

Bourne in 1814

WILLIAM MARRAT (1772-1852) MAPPED AND MADE
SEVERAL TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEYS OF LINCOLNSHIRE
BETWEEN 1814 and 1817.

BOURN.

BOURN is a small Market Town, in the wapentake of Aveland, in the parts of Kesteven, about 9 miles from Folkingham, and is situated on the great road leading from this latter place to London.

Contiguous to this town, near the castle hill, is a fine large perennial spring* of excellent water, which flows in such abundance, as to turn three mills within a very short distance from the head; - it runs through the town, and from thence to the river Glen and to Spalding. This stream gives name to the place, *bourne* being the saxon name for a *brook* or torrent.

There can be no doubt but that this town was a Roman station, its name however at that period is now lost. "Upon the road from Bourn to Sleaford have been Norman, and perhaps Saxon Castles, at both these places; and it is highly probable that there were some places of defence, in the time of the Romans, for their road and dyke, as well as the residence of some of their people, against the inroads of the Britons. Their coins show that those places of strength were possessed by the Britons, when the legions were drawn home."

[*This spring which gives water to three of the streets in this town, is called Bourn Well Head; but in some old writings belonging to Mr Presgrave, respecting the fishing and royalty of the river, it is called Peters Pool.]

The name of the founder of Bourne Castle is not known nor the time of its foundation; it has been said that it was built by the Wakes, but a Castle existed in the year 1062, and this was prior to the Wakes being in possession of the place. It is extremely probable that the Castle was built by the Normans, as has been before observed; and, having been kept up successively by the Saxons and Normans, it at length fell to decay and ruin, as Bourne fell away from its primitive splendor. It appears from what Leland* says to have been in a dilapidated state in his time. "There appear grete diches, and the Dungeon Hill of an ancient Castle agayne the West ende of the priory, sumewhat distant from it, as on the other side of the streate backwards: it longgid to the Lord Wake, and much service of the Wake fe is done to this Castelle; and every feodarie knoweth his Station and place of service."

The building is entirely destroyed, but the earth-works, and foundation walls

on the west side, are nearly entire. The area within the outer moat contains about 8 acres; within the inner, about one acre, not like a keep, but flat and covered by a rampart within the ditch.

Between the moat and ditch on the north and west sides, the works are very irregular, consisting of raised banks of about 20 yards in length, and 9 yards in breadth, with a ditch between every one of these, pointing to the grand moat. Altogether they look like a piece of ground drained and are said to have supported Cromwell's artillery against the town. There is a house and barn, near the place where the Castle stood, which were built out of the old materials. Among the records of this parish, it is said, that, "Oct. 11. 1645. The Garrison of Bourne Castle began," whence it appears that the Castle was not entirely demolished until the time of the Common-wealth. The inhabitants have a tradition that it was destroyed by the forces under Cromwell, for adhering to Charles I but however this may be, it has certainly never been made mention of as existing subsequent to that period, nor are there any records relative to the time of its demolition.

The only decription [sic] of this Castle is in Peak's MS ** account of the towns in Kesteven where he says: "The castelle of Brun ys a verrye ancyent portlic castelle scytewate neare Peterspoole, it contaynes thre principal wardes. On the north side ys ye porter's lodge wch ys now reuinoose, and in decaye by reasone ye floores of ye upper house ys decayed and very necessarie to be repaired. The dungeon ys sett of a little moat made with men's handes, and for the moste part as yt were square. It is a fare and prattie buildinge, with IV square toures, Rounde about ye same dungeon upon the rooffe of ye said toures, ys tryme walkes and a fare prospect of the fenes. And in ye said dungeon ys ye halle, chamberes, and all other maner of houses of offices for ye lord and his traine. The southe syde thereof serveth for ye lordes and ladies lodgeinges, and underneighe them ys ye prisone and wyne cellar wth ye shollorie. Over ye moat yt surrounds ye castelle ys a drawe bridge, ye moat is verie fresh and deipe. Ther ys also a fare parke belonging ye castelle."

In the inner ditch was the gate house, it consisted of a round tower thirty feet high, embattled on the top, and ascended by a flight of stone steps. In the walls, which were upwards of six feet thick, were several niches, and the door of entrance was through a circular arch, apparently Saxon, in height about eight feet, and closed by a massy door. It was taken down by Lord Exeter, to build a barn and repair the roofs. The situation of this lodge was at the north end of what is now called the castle barns, at the south end of which, on a mount of earth "cast up with mene's hands," stood the castle.

Nothing of the castle now remains. The outer and inner moat are, however, still

visible, and there is a house and barn near the place where the Castle stood, and which were built out of the old materials.

Marrat's footnotes: Ingulphus, in his history of Croyland, after mentioning several benefactors to Croyland abbey, says, that Leofric lord of the Castle of Brunne Kinsman to Ranul or Radin the great Count of Hereford, gave many possesins to this abbey, and assisted the monks with is council (sic).

My footnotes: * The 16th century antiquarian John Leland called here while making a tour of the country between 1534 and 1543.

** Peak's MS is a source common to all accounts of Bourne Castle but his identity appears to be unknown as is the whereabouts of his MS.

NOTE: This essay is an extract from The History of Lincolnshire, Topographical, Historical and Descriptive Volume III (Boston. 1816) and I have made small editorial changes to ensure that the text is more accessible for the modern reader.

Marrat's History of Bourne 1814-16

by REX NEEDLE

One of Lincolnshire's earliest historians was William Marrat (1772-1852) whose main interest was commercial because he was also a printer whose firm, Marrat and Co. operated from premises in High Street, Boston. It was his idea to chronicle the history if every town and large village and publish the results monthly as a series of small gazetteers for sale but at first, he considered it too big a task for one man to visit and describe them all. He therefore enrolled the aid of a learned gentleman in each place, usually the schoolmaster or the parson, who sent their manuscripts to his printing works where the booklets were produced and eventually distributed for sale.

In the event, the first booklets were so successful and help from all quarters so forthcoming, that Marrat changed his objective and eventually mapped and made several topographical surveys of the county between 1814 and 1817, so completing the entire area of Lincolnshire in three years.

These publications are now rare but I have been fortunate to find an almost complete set and although in rather a battered condition, still readable and containing details of his methods in obtaining information about each locality.

They are all slim volumes, 31 in all, illustrated with line engravings, and published originally under the title of Sketches, Historical and Descriptive, in the county of Lincoln, later changed to The Complete History of the Whole County of Lincoln, and sold to subscribers or at booksellers throughout the United Kingdom. Marrat promised that each would contain "one highly-finished engraving accompanied by forty-eight pages of descriptive letter-press on fine woven paper".

These copies originated from a family at Folkingham and the use of learned local gentlemen in the compilation of this material is evident by the name written in ink on the top of each which is most likely the contributor for that district, namely "Mr Welborne, Falkingham", who was the village schoolteacher at that time.

Marrat originally envisaged confining his publications to the area around Boston with only eight numbers, making one volume, with appropriate indexes, and he added: "To accommodate amateurs, one hundred copies only will be printed on a demy octavo, price two shillings each." He also began advertising for further material with a printed notice on the back of each volume which said: "Gentlemen residing in, or who are acquainted with, [variously listed] places, are respectfully solicited to favour the Editor with any information they may be in possession of, by sending it to Mr Marrat, Printer, Boston, in which they are particularly requested to mention who is the lord of the manor, the principal proprietors of land, what kind of soil, average rent per acre of large and small farms, how the lands are fenced, and what the land is most famous for producing, &c. The Editor's thanks are due, and hereby given to those gentlemen who have already favoured him with communications on the above subjects." The date of the first publications was 1814-16 and the information requested by and supplied to Marrat set a standard for that used regularly in the county directories such as White's and Kelly's which dominated the market in later years.

Soon after the first booklets appeared, however, the original idea had been expanded and Marrat decided to change the name of his project to The Complete History of the Whole County of Lincoln. He explained to readers that the change had come about because of the interest shown which had enabled him see the papers of several distinguished gentleman of the county, namely Sir Joseph Banks, J Linton Esq (Frieston), H Hawkes Esq. (Spalding), J Craggs Esq. (Threckingham), and many others. He went on: "This he flatters himself he shall be enabled to accomplish in a satisfactory manner, from the great assistance he daily meets with, and from the valuable documents he is constantly receiving from every part of the county. He intends also to visit every town and village in person and to collect all the information that can any where be met with: and he trusts that every friend to scientific pursuits will continue to favour him with every kind of information that will any way serve to stamp a value on the work.

"So powerful is the principle of curiosity in every breast which pants for improvement, that the pleasures attendant on the pursuit of knowledge are not less gratifying to the mind of man, than refreshing streams to the thirsty Hart. To impart such pleasures to every lover of his native county, is the object of the author of its history, who is anxious to place within the reach of *all that knowledge* of antiquity, - of interesting circumstances -, and of highly important events, which has hitherto been confined to *a few*. In order to enable his to accomplish this desirable object, so many friends to the undertaking have kindly offered to assist the author with their contributions that the work be said to be not the production of ONE man, but of almost very intelligent individual in the county.

"In the History of Lincolnshire thus encouraged and thus supported by the united talents of its inhabitants, there can scarcely be a page so devoid of interest as not to awaken in the breasts of some of its readers that fond remembrance of "*days gone by*" on which the heart rejoices to dwell: for *here* are exhibited the much-loved scenes where our early youth delighted to sport; - *here* those highly venerated mansions which the care of departed friends adorned; - *here* the fertile fields that our ancestors tilled; - *here* those holy and beautiful houses where our fathers' fathers worshiped their God; "and to crown the whole in *one*

delightful word, this is our HOME."

A description of Bourne was published in edition 21 and an extract appears above because much of that published was reproduced from other sources which can be found elsewhere in this history, particularly his account of Bourne Castle which is reproduced in its entirety. I have also excluded long and tortuous, and mostly inaccurate, historical accounts which add little to our knowledge of the town. Printing was still at an early stage and publications such as this had little regard for conformity or the niceties of language that we know today and so Marrat's account is full of spelling contradictions and, perhaps, errors of punctuation and grammar, which I have observed to the letter and so leave the reader to decide whether it is right or wrong.