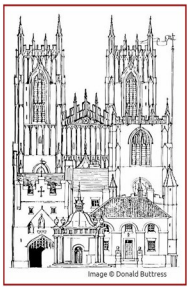


Newsletter:

April 2024

http://www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk/

BEVERLEY CIVIC SOCIETY
Founded 1961

Chairman's Remarks

An amazing recent sunset over Westwood on a night when the Aurora Borealis was observed much further south than normal…a co-incidence?

The first Sunday after the full moon following the Spring equinox defines Easter which is very early this year; but hopefully it will be followed by the arrival of Spring.

Photos courtesy Dick Lidwell

Our public talks programme continues to flourish, with the talk on Beverley's Canadian emigrants attracting 81 participants, including many guests. A fascinating talk illustrating the desire of peoples throughout the ages, right up to the present day, to migrate in order to find better lives for themselves and their families. Our penultimate talk of the season, on 11th April, explores another intriguing topic: come to find out from two university speakers who are researching what happened in Beverley during the Peasants Revolt of 1381. Be prepared to be surprised!

Dick Lidwell

Beverley and East Yorkshire in the 1381 Peasants' Revolt

Beverley and East Yorkshire took part in the Peasants' Revolt. Surely not! We saw pictures of rebels from Kent and Essex following Wat Tyler in our school history books.

New research revealed that in summer 1381 disturbances were widespread over half of England. The serious incidents in Beverley, York and Scarborough were the most northerly. Riots were more numerous in Beverley than in many towns, with the lesser craftsmen attacking the rich merchants, and those in the cloth trade objecting to sharply increased taxes.

Our talk on Thursday 11th April is jointly organized by the Beverley Civic Society and Hull and East Riding Historical Association to introduce the largest British historical research project ever. Relatively new methods - using computers to survey thousands of historical records, and digitalization to help historians identify previously undetected connections and causes - are leading us to understand how varied were people's lives in the 14th century. Search www.1381.online to see the wide ranging record of people's employment and lives, together with a database of records for each place.

Professor Andrew Prescott, from Glasgow University, and Dr. Helen Killick, one of two full time researchers for the 1381 team, will explain why detailed combing through legal records has produced amazing evidence of people's skills, trades and ways of communicating, which may explain the apparently spontaneous protests and riots across England.

Beverley was known by the late 14th century for serious disputes between the Archbishop of York and the Minster clergy. The numerous acrimonious petitions and the three days of rioting, looting and murder in the narrow streets must have been frightening. Re-examining archives has shown how strongly people objected to increasing taxation. With further knowledge about England in 1381 and the chance to research our archives we will come to a better understanding of how significant East Yorkshire was in this revolt.

Do join us on the 11th April for some surprises about our history!

Beverley Civic Society Event

A talk from Prof. Andrew Prescott
&
Dr. Helen Killick

on why Beverley residents took such an active part in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

7.30pm, Thursday 11 April 2024
St Mary's Church, Beverley

Non-members are welcome £5

Planning Matters

Beverley Park and Ride:
It appears from the YouTube recording of the ERYC Cabinet meeting on 19th March that the plans for the Park and Ride have been suspended in the light of changing needs for parking spaces since Covid, and the subsequent changes in working patterns. The existing town parking spaces, together with the Flemingate multistorey car park (which opened after the original proposal for the P&R was made; yes that long ago!), appear from surveys to meet the current demand for parking in Beverley. Of course many people hope to park as close as possible to where they wish to go, so may be reluctant users. But the outlying car parks appear to always have some capacity. Any alternative use for the designated P&R site will be under review after consultation with the developers, who are the funders under a 106 agreement. So watch this space!

Broadband Poles:
A major and on-going issue. As reported earlier, the Society has attended meetings with Graham Stuart MP, our Vice President, BTC and other councillors, and have requested that Civic Voice take up the issue through their contacts at Whitehall. It is increasingly apparent that this is a nationwide Issue which can only be dealt with by amendment to the Act of Parliament. As you may be aware, some of our local MPs are vigorously pursuing this issue in Parliament.

Some updates on planning applications/developments:
Plans have been submitted to establish a farm shop and café, together with seven holiday apartments at Killingwoldgraves Farm (ref: 24/00393/PLB). That rural area is in the process of major environmental change with the existing filling station and associated facilities, the erection of a fast food outlet, another filling station, some employment units, and a distribution centre; with the overall effect of urbanisation.

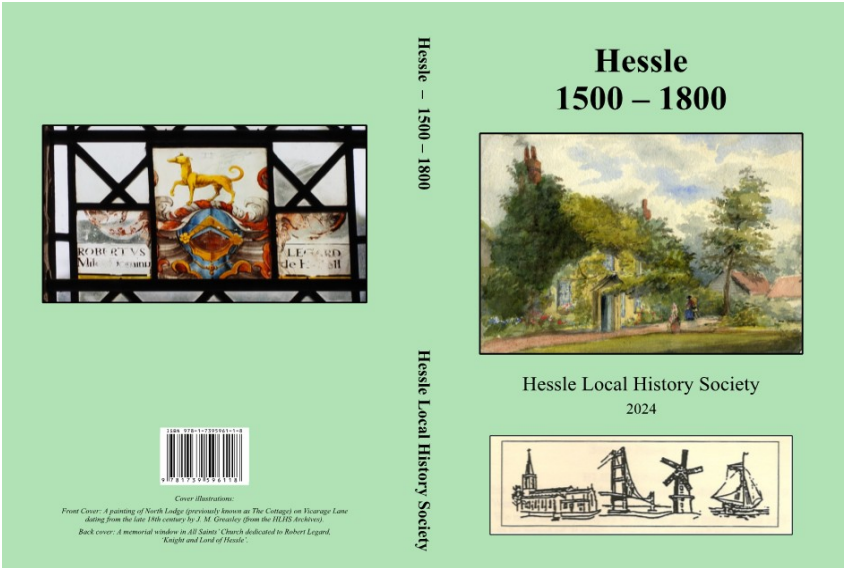
The developer of rejected plans for two new dwellings in Grosvenor Place has appealed that decision, which will be dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate through written representation (ref: 23/02692/PLF).

Lord Roberts Road (22/03203/PLF); at the time of writing there is no further news to report on the progress of this highly important town centre site application.

Dick Lidwell

Hessle Local History Society

The volume Hessle 1500-1800 is now available for sale at £7-99 at Hessle Bookshop, 23-25 Northgate, Hessle, Tel. 01482 641835. Alternatively, you can contact Ian Wilkinson on 07549 027967 or at Wilkinson.i1961@yahoo.co.uk who can organise delivery/postage following a BACS or cheque payment.



Trees for Minster Avenue

The Society has liaised with ERYC Forestry Department to plant trees in Minster Avenue in memory of our much loved Exec. Member, Eva la Pensée who lived here for 40 years and died in June 2023. We were guided by Clive, Eva's husband as to which trees to plant, and decided on sorbus, hornbeam and holly which will attract the birds and insects which Eva so enjoyed seeing. There will soon be a plaque erected to commemorate Eva's contribution to Beverley Civic Society.

Dick Lidwell with Clive la Pensée - *Rosie Ryan*

Tree for Minster Avenue - *Rosie Ryan*

Molescroft Wildlife Network

Members may be interested in finding out more about the Molescroft Wildlife network which is committed to encouraging biodiversity and the protection and renewal of nature within the parish. Amongst other projects, it is working on a management plan for the beautiful, and sometimes forgotten, St Mary's Graveyard on Molescroft Road, also known as New Walk Cemetery.

Photo - *Dick Lidwell*

The cemetery includes a number of Commonwealth War Graves from the First and Second World Wars. Also buried there are Fred and Mary Elwell.

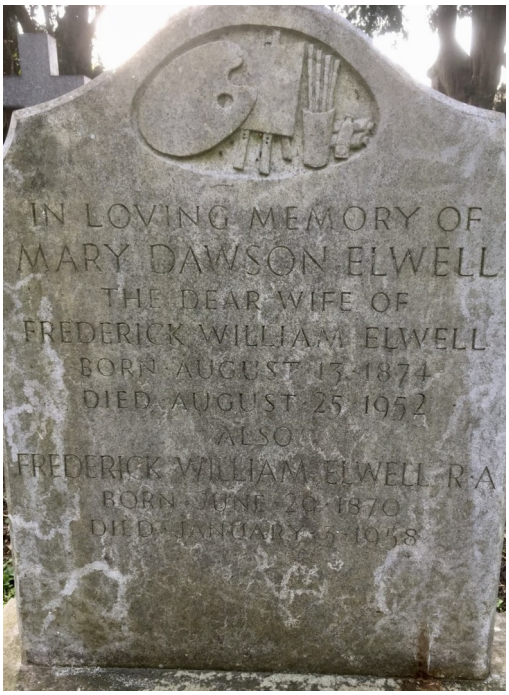


Photo - *Dick Lidwell*

Beverley Emigrants of 1906

On Thursday 14th March, members of the Society enjoyed a fascinating talk on the Beverley Emigrants of 1906. This was provided by Jane Bowen, whose interest was sparked on seeing a photograph of the emigrants on their way to Canada.

The emigration was a civic scheme, possibly related to a period of depression and unemployment in England in 1905-6. The rise of mechanisation on farms and in factories, coupled with the demobilisation of soldiers following the end of the Boer War, led to a Government Conference in 1903 to discuss the issue. In fact, no-one from the Beverley area attended the conference and in his Christmas letter in 1905 the vicar of St Mary's suggested that unemployment was not an acute local difficulty. Nonetheless in February of 1906 the scheme was launched and over 100 men attended the initial meeting. The requirements were that the men were young, single, unemployed, morally and physically fit and could repay the loan they would receive. They also had to undertake a month of training at a Church Farm, the idea being that they would, after 2 years in Canada, obtain a Homestead from a Canadian Government scheme.

Few records survive of the organisation and the process by which the emigrants were selected but it was clear that both the clergy of the Minster and St Mary's were involved, as well as the mayor and his wife (who set up a sewing group to equip the emigrants) and the Church Army. They planned to raise £500 to send out 100 men, but by April 1906 they had decided to send out 50 men on 10th April. This speedy action was probably the result of passages being available on the *SS Lake Erie* on that date. Given the date it is highly unlikely the men had completed the desired time at the Church Farm, several were married and a number 'morally unsuitable' so the initial plan had already gone awry.

Reasons for going varied. Some were members of large families; others had no parents. Either way it was hard for their families to support them. A dozen were ex-Army members and others may simply have wanted a big adventure. Whatever their reasons, on 5th April they were given a New Testament, a clothing kit and a tea in the Minster rooms followed by a church service and a torch lit procession to the market place. The civic nature of the event was underscored by an address from the mayor on 9th April before they were seen off to Liverpool from a packed station. At 4.30 pm on 10th April they set sail for St John, New Brunswick. A comfortable and calm voyage with plenty to eat was followed by arrival on 21st April.

They then boarded a special emigrant train to Toronto, with wood burning stoves and seats and luggage racks which converted into bunks for the long journey. Having arrived 30 hours late it was to find that no-one was there to meet them and the Canadian authorities hastily assigned the men to various farmers and trades.

Of the 50 men who left Beverley, it appeared one man had never got on the boat and another got off the train on the way to Toronto. Sixteen disappeared from records altogether, but others went to local farms, foundries and factories. In the end only two, Percy Gray and Ernest Kelsey, became Homesteaders as was originally planned.

But the emigrants led varied and interesting lives following their arrival in Canada. Eleven eventually returned to the UK, possibly as a result of isolation, the hard work or pressure from their families. A number married East Yorkshire girls who may have decided that a life in Canada was not for them. Eleven joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915 to fight in WWI, one of whom, Thomas Feirn, was killed. A few, including Ben Reynolds and George Woodthorpe, joined family members in the US. John Holliday eventually became the Captain of an Ottawa Fire Station and was joined in Canada by his sister Hilda. Another, George Hardy, went to British Columbia and formed the Teamsters Union. So many made a new life for themselves, if not in the way that the original scheme had planned.

Of Interest to our Members - Conference at Hull History Centre

Members of Beverley Civic Society may be interested in a conference to be held at Hull History Centre on **Saturday 15th June 2024**, organised by the Georgian Society for East Yorkshire and the Friends of Kant and Königsberg (based in Berlin). It is being held to commemorate the tercentenary of the birth of Immanuel Kant, the most important German philosopher, and his surprising close friendship with two Hull-born merchants. Note that one of the speakers at the conference is the author Max Egremont (Lord Leconfield and Egremont).

There is also a Beverley link with one of the Hull merchants and Königsberg:
George Motherby (1731-93), physician, who was buried at Beverley Minster on 21 July 1793, was the brother of Robert Motherby, close friend of Immanuel Kant and one of those named on the drinking glass that commemorated a gathering at Kant's house in Königsberg in 1763. George Motherby, born in Hull, was apprenticed to an apothecary there in 1745, and was working as a surgeon at Liverpool in 1766. He graduated in medicine from Aberdeen University in 1767 and soon afterwards settled at Königsberg (Kaliningrad), Prussia, presumably encouraged by his brother Robert, who was already settled there as assistant, or business partner, of Joseph Green.

George Motherby, who must have become part of Kant's circle, is said to have won great renown at Königsberg where he introduced vaccination against smallpox. It is claimed that he was also 'a physician of eminence in the court of Prussia', but it was Motherby's authorship of the *New Medical Dictionary* in 1775 that has gained him an entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Motherby's medical dictionary, which went through four editions, evidently includes the first definition of 'placebo', is said to be well-regarded and to have been up-to-date, incorporating the findings of contemporary medical writings, and can be seen as 're-organizing and prioritizing medical knowledge for his own generation'. (*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography)*.

Motherby was living at Highgate, London, in the 1780s, and it is not known when he moved to Beverley, although he was here in 1791, and was possibly, if misnamed, the William Motherby living on Highgate, Beverley in 1792. He died the next year, and his widow Christiana was buried at Beverley Minster on 17 June 1807. George's nephew William was also a celebrated physician at Königsberg, and the founder of the Friends of Kant in 1810.

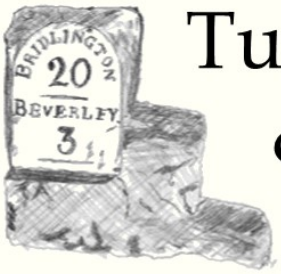
heritage open days

Date for your Diary - Heritage Open Days - 2024

Don't forget to make a note of the dates for this year's Heritage Open Days, Friday 6th to Sunday 15th September.

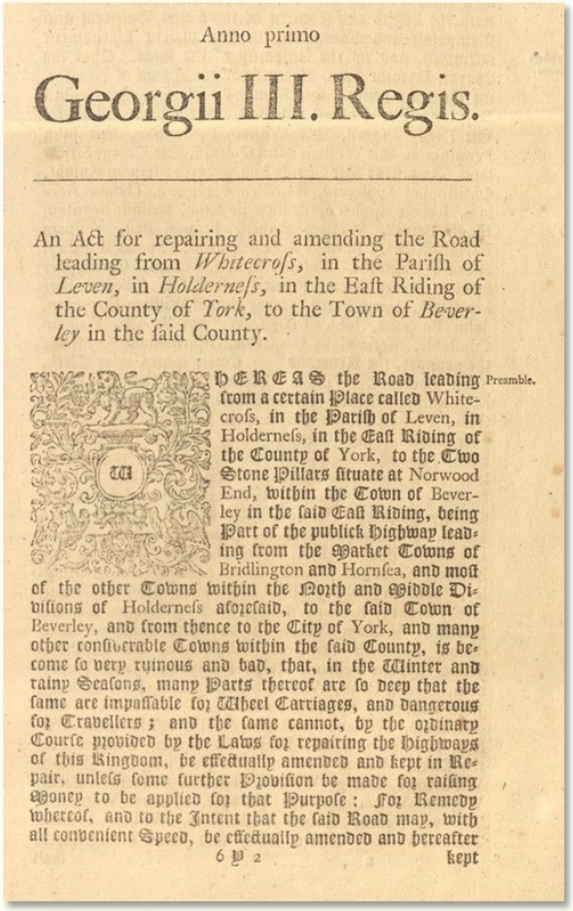
This year's theme is 'Connections, Routes and Networks'.

Details to follow but meanwhile consider acting as a steward for half a day in one of the amazing places that will be on show.



Turnpike & Tollhouse

The word road comes from the Old English ride, as on horseback. This reflects a distant past where rich people travelled by horse, and the poor on foot: goods could be moved by sea and river, and overland by packhorse. In later centuries people wanted to transport both themselves and their stuff by carriages, coaches, waggons or carts. But the roads, of earth patched with gravel, made that difficult because they were so poorly maintained by the forced labour of the local parish. By 1700 there was a movement to make the road users pay for mending roads, rather than the parishioners. A system of toll roads was introduced, that our ancestors called 'turnpikes', roads closed by gates (perhaps once made of military pikes) where tolls had to be paid before travelling on. America still has toll roads with names such as The New Jersey Turnpike and The Pittsburgh Pike.



Anno primo

Georgii III. Regis.

An Act for repairing and amending the Road leading from *Whitecroſs*, in the Pariſh of *Leven*, in *Holderneſs*, in the Eaſt Riding of the County of *York*, to the Town of *Beverley* in the ſaid County.

WHEREAS the Road leading from a certain Place called Whitecroſs, in the Pariſh of Leven, in Holderneſs, in the Eaſt Riding of the County of York, to the Two Stone Pillars ſituate at Norwood End, within the Town of Beverley in the ſaid Eaſt Riding, being Part of the publick Highway leading from the Market Towns of Bridlington and Hornſea, and moſt of the other Towns within the North and Middle Diviſions of Holderneſs aforeſaid, to the ſaid Town of Beverley, and from thence to the City of York, and many other conſiderable Towns within the ſaid County, is become ſo very ruinous and bad, that, in the Winter and rainy Seaſons, many Parts thereof are ſo deep that the ſame are impaſſable for Wheel Carriages, and dangerous for Travellers; and the ſame cannot, by the ordinary Courſe provided by the Laws for repairing the Highways of this Kingdom, be effectually amended and kept in Repair, unleſs ſome further Proviſion be made for raiſing Money to be applied for that Purpoſe: For Remedy whereof, and to the Intent that the ſaid Road may, with all convenient Speed, be effectually amended and hereafter kept

Preamble.

6 P 2

East Riding Archives

Converting a road into a turnpike in Georgian England required an Act of Parliament (renewed from time to time), investors, a board of trustees, agreed charges, tollbooths, and toll collectors. The illustration, right, shows the first page of the original 1761 Act of Parliament authorising the unusually short turnpike from White Cross near Leven to Beverley, a road which we probably all know, beginning at the white stone cross S of the present Leven roundabout, passing one tollhouse at Routh, another 200 yards W of Hull Bridge, and ending at the 'Two Stone Pillars' at the east end of Norwood six miles further on.

The first road turnpiked in the East Riding was Beverley to Hull in 1744, followed by Beverley to White Cross, then Beverley to Kexby Bridge; Beverley to Bainton Balk by way of Molescroft, Leconfield, Beswick and Kendale House; and Beverley via Skidby to Hessle Ferry. These joined other turnpikes for York, Malton, Bridlington, Scarborough and so on, until all the main roads around Beverley were turnpiked. When canals and railways made the turnpikes no longer economically viable, they were freed of tolls, the last surviving Beverley turnpike to Bainton Balk being 'disturnpiked' in 1881. After some years of disagreement over who would manage them, in 1888 'main' roads became the responsibility of county councils.

The white cross marked the end of the turnpike from Beverley to Leven *A. Bulman*

All the turnpikes had tollbooths or tollhouses, with no standard design. Regrettably not one of the former 50 tollhouses in the East Riding has survived, although there are pictures of some. The attractive c.1800 White Cross Cottage (pictured left with the Cross) is not a tollhouse, contrary to Historic England's listing.

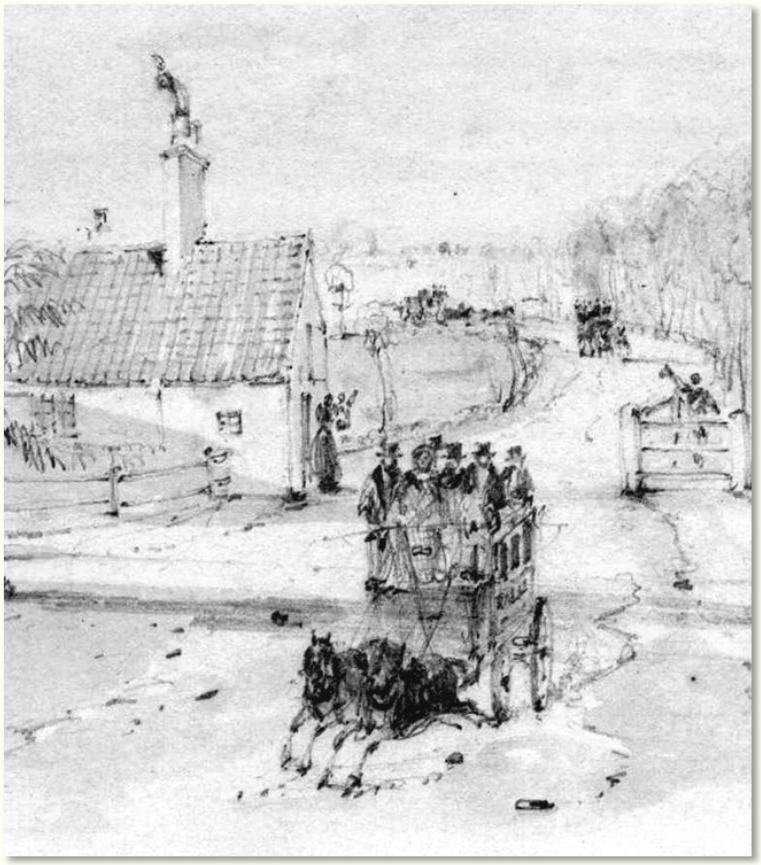
The 'tollhouse' in Northgate Cottingham, on a western link to the main Beverley to Hull turnpike, was demolished in 1982 and rebuilt on a much larger scale.

The Beverley to Hull turnpike, a causeway over flooding land, began at the Golden Fleece at Beckside, and had toll bars at Woodmansey and Newland. The ancient Golden Fleece, later the Fleece, no longer exists but was on the corner where Beckside leaves the Hull Road. Woodmansey tollhouse was drawn by Charles Warren Clennell in the 1830s and its rebuilt successor Toll Bar Cottage stands on the corner of Ferry Lane, facing the S end of Long Lane.

The location of the Woodmansey tollhouse shows that these toll bars were not necessarily built at the start or end of the turnpike: at this junction Woodmansey could collect tolls from people using the main road, or Long Lane, or those coming from Wawne ferry along Ferry Lane.

The turnpike towards Kexby and York began close to North Bar with the first tollbooth (demolished in 1885) at Killingwoldgraves, east of Bishop Burton, near the present roundabout. The neatherd's York Road gatehouse is not a tollhouse, although it may look like one.

The Beverley to Hessle Ferry turnpike started in Beverley, near Butt Lane, and had two tollbooths before the Ferry.



Woodmansey toll bar by C. W. Clennell
Beverley Art Gallery

The Molescroft-Bainton turnpike began at 'Willows Pump' [unidentified], at the N end of North Bar Without, with a tollhouse on the NE corner of Gallows Lane, later moved north nearer the Molescroft Inn as people tried to avoid the toll by using using Pighill Lane and Woodhall Way. A private owner has kindly allowed us to reproduce a watercolour of the Gallows Lane tollhouse, alongside Clennell's pencil drawing of the N side of the same building. This pair show field and foot gates, a woman toll collector, a board of toll rates, a lantern and a bell.

The old toll bar at the end of New Walk by C. W. Clennell
Beverley Art Gallery

Unknown artist, Molescroft tollhouse at Gallows Lane, 1830s
© *Private collector*

Toll rates varied according to vehicle and from year to year. In 1744 the Beverley to Hull turnpike charged a coach or waggon according to the number of horses used, 6d for one horse rising to 1s 6d for six horses. Single horses not pulling anything, cattle, calves, sheep, pigs etc. were much cheaper, for instance the pig toll was 5d for 20 pigs.

Pedestrians, soldiers, voters, Sunday churchgoers, funerals went free, as did Mail coaches, some farmers and the road menders. The turnpike income was used to maintain the road and pay expenses.

From 1767 milestones were compulsory on all turnpike roads, although milestones along the roads were much older than the turnpikes (they were introduced into Britain by the Romans). The East Riding has 51 remarkable milestones that could also be used as mounting blocks, stones cut with two or three steps so that those on horseback or stagecoach postillions who might have to climb down to read the distance could easily remount. Many of our milestones are older than the metal plates still fixed to some (many stones have been lost to roadworks, and many metal plates stolen: the York Road plate was stolen in the late 20th century). In WW2 directional signs had to be removed in case they helped invading Germans: a milestone at Brough was duly buried and then lost, until archaeologists retrieved it for restoration.

Brough milestone, Saltgrounds Road. It reads
YORK 30
LINCOLN 35
MILES
Photo A. Bulman

The East Riding still has about 112 milestones, of which 17 are Grade II listed structures (see Historic England's online site). These are a visible memory of past centuries when our roads were turnpiked so that the users paid for their maintenance: perhaps not a bad idea?

There are many books on turnpikes and milestones, and websites including that of the very active Milestone Society, and another online site with many photographs of East Riding milestones.

More than 500 documents relating to East Riding turnpikes are in the East Riding Archives (currently closed to researchers). The catalogue lists many interesting items, including maps and plans, accounts and legal cases, crimes and punishments. There is even a printed playscript of 1809 called 'The Turnpike Gate' which we have yet to read.


Milestone Bridge,
south of Dunswell