 1936 and the artwork is by Frank Mason (1876-1965), who was educated at HMS Conway and spent time at sea. He painted marine and coastal subjects. In addition to designing railway posters, he was also involved in engineering and shipbuilding in Leeds and Hartlepool.

The colours in the poster on the left are far more vibrant than the two previous posters. It shows summer visitors strolling along the pier with the distinctive harbour wall in the foreground. They are looking at the sailing boats and there also appears to be a motor boat on the water.

There is a pleasure boat moored against the quay with excited day-trippers watching or embarking for a trip. We can only imagine what the two old fishermen are saying as they put the world to right. What is striking about this rather unusual poster is the colour of the rather prominent funnel which is repeated in the large resort lettering, with the slogan ‘It’s Quicker by Rail’. The town with its many roofs can be seen in the background.

This poster is dated 1935 the artist is Frank Newbould (1887-1950), who studied at Bradford College of Art and joined the War Office in 1942. He designed posters for the LNER, Great Western Railway (GWR), Orient Line and Belgian Railways.
After the harbour scenes the next posters to be produced by LNER are two pictorial beach scenes. The one on the right is a simply eye-catching poster which at the time was highly representative of commercial art. It is bold bright and clear, everything you need in a holiday poster. It depicts a beach scene with mother and her child in beachwear splashing water in the sea. In the background are holiday makers playing on the sands. This poster is dated 1932 and the artwork by Tom Purvis (1888-1959), who rallied for the professionalization of commercial art. In 1930 he was one of the group of artists who founded the Society of Industrial Artists, which campaigned for improved standards of training for commercial artists in order to broaden their scope of employment. He became one of the first Royal Designers for Industry in 1936.

The poster on the left is lively impressions of a beach scene as viewed out of the window of a railway carriage. Of course the station was not alongside the beach, but the intent is clear. It illustrates activities on the beach with holiday makers bathing in the sea, children riding donkeys, and people are playing golf, cricket and tennis. A pleasure boat can be seen arriving in the harbour. This poster is dated mid 1930s and the artist is Thomas Cantrell (1880-1952).
Social and Historical Bridlington

The next group of posters focuses on people, fashions and socializing. Sparkling seas and golden sands are the reasons why the resort has always drawn thousands of visitors. This is as true today as it was in the mid-19th century, when the railways transformed the town. But to say this is the only reason for socializing in the town would not do it justice. Old Bridlington is steeped in history, but this has not appeared on any posters, so the impression of the town is a family resort, with all its attractions. The next few posters add to the ‘beach-style’ reputation, but a visit to the old part of the town is a different world.

The original village is inland about a mile from the coast, and was built in the form of a series of narrow streets around the Augustinian Priory, founded in 1113. This was a wealthy priory and naturally attracted a lot of attention from outside. One of the former priors, John of Thwing was canonised in 1401, and his shrine became a place of pilgrimage. After the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 Henry V visited the priory to give thanks for his victory. At that time Bridlington was held in high reverence.

The priory was dissolved in 1538 by Henry VIII during the Dissolution of the Monasteries and he destroyed the Shrine and much of the priory. Only the Nave of the church survives which became the Parish Church of St. Mary and the Priory Gatehouse, which dates from 1388 and is now the Bayle Gate Museum.

The photograph on the left is of the Parish Church of St. Mary and the one below of the Priory Gatehouse which is now the Bayle Gate Museum, they are located in old Bridlington south-west of the coast. These two historical buildings cannot be seen from the seafront and do not appear in any railway posters. LNER followed by British Railways (BR) were into mass transportation, and always wanted to show the glamorous and not necessarily the historic side of Bridlington and other Yorkshire seaside towns. Other towns and cities in Yorkshire such as York had the reverse policy, so there history prevailed.

Also the majority of holiday makers came to Bridlington for the beach, the sea and to sunbathe rather than to visit historical buildings. After all they were coming from polluted industrial locations where there was no chance of seeing the sea and taking in the sea air.
In the 1930s before the outbreak of World War II (1939-1945) LNER produced a number of railway posters promoting the beach-style of Bridlington illustrating elegance, affluence and smartly dressed people.

Left: This LNER poster was issued in 1935 and is a real Bridlington classic. It was painted by Frank Newbould (1887-1950) who was a great poster artist. It shows a smartly dressed couple gazing out to sea, while more elegant people stroll on the promenade below. On the beach are many changing tents and people can be seen on the sands and in the sea. The whole place appears neat and tidy and this period was the heyday of the town. The long sweeping bay can be appreciated with the harbour and tourist area shown by the red houses in the centre of the poster. In the far distance can be seen the Sewerby cliffs and beyond ending at Flamborough Head on the horizon.

This poster is well composed and is a real collectors’ piece. It does not appear that often in auctions, but when it does, bidding is always keen.

The poster on the right and the one on page 21 are LNER’s vision of social Bridlington. Holiday makers are sitting on the stone built sea wall wearing casual clothing for the 1930s. The young man sitting next to a young lady is wearing a short sleeved yellow open necked shirt compared to the couple in front on the left strolling along the promenade who appear to be more formally dressed. The man in a white suit with waistcoat is wearing a blue tie with a matching handkerchief in his top pocket and a white hat. Even the holiday makers on the sands seem to be smartly dressed in casual clothing rather than in beachwear. The sea wall curves round to the harbour and the Spa Royal Hall can be seen on the left with the tourist area of the town further along. This famous LNER poster is dated 1935 and the artwork is by Septimus Edwin Scott (1879-1962) who also designed posters for London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS).
Left: This poster also illustrated holiday makers wearing both casual and formal clothing. The prominent man on the left pointing out to sea is wearing a long white sleeved open necked shirt and white trousers. The man below the lady leaning on the sea wall is more formally dressed. He is attired in a pink top coat, a white shirt and orange tie. Once again most of the holiday makers sitting in deckchairs on the sands below seem to be smartly dressed in casual clothing rather than in beachwear. This poster is dated 1935, the artist is Fred Taylor (1875-1963).

Right: The scene and the characters depicted in this poster, would be more at home in a comic. Sitting under a flagpole is a bearded fisherman, stylishly dressed people are strolling about and to the right a naval officer looking for his ship. The little girl in a red swimming costume with her dog and the boy racing down the steps to sail his model yacht should be on the beach. The Spa complex with its glass dome is on the far side of the harbour. This ‘Lively Bridlington’ LNER poster is dated 1936, the artist is Joseph Greenup (1891-1946).

The Spa complex which can be seen in Joseph Greenup’s poster has recently undergone a multi-million pound refurbishment. It contains all the state-of-the art facilities necessary to meet the entertainment needs of a more astute public. The Royal Hall is exquisitely adorned in 1930s ‘art deco’ style, and is capable of holding up to 3,500 people, so that concerts, plays, sports, dancing and exhibitions are now easily catered for. Today, modern shops and attractions co-exist happily with the past. There is literally something here for everybody and this is why Bridlington won ‘Visitor Destination of the Year’ in Yorkshire’s 2007 Tourist Board award scheme.
Left: This poster shows an elegantly dressed woman looking out to sea from a balcony. She is wearing a two piece red suit and shading her face from the sun with a red matching hat. Also on the balcony sitting in a deckchair can be seen a man wearing a blue tie and white hat. Below the balcony are holidaymakers strolling along the promenade. On the beach are many white changing tents, and people can be seen sunbathing on the sands and swimming in the sea. In the distance on the sea a pleasure boat can been seen setting off on a trip around the bay. This is a classical mid 1930s poster issued by LNER and painted by Andrew Johnson.

British Railways Seaside Holiday Posters

In 1948 after World War II (1939-1945) a decision was taken by the Labour government to nationalize the railways. British Railways (BR) was created with regions similar to those operated by The Big Four. It continued to produce posters of Yorkshire much as before. Advertising was on a regional basis and the posters that were produced by British Railways (BR) had a very similar look to the LNER posters although they now carried the British Railways name in a distinctive lozenge design.

Anything that the LNER could do when producing exquisite Bridlington posters, BR showed they could match. The poster on the right was commissioned in 1949, and appeared as a poster in 1950. The artist is Frederick Donald Blake who painted many views of the east and north-east areas, of which this is one.

He has set up his easel about half a mile south of the harbour, and is looking north-east which shows an expansive view of the beach and promenade. As with the poster on page 20, similar features are present, and little seems to have changed for 15 years. The beach is crowded, and some people are swimming in the sea, there are a number of greenish beach tents and even the same fluffy white clouds sit over the white limestone cliffs of Flamborough Head. Some holidaymakers are strolling along the promenade chatting and soaking up the sun. The Spa Royal Hall is visible in the background and further along is the tourist area.

During the summer holidays most Yorkshire workers from the industrial centres went to fashionable resorts along the East Yorkshire Coast, workers from Manchester went to Blackpool. This continued throughout the 1950s and early 1960s when times were good. However, tastes were soon to change with the decline of the traditionally family holidays to Hornsea, Bridlington, Filey, Scarborough and even Whitby being replaced by the popularity of cheap packaged foreign holidays.
The Harbour

Like LNER British Railways (BR) followed in producing harbour posters.

The first one on the right is by artist Frank Wootton (1914-1998) and is dated 1953. The scene is full of movement and colour, with the arrival of a pleasure boat entering and approaching the harbour wall which is full of holidaymakers. There are not so many people walking along the pier but seagulls can be seen flying everywhere. One noticeable observation is that the sea appears to be rather viscous and oily.

The Frank Wootton poster was one of many he painted for various parts of British Railways in the 1950s and his work is being re-evaluated and more appreciated today.

The pleasure boat in the poster is the Yorkshire Belle which was launched in May 1947 and arrived in Bridlington just over a week later. It is the last large pleasure boat working in Bridlington and operates frequent one hour trips towards Flamborough Head, plus occasional longer trips.

The poster on the left shows the harbour at the southern end of the beach. It gives a wonderful panorama of Bridlington, with Flamborough Head in the distance. On the quay are three young people and a fisherman looking down at the harbour, where there are a number of boats and yachts. At the other side of the harbour is the wide sandy beach protected by a sea wall, crowded with holidaymakers.

This poster is titled ‘Bridlington Yorkshire’s Gay Seaside Playground’ which at the time the poster was painted had quite a different meaning. It was issued in 1958, the artist is George Ayling (1887-1960).
To complete the Bridlington Seaside Holiday posters the following three have a different style and design to the usual attractive classic posters. This was because society and times were beginning to change.

The poster on the left is really an eye-catching poster by the great commercial artist Tom Eckersley (1914-1996). He like Tom Purvis many years before had a great talent for putting a commercial message down on canvas simply and colourfully. It illustrated a bucket and spade on a sandy beach with the smiling face of a beach ball placed on the bucket wearing a straw sunhat. In the background is the sea with seagulls flying over it. This is one of the most iconic posters that BR produced for any of the Yorkshire resorts in the 1950s, and it is rarely seen today. It is dated 1955 with a simply title ‘BRIDLINGTON YORKSHIRE’

Right: This is a typical ‘Agency’ type piece of artwork that is more art-deco than the late 1950s. It carries a simple but effective message which reads ‘… sun and fun for everyone!’ and is the essence of a commercial poster. It is dated 1957 and the artist is ‘Tatt’.

Left: The emphasis in the last poster is the same theme as the two posters above, sun, sand and sea with a bucket and spade. This poster includes a deckchair on the beach and is dated 1964 the artist is signed as Appleby.

By the 1960s the railways where having to compete seriously with the car and cheap package holidays. This eventually brought about the end of the attractive, classic popular posters of the Yorkshire seaside holiday resorts. Posters now promoted the new, cleaner and faster locomotives in an attempt to win back passengers, rather than individual seaside resorts.
The above illustration was published by John Furby, Bookseller of Bridlington in about 1853. It is looking south towards the harbour where a number of ships are docked shown by their sails and masts. One ship to the left is in full sail and appears to be entering the harbour. Standing on the quay are many people looking at the ships or taking in the view of the beach. Lined up on the sands at low tide are many bathing machines, two of which can be seen in the sea with their big wheels and one is being pulled back to the beach. All three are being hauled by a horse with a driver. On the beach people are watching the scene with interest or walking and talking to their companion. What is interesting to note is the pleasure steamer which is sailing along the coast. From the 1850s pleasure steamers became very popular at Bridlington with holidaymakers rather than at that larger seaside resort of Scarborough.

At about this time doctors began promoting sea-bathing as a healthy pastime, wealthy people would come to bathe in the sea at Bridlington which was now being recommended for bathing, sea breezes, and coastal scenery. In the 1800s bathing machines were very popular at seaside resorts but they declined rapidly in the 1890s. In fact the first bathing machine was pioneered at Scarborough in 1735. A complete history on ‘Sea Bathing and the first bathing machine at Scarborough’ by Sarah Harrison has been published in the Journal (TYJ Spring 2012).

The bathing machines were used to preserve the modesty of ladies getting changed so that they could descend into the water directly from the bathing machine. They were roofed and walled wooden carts that had four large wide wheels with a door at the front or back. They were pulled in and out of the surf by a horse that had a driver. Once the bathing machine was in the water, the occupants disembarked down steps into the sea.

The only Bridlington railway poster where bathing machines seem to appear is in the 1910 poster on page 13 (also see right), produced by North Eastern Railway (NER) It shows a child in the foreground and a beach scene with children playing on the sands. Where the beach curves round to Flamborough Head in the distance are probably about two bathing machines in the sea and about three on the sands. After this poster was produced they probably went out of fashion being replaced with beach changing tents which can be seen in many of the posters.
Medieval Wall Paintings in Holy Trinity Church, Wensley, North Yorkshire

By Julian Giles

Holy Trinity Church is situated at the southern end of the small village of Wensley on the north bank of the River Ure, which runs through the valley of Wensley Dale in North Yorkshire. It is located just off the A684, the main road intersecting the Dales 1½ miles south-west of Leyburn 2¾ miles north-west of Middleham and about 3¼ miles south-east of Castle Bolton. Wensley appeared in the Domesday Book of 1086 as ‘Wendesley’ but no church is mentioned although it is likely that a church was present in the Anglo-Saxon period.

The village itself does not now reflect the scale of activity that the church once saw in the medieval period considering its size in comparison with the small unassuming village in which it stands. The church was once supported by great wealth and patronage. In 1202 Wensley was granted a market charter, and became an important market centre of the area. When James de Wensley obtained a licence in 1307 which was renewed in 1318, there was a market on Wednesdays and an annual fair on the eve, feast and morrow of Holy Trinity day, demonstrating the significance of the church’s dedication feast to the economy and life of the village and parish. Wensley had good connections, there was a medieval bridge across the River Ure, and the village prospered until the plague in 1563 which reduced its population. The importance of Wensley within the local landscape continued to decline until eventually transforming it into the quiet small village it is today. However, the impressive and important Holy Trinity church still remains in its large walled churchyard.

Brief History of the Church

Holy Trinity Church dates from the 13th century and is probably built on the foundation of a pre-Norman church. There are a number of Anglo-Saxon stone carvings in the church dating from the 8th to the 10th centuries. Two of these can be seen on the window sill on the north side of the chancel and three are built into the north wall of the north aisle, two of which have crosses with inscriptions.

The plan of the church consists of a nave, with north and south aisles and north and south porches, a chancel with a north vestry, and a west tower. The chancel is the oldest parts of the current church built in c.1245 with the south wall being almost intact from that date. The nave, north and south aisles and the north porch were added around the turn of the 14th century.

Right: Three Anglo-Saxon stone carvings built into the north wall. The top two have crosses with inscriptions.

Photograph by Stephen G. Hipperson
The north porch is the main entrance to the church, being on the side of the village, which has the coat of arms of the Scrope family of Bolton Castle positioned over the entrance. The south porch was rebuilt in the 15th century and at the same time a vestry was added to the north side of the chancel. The tower arch indicates the presence of a western tower that was built at the end of the 13th century, but the tower and west ends of the aisles were reconstructed into their present state in the 18th century. On the north face of the tower is a clock by W. Potts and Son of Leeds dated 1899.

Holy Trinity Church has been designated by English Heritage as a Grade I listed building, and in 2006 the church was transferred to the care of The Churches Conservation Trust, and a considerable restoration and conservation work has been undertaken since then.

The Medieval Wall Paintings

Although Holy Trinity Church at Wensley is noted for its magnificent art work in wood carvings and brass memorial plaques the church also displays two interesting fragments of wall paintings. The surviving wall paintings were discovered on the north wall of the nave following the 1927-8 restoration work to the church and date to a little after the north aisle wall was completed the 14th century. They depicted two separate scenes ‘The Three Living and The Three Dead’ and ‘A legend in the Life of Saint Eloi’. Medieval wall paintings in churches was a visual aid to teach about the wide knowledge of the Bible and to help the congregation understand morality. Most of the population would be illiterate and the completed paintings were probably the only illustrations ever seen by many of them. Until the end of the 15th century, it was not possible to learn the teachings of Christ or the lives of the saints from books. This was because there were no printed books and hand written religious books that existed were rare and owned by only a few.

The Three Living and The Three Dead

Although this painting has been reduced to just one fragment, what remains is fairly clear, and it is certainly gruesome, with the lower parts of two living dead legs tasselled with feasting worms. The third one at the extreme left edge, has almost completely gone. However, the most interesting aspect of this example is the inscription between the dead figures.

Above: This fragment of a wall painting displays only the lower part of the Three Living and the Three Dead. The three dead are represented by the legs of two of them on the left with thread-like worms’ discharging from them. The lower part the three living of which only two have survived on the right appear to be fully robed.
This scene usually shows three kings hunting on foot in a forest, all finely dressed and with the trappings of wealth. As they hunt they encounter three walking corpses or skeletons, often depicted on contrasting landscapes. Such paintings were part of the changing imagery of reminders of death, judgement and the afterlife. In the 14th century Doomsday began to dominate the walls of churches, as attitudes focused more on individual salvation, with death and judgement inescapable irrespective of rank and privilege.

The Wensley’s painting was a means of proof of the virtuous piety and social ambition, and was inseparable from fears of purgatory and judgement. But wall paintings’ meanings could be social as well as specific. They were part of the parish’s inherited tradition, giving identity and memory to the parish, and embracing the generations of people who viewed them. At Wensley in particular this seems to be the case, and its survival is something quite special. Wensley’s Three Living and Three Dead scene displays the first known textual inscription in vernacular English:


The full text should read, ‘As you are, so were we: as we are, so you will become’.

*Right: Part of the painting rotated in order to make the inscriptions more readable*

The figures in fine robes to the right of the living dead, represent the Three Living. Like the lower parts of the two living dead legs only the lower parts of two of the Three Living dressed in full attire have survived. They appear to be seated figures, facing forwards, and there is a suggestion that the figure nearest to the dead has his hands veiled in drapery in an ancient fashion signifying the reverential handling of sacred objects. This is not typical of the usual treatment of the subject where the three corpses warn three kings of the inevitability of death and subsequent Judgement, urging the living to repent with an ominous reminder that nothing can prevent the inevitable, which is rather confusing. There are some faint details below the two parallel horizontal lines at the bottom of the scene which probably represent other wall paintings of a different scene. Due to the fragmented state of the painting it is impossible to be sure and there may have been much more of the subject further to the right.
This is evidence of Wensley’s communicating the message of the painting to the ordinary parishioners, and also connecting the whole community in its expression of piety, fear and judgement. This wall painting dates to the early 14th century and it is probable that the patron of the painting was a member of the Scrope family of Bolton Castle, who had acquired the land and church of Wensley by this time.

**The legend of St. Eloi**

This wall painting is probably that of St. Eloi or Saint Eligius also Eloy or Loye. Some sources identified this painting as Jacob and Esau, but this seems unlikely. Eloi was bishop of Noyon in France in the first half of the 7th century and was a famous goldsmith and metal worker. The best known legend associated to him concerns his shoeing of a horse that was quite uncontrollable. He thought that it was possessed by the Devil. Eloi solved the problem by cutting off the horse’s foreleg and, while the horse stood on the remaining three legs and watched, he reshoed the hoof on the amputated leg, before miraculously restoring the leg to the horse with the new shoe in place.

Although this wall painting is damaged in places it clearly illustrates a huntsman at the top of the picture with a bow over his left shoulder with three arrows attached to his belt around the waist. He appears to be leading his horse by the reins that is wide-eyed and grinning malevolently. The huntsman is taking the horse to Eloi for shoeing, all previous attempts to do so having failed. Below is a figure wearing what seem to be clerical vestments and perhaps with a tonsure. This scene seems to illustrate the legend of Eloi who is wields a hammer probably in his smithy ready to deal with the demonic horse. It is most unfortunate that the wall painting is damaged and parts missing where there have been other details in the background, at the top, to the right and especially to the lower right, it is impossible to say what they are now.

This wall painting depicting the legend of St. Eloi is a very rare subject for an English church.

**Medieval Paintings on the Pillars**

The pillars in both the north-east and south-east of the nave have traces of painting from the first half of the 14th century. The figures depicted on the north-east pillar are unclear but may represent the downfall of Satan and include Adam, Eve and Archangel Michael. On the south-east pillar can be seen one of the consecration crosses of the church and below this may be the figure of the Archangel Gabriel.

*Left: The north-east pillars with traces of 14th century painting. On the wall in the background can be seen what remains of The Three Living and The Three Dead wall painting. To the right behind the pillar is the elaborately carved Bolton family pew.*
Anglo-Saxon Stone Carvings and a Burial at Holy Trinity Church, Wensley, North Yorkshire

By Jeremy Clark

At the Holy Trinity Church in Wensley are a series of pre-Norman stone carvings that probably date from the 8th, 9th and 10th centuries. Although there is no record of an early church the discovery of these carved stones indicate that Wensley was an important centre at this time. These carved stones have been found in the walls of the church during repair work or discovered buried in the churchyard. Most of them are fragments that belong to free-armed crosses decorated in relief, they can be seen inside the church, and some are built into the interior and exterior walls.

Apart from these free-armed crosses there are two carved grave stone slabs that have inscriptions on them which are now built into the interior north wall of the north aisle. The inscriptions displayed on these grave slabs are male names which have been set out in elegant capital letters which would not look out of place in script of a manuscript of the 8th or 9th century. The lettering on these decorated slabs is also cut in relief and both crosses are similar in style and size. They are carved on one face so it is likely that they may have been coffin-lids to fit a grave or fixed vertically to a wall within a building to mark the place where a burial was made.

What is also interesting is that a 9th or early 10th century decorated sword was found with a burial in the churchyard. However, there is no record of this grave being covered over by a decorated stone slab with an inscription like the ones in the church.

Two Decorated Grave Stone Cross Slabs

The decorated grave stone cross slab on the right was the first to be found at Wensley. It was dug up in the churchyard some time before 1789 but no record was made of a burial associated with the slab.

Only one face is visible and the stone slab is cracked in two. The four expanded arms of the cross fit inside a finely carved border. In the spaces between the upper arms of the cross in each corner is carved a bird, each is a mirror image of the other. The birds have slender legs, lobed feet, wedge-shaped tails and long pointed wings which slant diagonally upwards. The necks are long and the head is laid along the back. Below each of the cross arms is what appears to be an animal with elongated body and pear-shaped thighs. The head is thrown back with a square jaw, part of this on the left-hand side is broken away. The tail is looped in a distinctive Stafford knot with a spiral form on the tip. One foreleg and one hindleg are crossed. Below the cross is a horizontal panel within a narrow frame interlocked with the edge of the cross-shaft. At the centre of the cross is a square socket-hole to hold a jewel, a gem or a glass bead.
The Inscription

Set within a panel with a slightly raised border is the inscription of probably seven letters in a single line. The letters are about 5 cm high carved in low relief. The surface of the stone is badly worn away at either end of the text. The inscription which is in decorative capitals, can be transcribed as [D]ON[FR . .] The first five letters are legible. Following them there are slight traces of two verticals letters. These are compatible with the final ID letters shown in early illustrations, (see drawing on page 30 by the Rev. D. Haigh, 1845 when the grave stone cross slab was in the vestry) which appear to have been made before the damage to either end of the inscription. The text can then be reconstructed with reasonable certainty as DONFR[ID] and it is likely to be a variant spelling of the recorded masculine name Domfríð. Although it is not entirely certain that this grave stone cross slab was originally placed over Domfríð’s grave, it does seem reasonable to assume that it was.

The decorated grave stone cross slab on the left represents the upper part of a much larger slab. It is adjacent to the above grave stone cross slab and was shown to the Rev. D. Haigh in May 1846 in the path of the church-yard being used as a flag-stone, but with the carved decoration turned over facing downwards. Haigh was refused permission to lift it but it was subsequently removed to the vestry and by 1904 was reset in the nave wall.

Haigh suspected the existence of a series of grave-stones like this one in the same flag-stone path but could not obtain permission to lift them up.

Only one face in visible, broken at the top and bottom. It is bordered on each side with narrow triple incised lines. The carved cross within the border is in low relief and has expanded arms with wide curved armpits supported on an uninterrupted cross-shaft.

The Inscription

An inscription carved in relief has been arranged symmetrically in four spaces around the cross. All the lettering on this decorated grave cross slab is much worn and it is not easy to distinguish. The letters are short about 4 cm in height with the inscription in decorative capitals. Between the upper arms of the cross can be transcribed [EAT] [BER] and below the letters are [EH] [CT]. The text consists of a form of common Old English of a personal name belonging to a EATBEREH[C]T. It seem very likely that this grave stone cross slab was originally placed over Eatberehht’s grave.

These two decorated grave stone cross slabs share the rare feature of an inscription cut in relief but there are some differences, particularly in the layout and treatment. Both inscriptions consist of a single name but the inscription of EATBEREH[C]T is more usual with the arrangement of the text in the spaces around the cross. The difference in treatment between the narrow lettering of DONFR[ID] and the broad and more spaciously laid-out lettering of EATBEREH[C]T are appropriate to the different fields that they occupy. They seem however to be a matter of stylistic preference and suggest that different designers were responsible for the forms of the lettering on the two stones. The decorative capitals in relief can probably be dated to sometime in the second half of the 8th or early 9th century.
Burial in Wensley Churchyard

On 20th November 1915 the burial of a man accompanied by an iron sword with a silver-mounted hilt and decorated pommel was found during the digging of a grave in Wensley churchyard. The sword was placed on the man’s right side, other grave goods including an iron knife, an iron spearhead and sickle blade, were placed on the man’s left side. These grave goods indicate that he was probably a farmer. It is also interesting to note that it was further reported by Lord Bolton that the sexton who dug the grave discovered heavy foundation stones that were roughly dressed and set in mortar. These foundations were not investigated at the time and could represent an earlier church built on the site but only an archaeological excavation will determine this.

The iron two-edged sword has a silver-mounted hilt and pommel. The blade is much corroded and the tip is missing. Below the pommel is a silver band with incised decoration but it is much worn. Each face of this band is divided up into four panels, of lozenge-shapes and triangles.

In shape the pommel is trilobate above the curved silver band and damaged on one side. It is decorated with incised linear lines in the form of lozenge-shapes and triangles. The length of the sword is 81.3 cm.

Right: Drawing of the Sword found with a burial of a man in the Wensley churchyard

The associated finds include a fragmentary and much corroded iron spear-head with its socket pierced by four bronze rivets. A portion of the wooden shaft survives in the socket. An iron fragment of the blade of a sickle which is curved and much corroded. An Iron knife, the blade and tang are triangular and the edge of the blade towards the tip is curved.

In 1964 the sword and its associated objects were cleaned and treated in the Research Laboratory of the British Museum. Then the sword was purchased in July 1965 at Christie’s by the British Museum, from the collection of Lord Bolton.

This iron two-edged sword is of Anglo-Saxon style of the 9th or early 10th century, but the burial is obviously that of a pagan who wanted to take his tools and weapons with him to Valhalla as a mark of his status. The first Anglo-Scandinavian settlers were not immediately converted to Christianity and in the case of the Wensley burial were using an existing Anglo-Saxon Christian graveyard for burial.

The sword and other finds are now in the British Museum.
In addition to this burial two other Anglian objects have also been found in the Wensley Churchyard, they are a bronze pin and a bronze stylus. The exact find spot of the bronze pin is not recorded, it is 6.8 cm long, with square sectioned stem, and flat head plate with two perforations. The bronze stylus was found when digging a grave in Wensley Churchyard but the year is not recorded. It has a round stem with moulding at each end and a conical tip. The head is a flat triangular plate with an edge for smoothing out the wax of a writing tablet. These two objects are in Bolton Castle.

Above left: Bronze Pin. Right: Bronze Stylus

Right and Below: Views of Holy Trinity Church, Wensley from the churchyard
To Walk Invisible

A BBC drama production broadcasted on BBC1 on Thursday 29th December 2016 written by Sally Wainwright, it tells the story of the Brontë sisters' rise to literary fame and publication against all odds. Starring Jonathan Pryce (the Reverend Patrick Brontë), Finn Atkins (Charlotte Brontë), Chloe Pirrie (Emily Brontë), Charlie Murphy (Anne Brontë), and Adam Nagaitis (Branwell Brontë).

By Margaret Mills

For lovers of the literary Brontë sisters and their novels, this television production was a post-Christmas treat. Written and directed by Sally Wainwright, (“Last Tango in Halifax”, “Happy Valley”), the title of the drama was taken from a letter written by Charlotte Brontë to her London publisher, George Smith, in which she comments about the price of fame: “What author would be without the advantage of being able to walk invisible?”

Filmed mostly in Yorkshire (although it was not possible to film scenes in the Brontë Parsonage Museum in Haworth, former home of the Brontës), the plot centred on incidents from the extraordinary lives of the 3 Brontë sisters, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, and their troubled only brother, Branwell. Most of the action took place during the mid to late 1840s, the period that would make the sisters famous for the publication of their powerful and unconventional novels, but a time of joy tempered by sadness due to the continuing deterioration in health of their gifted but psychologically unstable brother, Branwell, and his ultimate death, probably as a direct result of increasing dependence on drink and drugs.

The opening scene of this production took us back to the childhood of the 4 precocious Brontë children. This was achieved by means of a dream-like sequence, showing the children seizing on Branwell’s toy wooden soldiers to illustrate and stimulate their genius for literary output and as a precursor of their future creation of such timeless characters as Heathcliff, Jane Eyre and Mr Rochester - characters that would make the sisters loved and revered the world over. The drama continued to unfold by showing us how the sisters turned the constraints of both their own home life and the role that 19th century society had prescribed for women, to create books that arguably outshone nearly every other 19th century British novel. The bitterness and anger of the scene where Branwell is confronted by his father and sisters, following the discovery of his affair with the wife of his wealthy employer, Edmund Robinson, (who employed both Branwell as a live-in tutor and Anne as a governess to his young family), amply illustrated the family dynamic. It showed how the life of the Parsonage effectively revolved around the sibling for whom the family had such great hopes, but who had repaid their love and pride by dismissal, disgrace and a great capacity for self-destruction. All the more remarkable, then, that 3 motherless young women, not rich and living restricted social lives as daughters of a clergyman in a small Yorkshire parsonage, hampered by a gifted but psychologically troubled brother with a great capacity for self-destruction, were able to produce masterpieces of literature.

Right: The anger scene where Branwell is confronted by his father and sisters, following the discovery of his affair with the wife of his wealthy employer, Edmund Robinson.
Branwell’s illicit relationship, which has destroyed both his own teaching career and that of his youngest sister, Anne, is just the latest in a series of failed endeavours. Wainwright’s standpoint is that Branwell’s loss of respectability and selfish behaviour have implications not only for him, but for his sisters, who have to somehow combine picking up the pieces from the fallout of his actions with attempting to make their own way in life by writing. Wainwright shows often overlooked facets of the Brontë story – how these young women achieved greatness against all expectations and in spite of having to overcome enormous barriers in a world where breaking into the world of literature was especially hard - if not almost impossible - for women. Through the dialogue of Emily, Wainwright also considers whether the high expectations of his family might have been at least partly responsible for Branwell’s ultimate self-destruction.

When word eventually comes that Branwell’s late employer, Mr Robinson, has died and his widow, Lydia, is now free to re-marry, it is a foregone conclusion to everybody except Branwell that she would never seriously consider marrying a penniless ex-tutor. Charlotte, struggling against her own love for a married man she had met when furthering her education in Brussels, is particularly incensed by the lack of self-control shown by her brother, and his naivety in assuming that his passionate affair was anything other than a temporary, amusing dalliance to a rich woman.

Coping with the aftermath of family shock and embarrassment, and showing incredible self-reliance and refusal to be crushed by failures, the 3 sisters brave their first venture into print – a volume of their combined poems. Around them, their aged father is forced to treat his hysterical son as a child and move him into his own bedroom to prevent him from harming himself, while being forced to watch as his son increasingly retreats into alcohol and drugs in a bid to forget his now defunct love affair. In spite of family turmoil and undaunted by the fact that their published volume of poems have turned into a loss-making venture, the sisters’ persevere, and their novels Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights and Agnes Grey go on to become successful and bring the sisters to the attention of the novel-reading public and literary critics. The subsequent death of Branwell is perhaps his final act of selfishness, a bitter blow that casts a long shadow over what should have been a time of triumph for the whole family. The programme undoubtedly succeeds in conveying how the sisters overcame almost impossible odds by channelling their frustration, unrequited love and unhappiness into what would become classic literature.

Left: Branwell Brontë played by Adam Nagaitis

Particular mention should be made of excellent performances by Adam Nagaitis, who effortlessly conveyed the selfishness and weakness of Branwell, whilst managing to still retain our sympathy, and that of Chloe Pirrie as Emily, who perfectly captures Emily’s taciturn, introverted personality, but also shows her tolerant acceptance of her brother’s weaknesses and failings.

Right: Emily Brontë played by Chloe Pirrie
Two scenes in particular were worthy of note: the first is the scene where Emily turns back to offer a helping hand to her drunken and stumbling, shabbily-dressed brother who is attempting to walk home, while her 2 smartly-dressed sisters walk by him with their eyes averted. This scene was beautifully done, and captured the continuing disintegration of the family’s formerly close relationship and the disgust that Charlotte and Anne feel for the brother who was once their idolised ‘golden boy’ sibling.

The second is the portrayal of Emily waiting in the darkness outside the Parsonage for her brother to return from one of his late-night carousals. When Branwell finally appears, the worse for wear, the brother and sister giggle together as they mimic the sound of howling dogs, and in this one brief moment of childish behaviour we catch a glimpse of their former childhood, when things were so much simpler and happier, when brother and sisters were a tight unit, able to laugh and have fun in each other’s company.

A few criticisms: the use of the F word added nothing to the production, was incongruous used in that particular setting and was, seemingly, another example of an author trying to be ‘cutting edge’ without any particular reason for doing so. We were also shown Charlotte effectively burgling Emily’s bedroom, in her search for her sister’s private poems. In the interests of realism, I think the accepted story – that Charlotte happened on these, as Emily had accidentally left them in plain sight – is far more likely. The sisters valued their own individual powers of creation too much to deliberately violate one another’s privacy. Finally, the sound quality of the production was poor, and this should have been rectified before transmission of what was otherwise an excellent production.

Below: Reverend Patrick Brontë was played by Jonathan Pryce

Above: The three Brontë sisters, left Emily Brontë played by Chloe Pirrie, Anne Brontë played by Charlie Murphy and Charlotte Brontë played by Finn Atkins
Film Locations
By Brian Wade

The drama production ‘To Walk Invisible’ was filming during the months of May and June on the famous cobbled Main Street of Haworth. The shops were converted back to the 19th century with large display windows and goods reflecting that period. The production team also had to re-create a full-sized replica of the Brontë Parsonage and its surrounding in order for it to look the same way it did when the Brontës lived there. The purpose built set was on Penistone Hill above Haworth.

The rear of Shibden Hall, Halifax was the location for the Devonshire Arms used as a coaching inn and Micklegate in York was disguised as Cornhill in London where Charlotte and Anne went to see George Smith.

In the above two aerial views the construction of the Haworth Parsonage is underway without the added gable wing. The church school house with the Sexton’s house next to it are also under construction. St Michael & All Angels church and the graveyard with gravestones will be next to be created.
Above shows the set almost complete with the re-created Haworth Parsonage and graveyard with gravestones. To the right is the church school house and next to it the Sexton’s house.

Left is a closer view of the complete Haworth Parsonage as it would have looked when the Brontës lived there. The moor was also closer to the Haworth Parsonage than it is today.

Right is a view from the bottom of the reconstructed Haworth Parsonage garden looking across towards the church school house with the Sexton’s house built next to it.
Two of the shop fronts re-created in Main Street that were there in the Brontë sisters’ time

Left and below is behind Shibden Hall, Halifax which was used for the Devonshire Arms as a coaching inn

Above Branwell has just arrived from London and right is a stagecoach arriving during filming.

Micklegate in York was disguised as Cornhill in London where Charlotte and Anne went to see George Smith. To the left is the front window of the premises, displaying many books. Charlotte and Anne can be seen about to enter the shop. Below is Micklegate during filming with a crowd of onlookers.
The shops in Main Street, Haworth were converted back to the 19th century for the BBC drama production ‘To Walk Invisible’.

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