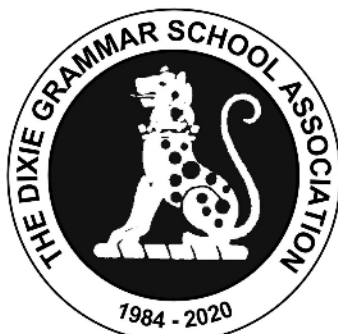


# **SOME FAMOUS ALUMNI**

of  
**The Dixie Grammar School**  
**Market Bosworth**



WESTON.

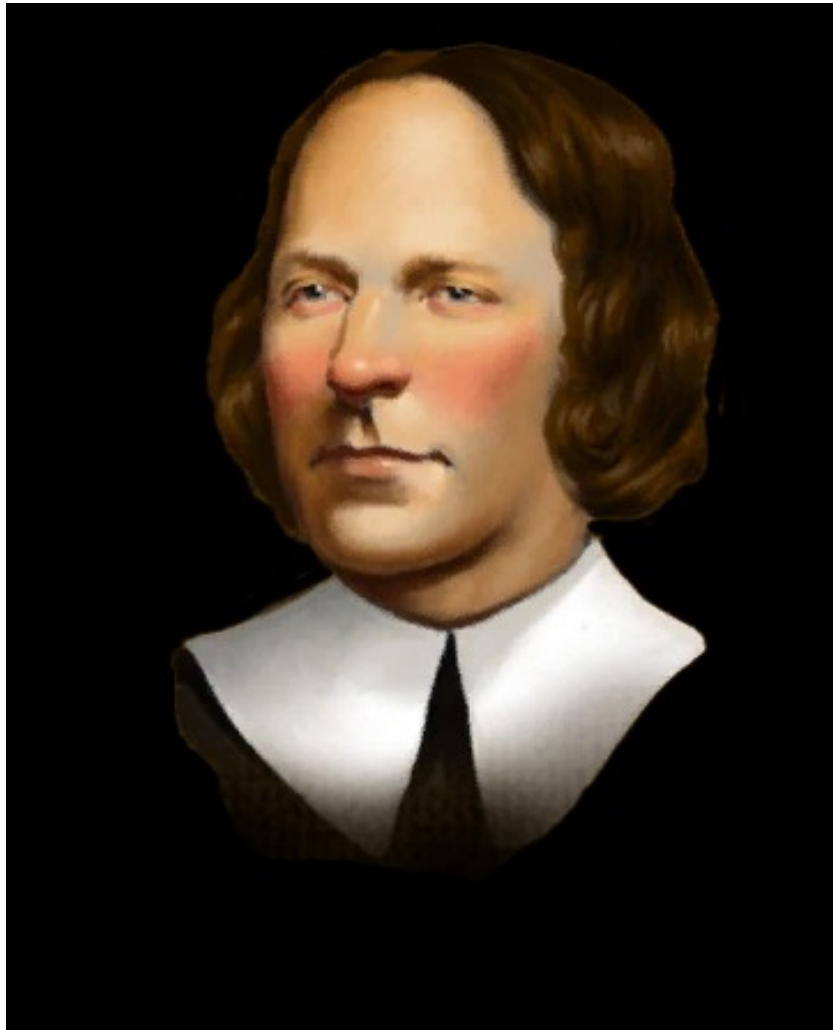


The Dixie Grammar School Association  
Founded in 1984  
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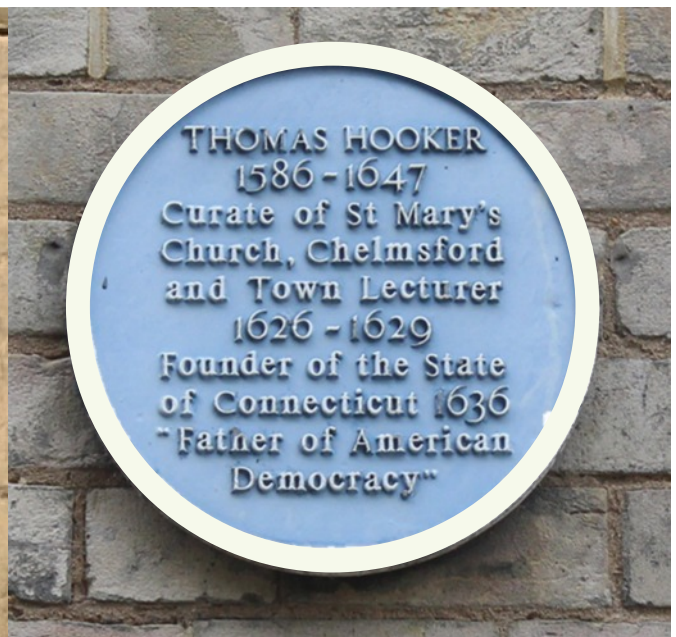
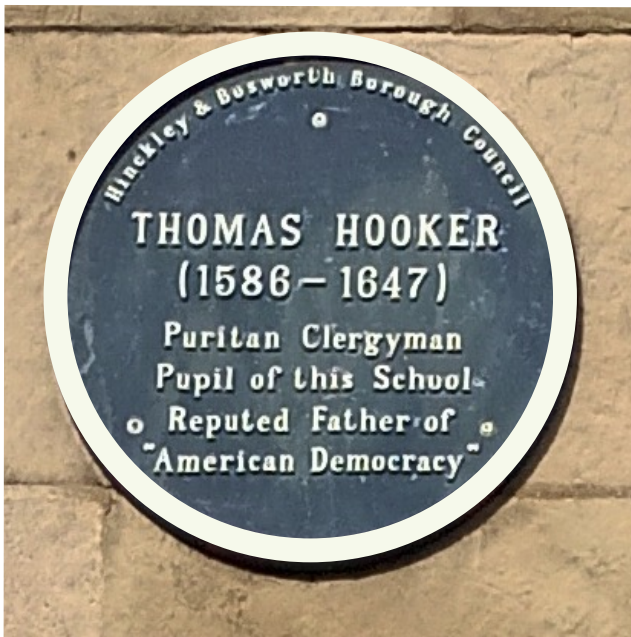
## CONTENTS

- Thomas Hooker**                    **1586 - 1647**  
“Father of American Democracy”.
- Thomas Simpson**                **1710 - 1761**  
Mathematician - “Simpson’s Rule”.
- John Jaques**                    **1827 - 1900**  
“The Bosworth Mormon”.
- Bernard Newman**               **1897 - 1968**  
Novelist and Travel Writer.
- Sgt. Pilot H. E. Black**        **1914 - 1940**  
Battle of Britain pilot.
- Tony Holland**                   **1932 - 2014**  
Freelance cartoonist.
- Prof. Dame C. Black GBE**      **1939 -**  
Advisor to HM Government.
- Kevin Woodcock**               **1942 - 2007**  
Freelance cartoonist
- Michael J. Roberts**           **1945 - 2020**  
GP and international expert on Spiders.

[CLICK ON A NAME TO VISIT THAT SECTION.](#)



**THOMAS HOOKER 1586 - 1647**



Many readers of the Newsletter will know of the Blue Plaque commemorating Thomas Hooker mounted on the wall of the Dixie Grammar School in the Square.

But apart from the details contained on the plaque it is unlikely that they will know much more about the man. His life is worthy of a much better understanding. So who is he and what did he achieve after his time in Market Bosworth?

Thomas Hooker was born in Markfield on July 5th 1585. He joined the tiny school in Market Bosworth, along with eight other boys, where he would have been taught by the then schoolmaster Roger Armson. Thomas was allowed the privilege of being the only boarder at the school since he lived around ten miles away and would have had great difficulty in arriving for lessons on time, especially in the winter. Lessons started at 7.00 am until 11.00 in the mornings and from 1.00 until 5.00 in the afternoons. In the summer months they started at 6.00 am.

After leaving Bosworth Thomas studied at Queen's College, Oxford, before moving to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1603 in order to take advantage of the Dixie Scholarship there. It was during his time at Cambridge that he met John Harvard and the two became great friends. It was around this time that Thomas read, and was influenced by, William Bradshaw's book about English Puritanism. As Bradshaw was born in Market Bosworth it is possible that he had also been a pupil at the old school in Bosworth. Thomas obtained his B.A. in 1608 and his M.A. in 1611. He then became a Fellow on The Dixie Foundation at Emmanuel College - one of the first to receive this financial assistance.

Thomas Hooker became the Rector of Esher before moving to Chelmsford where he found fame as a lecturer and leader in Puritanism. In recognition of this, near Chelmsford Cathedral, Essex, there is a blue plaque fixed high on the wall of a narrow alleyway, opposite the south porch, that reads: "Thomas Hooker, 1586–1647, Curate at St. Mary's Church and Chelmsford Town Lecturer 1626–29". Hooker's lecturing on Puritanism did not please his superior, Bishop William Laud, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury. So in 1630 it was time for Thomas to escape Laud's wrath and he quickly moved to Holland where he became the leader of the Puritan Sect there. However the group soon became disillusioned and many, including Hooker, returned to England. In 1633 he sailed on the "Griffin" from Downs, in Kent, landing at Plymouth, in Plymouth Colony, Massachusetts, on September 3.

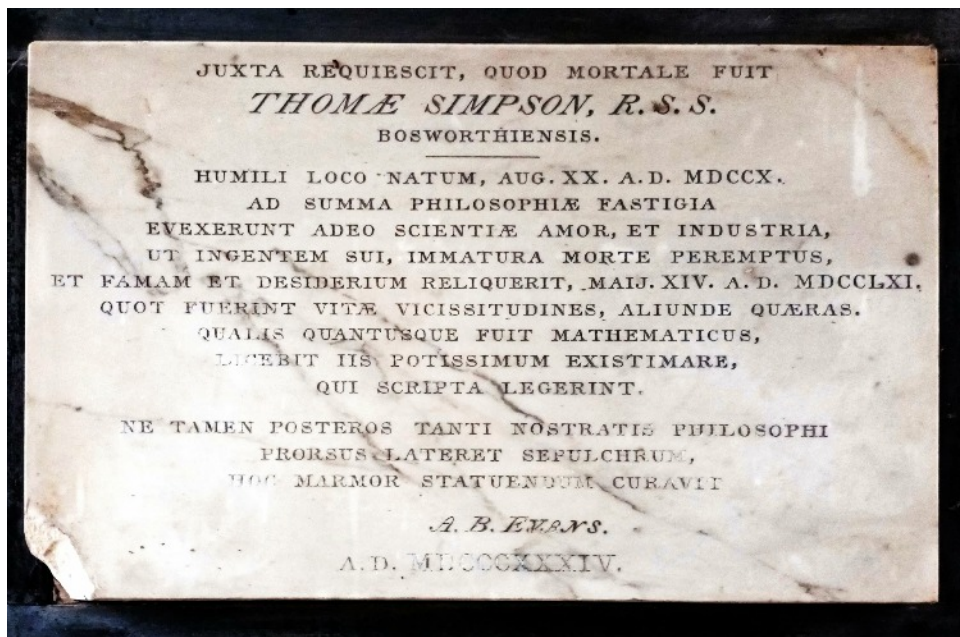
He became the pastor of a company of Puritans who had arrived from England the previous year. He and his supporters became unhappy under the influence of John Cotton, and in 1636 he led a group to Connecticut to settle and found the city of Hartford, named for Hertford, England, the birthplace of one of Hooker's assistants, the Rev. Samuel Stone. Critical of restricting suffrage to male church members with property, Hooker sought a more universal suffrage and told the Connecticut General Court in 1638 that "the people had the God-given right to choose their magistrates". This view was an advanced one for his time and led some historians to call him "the father of American democracy," Hooker had no intention of separating church and state; he declared that "the privilege of voting should be exercised according to the will of God". He was active in formulating the "Fundamental Orders of Connecticut" (1639), which later helped shape aspects of the Constitution of the United States of America. The "Fundamental Orders of Connecticut", is often referred to as the world's first written democratic constitution establishing a representative government.

The Thomas Hooker died during an epidemic on July 7, 1647, at the age of 61, two days after his 61st birthday. The location of his grave is unknown, although he is believed to be buried in Hartford's Ancient Burying Ground. There is a plaque on the back of the First Church. Because there was no known portrait of him, the 1938 statue of him that stands in front of Hartford's Old State House, was sculpted by Frances Laughlin Wadsworth from the likenesses of his descendants.

Hartford is not without a sense of humour regarding its origins. Each year in October, organisations and citizens of Hartford dress up in outrageous costumes to celebrate Hooker Day with the Hooker Day Parade. T-shirts sold in the Old State House proclaim "Hartford was founded by a Hooker."



**THOMAS SIMPSON 1710 - 1761**



Thomas Simpson, the oracle of Nuneaton, Bosworth and the environs.

Thomas Simpson is believed to have been born in Market Bosworth on August 20th 1710, but there are claims that he was born in Sutton Cheney.

He was the son of a successful weaver and so was expected to go into his father's trade. His father was more concerned that his son should learn and understand the art and skill of weaving than any formal schooling. It is known that he did spend some time at school where he was taught English and if so this was almost certainly the Dixie Grammar School. In Mr. Hopewell's "The Book of Bosworth School" it's recorded that he started under the headship of Richard Smith, 1711 – 1722, at a time when the School was flourishing. There were around fifty pupils attending at that time and in view of the impact of Isaac Newton's publications the syllabus was extended to include Mathematics and Science for the first time. Mathematics appealed to the young Simpson and he was fascinated by the subject to such an extent that his study of weaving faltered. His father was having none of this "book learning" and took him back to the weaving shed.

This of course simply meant that Thomas would go out of his way to learn more about his favoured subject. He took to reading and studying every book he could get his hands on and talking to anyone he thought could help him with his studies. He soon taught himself to write and by all accounts he gave himself an education. But it was Science and Mathematics that became his all consuming interest. His continued interest in matters other than weaving further annoyed his father and the rift between them grew. Thomas was particularly excited by the prediction of a total eclipse of the sun which would take place on May 11 1724. He wanted to discover how such predictions could be made. The darkness which fell across the Earth during such a phenomenon was terrifying to those ignorant of its cause and young Simpson wanted to know more. Finally, aged around fifteen, he left the family home and took lodgings in nearby Nuneaton with the widow of a tailor named Swinfield. She had been left with two children, a daughter and a younger son who was only a couple of years older than Thomas. The two boys soon became good friends. During his time in Nuneaton he took whatever work he could find as a weaver and began teaching mathematics. In 1730, aged twenty, he married the widow Swinfield.

In around 1732 a travelling pedlar was passing through Nuneaton and took lodgings at their home as was his custom. He lent Simpson a copy of Cocker's Arithmetic and a work by John Partridge, an English astrologer, author and publisher of a number of astrological almanacs and books. As well as his profession as an itinerant merchant this pedlar had taken on the more profitable role of a fortune-teller, which he performed by means of "judicial astrology". Young Simpson made such good progress with these extra studies that he acquired a local reputation as a fortune-teller. Every one knows what the inhabitants of country villages think of such characters. However, in a larger town there were those who were intrigued by their so called "abilities" and would avail themselves of the services on offer. One such was a young girl who wanted to know more about her boyfriend who was away at sea. Thomas agreed to help in a séance at which the fortune-teller would "raise a devil" to assist in his task. Unfortunately, it all went wrong when a person, presumably Thomas, appeared from a bed of straw dressed as the Devil! The poor girl was so scared that she had a series of fits and was in fear for her life. When the news of this escapade spread through the town "the Oracle of Nuneaton, Bosworth and the Environs", as Thomas had become known, was forced to flee with his family.

In 1733 they were established in Derby where Thomas was again earning a living as a weaver by day and teaching mathematics in the evening. He was also developing his skill in 'rhyming verse', producing a 'well written song' in favour of the Whig politician Lord James Cavendish, son of the Duke of Devonshire, for the 1733 Parliamentary Election. It was around this time that he had the first two of his mathematical questions published in The Ladies' Diary, a publication "Containing New Improvements in ARTS and SCIENCES, and entertaining PARTICULARS peculiarly adapted for the USE AND DIVERSION OF THE FAIR-SEX". These included riddles (called enigmas), rebuses, charades, scientific queries, and mathematical questions. A typical volume in the series included answers submitted by readers to problems posed the previous year and a set of new problems, nearly all proposed by readers. Both puzzle and answer (revealed the following year) were often in verse;

This one, sent in 1707 by reader by Mr. John White of Rutterly, Devon, is typical of such an 'Enigma'.

If to my age there added be  
One half, one third, and three times three;  
Six score and ten the sum you'd (sic) see,  
Pray find out what my age may be.

(Go on, try and work it out. The answer's at the end of this passage.)

It was in the pages of this journal that Thomas' 'versifying' and mathematical skills first came to the public's attention.

Times were hard for Thomas in Derby, there being little work for a weaver and even less for a teacher of mathematics. His wife had borne him two more children and with six mouths to feed things were getting difficult and so, in 1735, he decided to head to London. It is thought that the route he took brought him back through Market Bosworth as there is a rumour (James Throsby 1790) that he met up with his old school friend, Jeffery Tilecote, who was trading as a draper in the town. Tilecote let him have a suit for eight shillings, all he could afford, so that he could go on to London. Whether this is true or not is unclear.

Once in London he set up in business again as a weaver in Spitalfields and taught mathematics in his spare time. He was an early member of the Spitalfields Mathematical Society, founded in 1717, being one of forty-nine members in 1736. This Society operated as a working men's club and we know that it was a natural choice for a weaver who taught mathematics since of the members in 1744 about half were weavers, and the rest were typically brewers, braziers; (workers in brass), bakers, and bricklayers.

Simpson was the most distinguished of this group of itinerant lecturers who taught in the London coffee houses. At this time coffee houses were sometimes called Penny Universities because of the cheap education they provided. They charged an entrance fee of one penny and then while customers drank coffee they could listen to lectures. Different coffee houses catered to specific interests such as art, business, law and mathematics. For example, the mathematician Abraham de Moivre used Slaughter's Coffee House in St Martin's Lane as a base and William Jones, who was a friend of Simpson, was able to make a living lecturing in coffee houses such as Child's Coffee House in St Paul's Churchyard.

Simpson was a hard worker and he was soon able to send for his wife and children. As the number of his scholars increased, and his abilities became more widely known, he issued proposals for publishing a book by public subscription. Simpson was never one for brief, snappy titles and it was to be called "A new Treatise of Fluxions, wherein the Direct and Inverse Method are demonstrated after a new, clear, and concise manner; with their application to Physics and Astronomy. Also, the Doctrine of infinite Series and reverting Series universally and amply explained; fluxionary and exponential Equations solved." Writing it proved difficult for Simpson as he was so busy teaching and was constantly being distracted. It was eventually published and printed in 1737 by Thomas Gardner of London.

(Feb. 2024. A copy is currently available for sale in Switzerland priced £1,419.67 plus shipping at £18.36. This one would appear to be an original but cheaper, digital reprints are available.)

Then in 1740 he published "A Treatise on the Nature and Laws of Chance", in which he expanded on the solutions to a couple of important problems added in the second edition of Mr. Abraham de Moivre's "Book on Chances, and two new Methods for the summing of Series."

This is Simpson's second definition of Chance contained in this volume: -

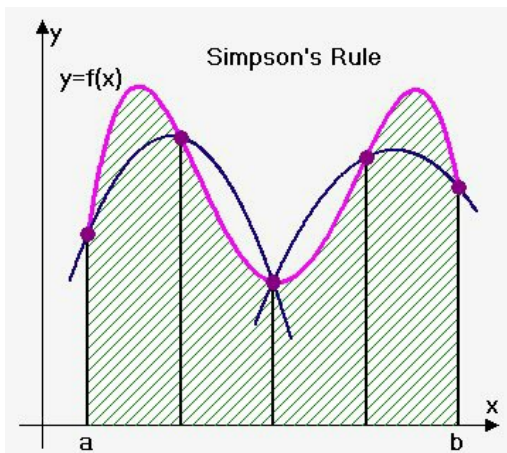
"The expectation on an event is considered as the present certain value, or worth, of whatever sum or thing is depending on the happening of that event, and is compounded of that sum and the probability of obtaining it." To this he adds the Corollary (sic) "Therefore if the expectation on an event be divided by the value of the thing expected on the happening of that event, the quotient will be the probability of happening." Got that?

This was followed by the publication of "Essays on useful subjects in speculative and mixed Mathematics" and soon after this his election as a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences at Stockholm was announced.

Simpson is best remembered for his work on interpolation and numerical methods of integration. However, the numerical method known today as "Simpson's rule", although it did appear in his work, was something he learned from Newton as Simpson himself acknowledged. By way of compensation, however, the Newton-Raphson method for solving the equation  $f(x)=0$  is, in its present form, due to Simpson. Newton described an algebraic process for solving polynomial equations which Raphson later improved. The method of approximating the roots did not use the differential calculus. The modern iterative form,  $x_{n+1}=x_n-\frac{f(x_n)}{f'(x_n)}$  is due to Simpson, who published it in 1740.

In applied mathematics we can represent real life situations on a graph, often these graphs are curves. In some cases, it may be useful to find the area under this curve to calculate another value. For example, we find the area under a curve relating to velocity/time to give us the displacement of the object.

When we are unable to use calculus (an algebraic method that would give us an exact area) we have to turn to numerical methods to approximate the area. There are many formulas which have been derived to estimate the area under a curve, one of which is Thomas Simpson's rule. His rule takes the area under the curve and breaks it down into equal sections. Three points on the curve (see the pink curve below) are required firstly and a quadratic curve is fitted as best it can to these three points (the blue curve). We are able to calculate the area under a quadratic graph exactly, but clearly as you can from this picture the area under the blue curve does not match the area under the pink curve exactly, hence the approximation.



This is then repeated on the next two sections with another quadratic curve (see the second blue curve on the right) and so on until we have found the total approximated area.

I understand that an algorithm developed from this method is used today by logistic firms such as TNT, DPD, Hermes and Amazon to discover the most convenient route for the delivery of their packages.

Simpson's next work appeared in 1742, "The Doctrine of Annuities and Reversions." which was followed in 1743 by "An Appendix, containing some Remarks on a late Book on the same subject (by Mr. Abr. De Moivre, F. R. S.) with answers to some personal and malignant presentations in the Preface thereof." To this De Moivre never thought fit to reply. Also, in 1743 he published "Mathematical Dissertations on a variety of Physical and Analytical subjects," This work he dedicated to Martin Folkes, esq. President of the Royal Society. Not long after this, largely through Folkes's support, he was appointed Professor of Mathematics at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. and was elected fellow of the Royal Society two years later having been proposed as a candidate by Martin Folkes, William Jones, esq. Mr. George Graham, and Mr. John Machin, the secretary, all very eminent mathematicians. The President and Council, in consideration of his very moderate circumstances, were pleased to excuse his admission fees, and likewise his giving bond for the settled future payments.



His next book was, "A Treatise of Algebra, wherein' the fundamental principles are fully and clearly demonstrated, and applied to the solution of a variety of problems." To which he added, "The Construction of a great number of geometrical Problems, with the method of resolving them numerically." This work was designed for the use of young beginners; inscribed to William Jones, esq. F. R. S., and printed in 1745. A new edition appeared in 1755, with additions and improvements. This one was dedicated to James, Earl of Morton, F. R. S., Mr. Jones having died; and then there was a sixth edition in 1790.

His next work was "Elements of Geometry, with their application to Mensuration of Superficies and Solids, to the determination of Maxima and Minima, and to the construction of a great variety of Geometrical Problems," which was published in 1747 and reprinted in 1760, "with large alterations and additions, designed for young beginners; particularly for the gentlemen at the king's academy at Woolwich, and dedicated to Charles Frederick esq. surveyor-general of the ordnance". Other editions have appeared since.

In 1748 he published his "Trigonometry, Plane and Spherical, with the construction and application of Logarithms." This little book contained "several things new and useful." In 1750 "The doctrine and application of Fluxions" appeared in two volumes. In the preface he states that "the author offers this to the world as a new book rather than a second edition of that published in 1737; in which he acknowledges, that, besides errors of the press, there are several obscurities and defects, for want of experience, in his first attempt. This work is dedicated to George, Earl of Macclesfield."

In 1752 "Select Exercises for young proficient in Mathematics," dedicated to John Bacon, esq. F. R. S. went into print and his "Miscellaneous Tracts." printed in 1757 was his last publication. His work has been described as "a most valuable bequest, whether we consider the dignity and importance of the subjects, or his sublime and accurate manner of treating them".

Simpson wrote several papers which were read at the meetings of the Royal Society, and printed in their "Transactions", but most, if not all of them, were afterwards inserted, with alterations or additions, in his printed volumes. He also proposed, and resolved many questions in the "Ladies Diaries," sometimes under his own name, as in 1735 and 1736; and sometimes under feigned or fictitious names; such as, it is thought, Hurlthroumbo, Kubernetes, Patrick O'Cavenah, Marmaduke Hodgson, Anthony Shallow and probably several others. Simpson was the editor or compiler of the Ladies' Diary from 1754 until 1760, during which time he raised the standard of the publication to the highest degree of respect.

In 1754 there was much discussion in the press concerning London's slow progress in its regeneration after the Great Fire in 1666. Joseph Massie, a writer on economic issues, published a pamphlet pointing out the City's inertia and the progress being made elsewhere. Amongst other schemes he proposed the building of a new bridge linking the City with Southwark. Massie's solution as to where to situate the new bridge without purchasing and demolishing expensive waterfront buildings was to site it over the outflow of the River Fleet, known as the Fleet Ditch. The City took advice from the eminent engineer John Smeaton regarding the cost and then petitioned Parliament to be able to create the new bridge. A House of Commons committee was formed to consider the matter and the result was an Act. to raise funds for the new bridge. A committee of 36 aldermen and councillors was formed to oversee the new bridge project, although none with any specialist engineering knowledge. It was then delayed by several years due to its high cost. The initial budget was set at £144,000. By July 1759 this sum had been raised and a competition was then held for a design and several eminent architects and engineers tendered entries, including George Dance the Elder and John Smeaton. The initial front-runners were Smeaton, who was then building the Eddystone lighthouse and had already been involved in the bridge project, and John Gwynn, who went on to design bridges elsewhere in England. Of the 69 entries submitted, one from an unknown young Scotsman by the name of Robert Mylne unusually consisted of elliptical arches. Unlike others such as Smeaton and Gwynn, who had probably been preparing plans over a long period, Mylne had only two months from the announcement of the competition until the closing date. The submissions were then whittled down to a short-list of fourteen.

Throughout this time Thomas Simpson had been on the fringes of the discussions regarding the structure of such a bridge. His contribution would appear to be the only mathematical appraisal of the designs as the panel of "experts" included a clergyman, the Astronomer Royal, a teacher of medicine, a lawyer, and two professors. Simpson's calculations showed that Mylne's arch was thicker than necessary, and that the size of pier needed to resist the horizontal thrust was virtually identical for both elliptical and semi-circular designs. Simpson was working on extending these studies into a treatise on arches, but after his early death one year later his papers were given by his widow to a military officer, who refused to let them be seen again.

There was a great debate regarding the various designs, with a certain amount of propaganda spread around in the form of anonymous letters to newspapers, including one from Dr. Samuel Johnson, a friend of Gwynn and someone known for his dislike of Scotsmen such as Mylne. Eventually a lengthy and anonymous pamphlet went into circulation debating the issue. The detailed criticism of each of the main submissions, and its praise for that of Mylne, suggests that this was written by the young Scot himself. To the surprise of almost everyone, in February 1760 the committee announced the winning entry to be that of Mylne. Furthermore, he was appointed surveyor of the bridge and its surrounding areas on each bank, on a very generous salary.

All of this extra work and stress had put Simpson's life in danger, exercise and a proper regimen were prescribed him, but to little purpose; "for he sank gradually into such a lowness of spirits as seemed to impair his mental faculties, even reading the letters of his friends confused him. He became clumsy and unsteady when walking which caused him great anxiety." The physicians advised him to seek the fresh, country air of his home-town to help in his recovery. In Feb. 1761, he set out reluctantly with some relations for Bosworth, believing he would never return. The journey tired him so much, that upon his arrival, he took to his bed, where he died on May 14th. He was just fifty-one years old. He left a widow and a son and a daughter; the former an officer in the royal regiment of artillery.

The King, George III, at the suggestion of Field Marshal John Ligonier, 1st Earl Ligonier, KB, PC, in consideration of Thomas Simpson's great works, granted a pension to his widow, together with handsome apartments adjoining the academy at Woolwich, a favour never conferred on anyone before. His widow died at Woolwich, December 19th, 1782, aged one hundred and two.

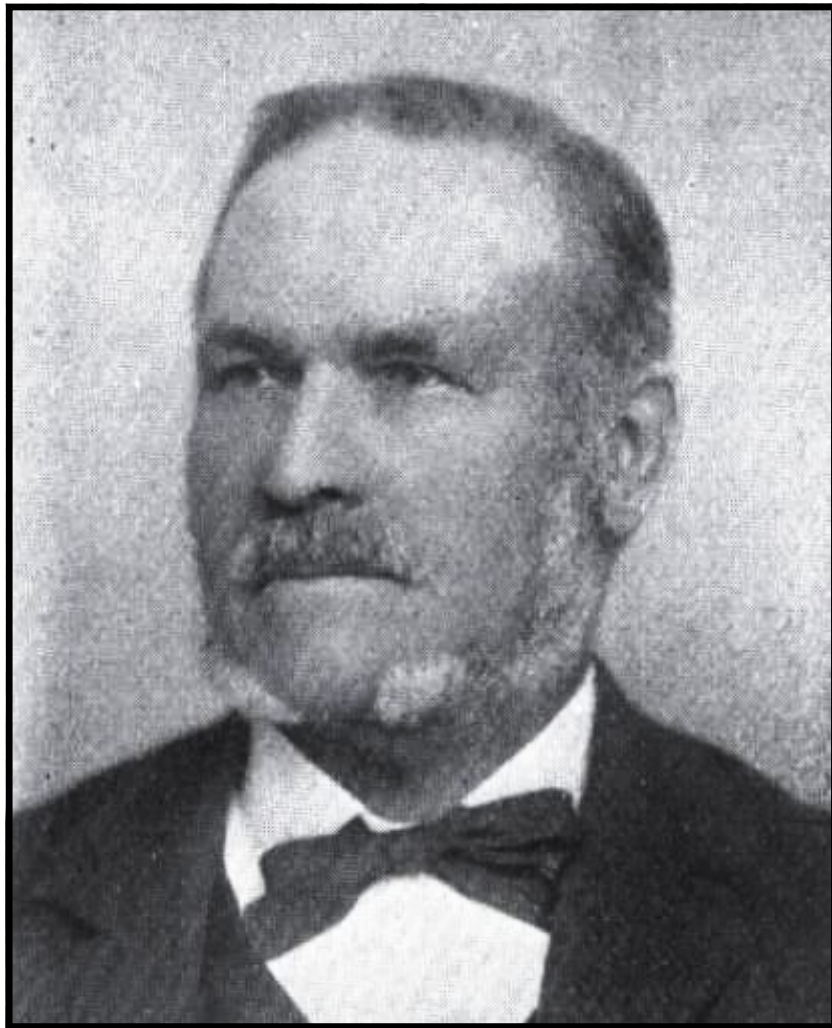
In 1834 the Headmaster of the Dixie Grammar School, Market Bosworth, Rev. Dr. Arthur Benoni Evans erected a marble tablet to his memory in St. James's Church in Sutton Cheney where it is thought he is buried. The inscription reads: -

*Nearby rest the mortal remains of Thomas Simpson of Bosworth  
Born in a humble station on 20th August 1710 AD his love of knowledge and his industry raised him  
to the heights of philosophy to such an extent that, though taken away by an untimely death on 14th  
May 1761 AD, he left behind both great fame and a longing for him.  
You must look elsewhere for the many troubles of his life, but what a great and fine mathematician  
he was can be most readily judged by those who have read his writings.  
So that the tomb of our philosopher may not escape the notice of posterity entirely,  
A.B. Evans took care of setting up this marble plaque in 1834 AD.*

The following description of Simpson by his fellow mathematician Dr. Charles Hutton, professor of mathematics at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich (made 35 years after Simpson's death) is interesting: - It has been said that Mr Simpson frequented low company, with whom he used to guzzle porter and gin: but it must be observed that the misconduct of his family put it out of his power to keep the company of gentlemen, as well as to procure better liquor.

It would be fair to note that others described Simpson's conduct as irreproachable. So, dear reader, what do you think of this formidable man?

Answer to the "Enigma" puzzle taken from the Ladies' Diary as submitted by Dr. Charles Hutton: -  
"The meaning of the problem is, that the number 9 added to once his age, together with one half and one third of his age, the sum shall be 130; or since the sum of the parts 1 and 1/2 and 1/3 is 11/6, that 11/6 of his age is (130 - 9) = 121; consequently 11 : 6 :: 121 : 66 = his age."



**JOHN JAQUES 1827 - 1900**



**A typical Mormon Handcart trekker.**

JOHN JAQUES, the Bosworth Mormon.

John Jaques was born in Market Bosworth on January 7th 1827, one of a family of 5 brothers and 4 sisters. He was born in the same house that his father had been born in, a brick built cottage with a thatched roof located on Lichfield Street, now known as Station Road.

John's father was a framework knitter, so called because he made stockings in a large frame about 6 ft. high, 4 ft. wide and 3 ft. deep. John's father owned about a dozen frames and was considered to be quite well off.

In his early years John used to go to a school run by an old woman known locally as 'Grandmother Palmer', however at the age of seven he joined the Bosworth Free Grammar School. In order to do so he had to prove that he was able to read a chapter of the Bible. John writes that "*the hours of attendance were in summer 7.00 to 8.00 then a break until 8.45 to 10.00. We then had another break until 11.00 to 12.30. After lunch lessons began at 2.00 until 4.00; in winter we began the day at 8.45. Wednesday afternoons were holidays, also Saturdays after 10.30. There were six weeks' holiday or vacation in midsummer and the same at Christmas, and as it was a Church of England school, Saints' days were also holidays. Parents complained that we had too many holidays.*"

These holidays were not much of a 'holiday' for John. In his younger school days, during the summer and vacation, "*I was sent to school to an old man named Skelton who was Clerk and Sexton at the Church.*" Besides going to school he had, to work on the 'gardens', of which his father had two and afterwards three. "*Nearly everybody had gardens, either close to the house or at a distance of a quarter of a mile away, planted in the waste lands by the side of the lanes.*"

John remembered the festivities held in Bosworth to celebrate Queen Victoria's coronation and the games in the Market Place; he remembered Queen Adelaide, widow of George IV, passing through the town on her way to be received by Lord Howe at Gopsall Hall, a few miles away. Most of all he remembered the fox-hunting days; they were the days when the boys played truant from school and when, by custom and unwritten law, all fields and all parts of the Park were open to the public, a privilege denied for the rest of the year.

*"The Grammar School room had two double desks and two side desks, holding about a dozen boys each, making six classes in all: the boys were known as scholars, not pupils. The Latin master was Mr. Small and he and his scholars had another room. The High School was in the upper rooms, the scholars consisting almost entirely of boarders under the care of the headmaster, Rev. Arthur Benoni Evans, D.D. Spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic was the usual course, a few of the most promising were taught land surveying. Every midsummer there was an examination when precis were recited and prizes given."* His great granddaughter writes in her book 'The Life, History and Writings of John Jaques' that "*John had a prize for every year he was at the school and even though these books are over a century and a quarter old they are in the possession of my parents and still in perfect condition. Rare jewels indeed.*"

John left school at 14 and was apprenticed to a cabinet maker in Ashby de la Zouch, the premium of £30 being partly paid from a fund left with the Grammar School; later he moved to Burton-on-Trent where as an apprentice he worked from six in the morning to seven in the evening in the summer, and seven in the morning to eight in the evening in winter. His master was a 'particular' Baptist and John started attending his master's chapel and through this he became interested in religion. He was greatly affected by a tract called *Anxious Inquirer after Salvation*, written by a notable preacher in Birmingham, John Angell James, in 1834. Seeking answers to his religious questions, he sought private visitations with a local preacher and his wife, both of whom he admired. He became heavily involved in these religious meetings. "*But*", he concluded, "*I did not get the satisfaction I wanted*".

He made the acquaintance of a journeyman from Burton named Thomas Brown Ward, who "gave a lecture on Faith, which caused considerable dissension". Thomas Ward was a Latter-day Saint elder. John investigated Mr. Ward's religion over an extended period with increasing interest and finally, in the autumn of 1845, made the decision to be baptised into that faith. The ceremony was performed by Thomas Ward at Gresley, in Derbyshire.

Mr. Rowland, the cabinet maker to whom John was apprenticed, was unhappy with the boy's decision, and communicated as much to John's father. Thomas Jaques was furious with his son's choice to join this "wicked" sect - "a set of deluded people" - and sent scathing letters to him insisting that he give up the folly. Years after John's conversion, his sister, Emma, added the following statement to the end of a heart-breaking letter, undoubtedly summarising the feelings of the entire family: "P.S. - I am very, very greatly disappointed in you". Thomas and Mary Ann Jaques had made many sacrifices on John's behalf to enable him to prepare for life and the family believed that this favoured son had rewarded them with publicly humiliating stupidity. They felt betrayed.

Several years after his conversion, John was asked by the local leadership of his newly found church to devote himself full-time to travelling through the countryside, preaching and winning converts. He chose to accept this assignment. John briefly visited his parents near the beginning of his mission. The thought that he would give himself to full-time preaching in an unpopular religion was too much for them. John's indignant father refused to bid him farewell, telling him that he need not write to them or visit them again until he chose to return to the trade for which he had been trained. This was the last time John ever saw his father.

Latter-day Saint missionaries relied for their keep upon opportunities to perform whatever labouring jobs they could secure or upon the hospitality of total strangers. This was true of John Jaques and consequently he was often hungry and without a roof over his head. Anecdotes written later about him describe him as "not being of a particularly outgoing or gregarious disposition", so that the nature of his work preaching to mostly indifferent or even hostile strangers would have been especially challenging for him. He did not completely lose his sense of humour about the situation though. Of his first 'door approach', which took place in Warwickshire, he wrote in his diary: *"Walked to Tysoe. There were no saints (Mormons) in that village. I had to go upon the strength of my mission. After a great deal of hesitation and reluctance I summoned resolution sufficient to go to a very neat house with a garden in front and tell them I was a servant of the Lord preaching his gospel without purse or scrip. I asked if I could be accommodated with some refreshment and a night's lodging. A young woman came to the door. She said the master of the house was not at home and she did not know when he would be. She also said she could not receive me nor relieve me. I could scarcely help smiling at the girl. When I told her my message she looked at me as though I had just dropped from the clouds"*.

Whilst serving as a missionary, Jaques was able to apply his skill with tools to build the benches and make the candle holders for the Latter-day Saint's meeting place in Oxford. It was during his first mission that John wrote a poem called 'Truth', which has become the text of one of the best-known Latter-day Saint hymns. The poem appeared as a postscript to an 1851 anthology of revelations given to Mormon Church founder, Joseph Smith, that was later formally canonised as a book of Latter-day scripture known as 'The Pearl of Great Price'.

On 19th January 1852, John was appointed to serve as assistant editor of the *Millennial Star*, a Liverpool-based periodical that served in that era as a unifying voice for Mormons scattered throughout the British Isles and also brought important communications to other Latter-day Saints throughout Europe and the British Empire. Under the direction of Latter-day Saint Apostle Franklin D. Richards, the *Star* had during the previous year published the first edition of *The Pearl of Great Price*, which, as mentioned, included some of Jaques's work. The *Star* had also printed other pieces by the young missionary. Elder Richards had therefore already become acquainted with Jaques's writing abilities and was in a position to offer him employment. Franklin Richards and John Jaques would forge a lifelong friendship as a result of their associations in Liverpool. In a short period of time, Latter-day Saints throughout Britain came to know the powerful, informative pen that had been trained at Market Bosworth. Jaques's letter of acceptance of the appointment offers some insight into his personality, containing many elements that find their way into his other writings and are reflected in the way he would choose to lead his life. *"One of the fundamental principles of the Church of Christ is - that divine calling, legitimate ordination, and honest-heartedness, are equal to the emergency. Said Paul, I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me. This is the thought upon which I rely, on being called to fill the important station of assistant editor of the STAR."*

One of Jaques's most significant contributions published during his time at the Millennial Star was his 'Catechism for Children'. Latter-day Saints had felt there was a void in resources available for formally instructing their children in the basic tenets of their religion. Jaques undertook to fill that void, and the resulting catechism was published in several instalments from November 1853 to February 1854.

On 31st October 1853, Jaques married Zilpah Loader, whose family he had befriended as a travelling missionary while serving in Oxfordshire. Having received an honourable release from his missionary labours in Great Britain he emigrated with his family to America, sailing from Liverpool May 22nd, 1856, on the packet ship 'Horizon', which arrived in Boston, Mass., June 31st, 1856.

On arriving in Boston, Elder Jaques made the necessary arrangements for crossing the plains in Captain Martin's handcart company. This was one of the companies that suffered so much in the snow storms on the mountains, and in which many emigrants lost their lives. Among those who succumbed to the hardships of that memorable journey was Jaques's eldest child, a daughter, who died near Green river November 23rd, 1856.

The Mormon handcart pioneers were participants in the migration of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to Salt Lake City, Utah, who used two-wheeled handcarts to transport their belongings. The movement began in 1856 and continued until 1860. In 1856, a series of poor harvests left the church with only a meagre fund to help immigrants buy wagons and oxen, and church leaders looked for less expensive ways to move poor immigrants. As a result, Brigham Young announced on October 29th 1855 a handcart system by which the church would provide carts to be pulled by hand across the Mormon Trail. Young believed that with their carts and 90 days' rations the travellers could make the long journey to Utah Territory within 70 days, covering about 18 miles each day. Ten handcart companies would make the trek during the four years the plan was in operation. These migrations included some 3,000 Mormon converts from England, Wales, Scotland and Scandinavia in about 650 handcarts.

The carts were pulled from Iowa City, a distance of 1,300 miles, or from Florence (Omaha), Nebraska which was 1,030 miles. Each cart carried 400 to 500 pounds of foodstuffs, bedding, clothing, and cooking utensils, and needed two able-bodied people to pull it. Five people were assigned to each cart. Handcart company captains were men with leadership and trail experience. Each company included a few ox-drawn commissary and baggage wagons, at least one per twenty carts. Wagons or carts carried large public tents, one for every 20 people. Captains of 100 people had charge of five tent groups.

The trek was disastrous for two of the companies, which started their journey dangerously late and were caught by heavy snow and severe cold in central Wyoming. Despite a dramatic rescue effort, more than 210 of the 980 pioneers in these two companies would die along the way. One of these companies, led by James G. Willie, left Iowa City on July 15th and crossed Iowa to Florence, Nebraska. Prior to the Willie Company departing Nebraska, they met to debate the wisdom of such a late departure. But, because they were unfamiliar with the trail and the climate, they deferred to the church elders. One of the missionaries and sub-captain in the Willie Company urged them to spend the winter in Nebraska arguing that a late departure would lead to suffering, sickness and even death. However, all the other church elders argued that the trip should go forward, declaring that the company would be protected by divine intervention.

In the autumn, a group of fast-travelling missionaries returning to Utah from Europe, passed the Willie and Martin companies. On October 4th this party reached Salt Lake City where they conferred with president Brigham Young and other Church leaders, reporting that the two large handcart parties were still on the way.

The next morning, the elders called on Church members to provide wagons, mules, supplies, and teamsters to find the latecomers and bring them in. On the morning of October 7th the first rescue party left Salt Lake City with 16 wagon-loads of food and supplies, pulled by four-mule teams with 27 young men serving as teamsters and rescuers.

Throughout October more wagon trains were assembled, and by the end of the month 250 relief wagons were on the road. In the meantime, the two companies of pioneers reached Fort Laramie, Wyoming, where they expected to be restocked with provisions. However, there were no provisions for them. As a result, the companies cut back food rations, hoping that their supplies would last until help could be sent from Utah. Additionally, they lightened their loads, cutting individuals luggage allowance. Clothing and blankets, that later would be desperately needed, were discarded.

As the companies continued on, they began to run out of food and encounter bitterly cold temperatures. On October 19th a blizzard struck the region, halting the two companies and the relief party. The Willie Company was found along the Sweetwater River approaching the Continental Divide. A scouting party sent ahead by the main rescue party found the emigrants, gave them a small amount of flour, and explained to them that rescue was near. The scouting party then rushed onward to try to locate the Martin Company. At that time, the Martin Company was about 110 miles further east, making its last crossing of the North Platte River near present-day Casper, Wyoming, where the trail left the river headed across country toward Independence Rock and Devil's Gate. Shortly after completing the crossing, the blizzard struck and many members of the company suffered from hypothermia or frostbite after wading through the freezing river. The company set up camp at Red Bluffs, unable to continue forward through the snow.

Meanwhile, the members of the Willie Company quickly reached the end of their flour supplies and began slaughtering some of the cattle that still remained. On October 20th, Captain Willie and Joseph Elder travelled ahead of the pioneers by mule to locate the supply train and inform them of the company's desperate situation. The pair arrived at the rescue party's campsite near South Pass, Wyoming that evening, and by the next evening the rescue party reached the Willie Company and provided them with food and assistance. Leaving half of the rescue party to assist the Willie Company, the other half pressed forward to assist the Martin Company. Beyond the pass, the Willie company, now amply fed and free to climb aboard empty supply wagons as they became available, moved on quickly.

But the difficulties of the Willie Company were not over yet. Just two days later, on October 23, the Willie Company faced the most difficult section of the trail, the ascent up Rocky Ridge. The climb took place during a howling snowstorm through knee-deep snow. That night 13 emigrants died. Meanwhile, the Martin Company remained in the camp at Red Bluffs for nine days until three scouts finally arrived on October 28. By that time, 56 members of the company had died. The scouts urged the emigrants to begin moving again. One of the first rescuers from Salt Lake City, Ephraim Hanks, soon arrived and provided buffalo meat to the starving party. As the company moved from day to day, Hanks continued to kill many buffalo. He also performed many blessings and helped in some amputations to stop the progression of the frostbite and gangrene that would have otherwise killed more members of the company. Three days later the main rescue party met the Martin Company and the Hodgett and Hunt wagon companies and helped them on to Devil's Gate, Wyoming.

At Devil's Gate the rescue party unloaded the baggage carried in the wagons of the Hodgett and Hunt wagon companies that had been following the Martin Company so the wagons could be used to transport the weakest emigrants. The Martin Company continued on but severe weather forced them to halt at Martin's Cove, where they stayed for five days. After they continued, a backup relief party of 77 teams and wagons was making its way east to provide additional assistance. After passing Fort Bridger, the leaders of the backup party concluded that the Martin Company must have wintered east of the Rockies, so they turned back. When word of the returning backup relief party was communicated to Young, he ordered the courier to return and tell them to turn back east and continue until they found the handcart company, but several days had been lost. In the meantime, the Willie Company arrived in Salt Lake City on November 9th. Of the 404 still with the company, 68 died and many others suffered from severe frostbite and near starvation.

On November 18th the backup party met the Martin Company with the greatly needed supplies. The 104 wagons carrying the Martin Company arrived in Salt Lake City on November 30th. At least 145 members of the company had lost their lives. The emigrants would eventually go on to Latter-day Saint settlements throughout Utah and the West.

Despite the tragedy, the Mormon church did not give up on the handcart plan. It sent a missionary company east with handcarts early in 1857 and sponsored five more westbound handcart companies by 1860. Once the church finances had recovered, Young's followers returned to using conventional wagons. Although fewer than 10 percent of the 1846 - 68 Latter-day Saint emigrants made the journey west using handcarts, the handcart pioneers have become an important symbol in Mormon culture, representing the faithfulness and sacrifice of the pioneer generation.

Elder Jaques, with his family, arrived in Salt Lake City November 31st 1856; and he soon afterwards found employment on the public works. He was ordained a 'Seventy' on February 2nd 1857, by William Burgess, and became a member of the 9th quorum of Seventy.

In the latter part of 1859 he was called by Pres. Brigham Young to work as a clerk in the Historian's Office, where he was employed until September 1863. Next, by the consent of Pres. Young, he associated himself with Thos. B. H. Stenhouse and became assistant editor of the 'Daily Telegraph', a newspaper published in Salt Lake City. Subsequently he located temporarily in Ogden, where the Telegraph was continued in 1869; Elder Jaques remained with the paper until he was called on a mission to Great Britain. During this mission, which lasted from 1869 to 1871, he worked principally in the Liverpool office as assistant editor of the 'Millennial Star'.

On 1st January 1872, John Jaques married a second wife in Utah, thirty one year old Mary Ann Arnott, a native of Gunthorpe, Nottinghamshire. The social custom of plural marriage, was during that era seen as a general, moral obligation for male leaders in the LDS Church. John would have been required to obtain consent for the second marriage from his first wife, Zilpah, before allowing this second wife to join the family. John and Zilpah were still dearly in love. For the sake of propriety, the responsibility for accepting a second wife also led John to establish a second household for her. John and Zilpah Jaques had ten children together, six of whom lived to adulthood.

In April 1876, Jaques was asked to serve in an ecclesiastical capacity that might be approximately compared to that of archbishop in the Roman Catholic or Anglican faiths, a president of the Eighth Quorum of Seventy. Later, in 1893, he would be asked to serve as senior president of that quorum. Then as now, ecclesiastical service in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was strictly voluntary and not a source of income, so that he was still obliged to secure a living through non-ecclesiastical activities. In July 1877, less than two months before the death of Brigham Young, fifty-year-old John Jaques accepted a request to return to the Historian's Office, where he would remain active for the rest of his life.

Shortly after his assignment was accepted, he published his well-known narrative of the Martin Handcart Company. On October 4th 1889 Jaques would become Assistant Church Historian and General Church Recorder.

John Jaques' died on 1st June 1900 of Bright's disease, after an illness of seven weeks. Prior to the onset of the disease John Jaques had been a very healthy and active man, and the rapidity with which the disease led to his death was remarkable.

His official obituary tells us that "John Jaques was a strong man, his abilities rising high above the average. He was useful wherever he was placed, and performed several missions abroad. He was the author of the Catechism, a most valuable work for the children of the Saints. He was not a demonstrative man, and not everyone gained access into the inner circles of his life; but those who did, enjoyed his confidence, and those who knew his heart, knew him to be genuine, a man of strong character and one who would lay his head on the block for his conviction."

In July 2021 Byran B. Korth, PhD., Associate Professor of Church History & Doctrine at the Brigham Young University, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA, visited Market Bosworth and we were able to welcome him and Mrs. Korth at the School. The Headmaster and his wife escorted our visitors on a tour of the School, Nigel Palmer took them on a detailed walk around the town and Graham Rawlings of the DGSA explained the details of the Association's records relating to John Jaques's story. Professor Korth was delighted to discover that such an important figure in the history of the Mormon Faith is still held in such high esteem by the people of the town where he was born.





**BERNARD NEWMAN      1897 - 1968**



**Bernard with "George"**

### **Bernard Newman, an author of truth or fiction?**

Bernard Newman was born in Ibstock, Leicestershire, on May 8th 1897. His grandmother lived in Nuneaton and was the cousin of Eleanor Evans. You will probably know Eleanor better by her pen-name of George Eliot, the famous novelist. So Bernard had a literary background from the very beginning. He was one of the six children of Annie and William Betteridge Newman, a cattle dealer and farmer. His mother came from Alsace and he grew up speaking English, French and German. He passed his entrance exam to the Dixie Grammar School in Market Bosworth and joined in September 1909 alongside Arthur Dawkins from Barwell, who was to become a lifelong friend.

Both Bernard and Arthur did extremely well in mathematics, thanks to the excellent tuition of the Maths teacher, George Nicholls. Nicholls wanted both Bernard and Arthur to specialise in the subjects that he taught in order that he could prepare them for the exams needed for the Cambridge Maths Scholarships. There were only two of those awarded each year and Nicholls was usually successful in getting one awarded to his pupils. However, the headmaster, Rev. L. H. Pearson, refused to give his permission to such a specialisation and as a result Nicholls promptly left in the middle of the school year. This prevented the school from finding a suitable replacement. The one who was found, a Mr. Scott, was unable to cope with the needs of Bernard and Arthur and the boys were left to their own devices.

In the summer of 1913 they decided to enter for the Second Division Civil Service examination that was to be held in the summer of the next year. As the Dixie Grammar School had no experience of entering pupils for these examinations they arranged with their teachers, without the headmaster's knowledge, to let them off any homework in order that they could take a correspondence course with a tutorial college. By the time the examination was held in August 1914 the First World War had begun. The results were published a few weeks after the exam. Some 2,500 candidates had entered for only 100 positions. Bernard's results put him at around 350 – 400th on the list. He left school at Christmas 1914 along with Arthur and joined the army. Because of this he was unable to accept the position of Second Division Clerk when it was offered. However, it did mean that a position would be held for him after the War.

Serving in combat during World War I, with his reasonable fluency in French, the regiment's French liaison officer occasionally sent him undercover in Paris. Accompanied by a female French agent, they investigated the gossip of Allied soldiers discussing troop movements. It was here that his interest in espionage began, and his character 'Papa Pontivy' was based on that French liaison officer.

Some of his early fiction novels, particularly *Spy* which was published in 1935, were written in the first person with himself as the main character. This soon led to the belief that he was a spy. Newman clarified this in his 1960 autobiography, "Speaking From Memory", he said that his "*war service was routine and unremarkable and that his novels were publicised in that way to achieve sales at the suggestion of his publisher.*" Correspondence between Newman and the military historian B. H. Liddell Hart held in the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives at King's College London, confirm the publisher's marketing tactics by asking Newman to 'disappear' for two weeks during the book's launch to the public.

As a result of this free publicity, *Spy* ran to 18 editions. Newman eventually said in an interview: "*I am not a spy, I have never been a spy and I don't suppose I shall ever become one. I have never met the King, the Kaiser, Ludendorff, Hindenburg or Lloyd George. I did not win the DSO nor was I as much as half an inch behind the German lines during the war. I am trying to devise a new kind of thriller. I believe I have succeeded. I quite agree that there are plenty of people who might believe it, but I believe the intelligent reader will treat the book exactly as he would a good detective story.*"

That statement was widely reported in the press worldwide, but even his 1968 New York Times obituary repeated the fiction. Internet articles can still be found stating his 'espionage activities' as fact.

In 1919 he was 'mentioned in despatches' for "His gallant and distinguished services in the field." In 1933 he was appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. He ended the war as a staff sergeant, although in 1942, he was introduced to an audience as a captain.

Afterwards, with no interest in further education, he managed to get a modest job as a civil servant with the Ministry of Works. He began writing and became a lecturer and passionate traveller, visiting more than 60 countries between the wars, many of those on a bicycle. He gave some 2,000 lectures between 1928 and 1940 throughout Europe, even meeting Adolf Hitler. He started writing novels, gaining some recognition with his 1930 novel "The Cavalry Went Through". From 1936 to 1938, he was the first chairman of the Society of Civil & Public Service Writers.

His time with the military in the First World War was a major influence on his travel and his writings. He believed that the treaty of Versailles had been a failure, and that Britain's policy of appeasement could lead to disaster; he consistently sought out the danger spots of Europe. As thoughts of war grew in the 1930s, Newman encouraged everyone to visit the War's Cemeteries, even suggesting that "*if the world's leaders should meet in them rather than grand palaces they would not talk so airily about the next war.*" Newman saw the Second World War as "*the greatest tragedy in the history of the world*" for those who fought and died in the Great War believing it was to be the "*war to end all wars.*" At the same time his humour held true. He told of his "*trivial encounters of the road*" focusing on "*comedy, which is in keeping with my temperament*". In Sweden he entered Stockholm covered in mud, "*the result of the unequal contest between a cyclist and heavy vehicles on a sloshy road*". At the local bathhouse he undressed and soaked in the tub. After a time, the female attendant entered and, despite his protests, proceeded to scrub him. Then she insisted on drying him, again ignoring his modesty. Later he tried saunas, sharing them with both men and women. "*I saw more of the human body among Scandinavian peoples than any others in Europe, but a cleaner and more moral outlook I never knew.*"

As a child Bernard fell off horses so consistently his father bought him a bicycle. At an early age he knew that he wanted to write and lecture, so he made a round-trip cycle-ride of thirty miles to hear the then popular novelist Joseph Hocking. He rode his bicycle five miles each way to primary school and after that the six or so miles to the Dixie Grammar School. He rode far greater distances during holidays visiting historic sites. He rode to London, "*a mere 110 miles. What was that to a boy with a bicycle?*" In spite of his youth and poor eyesight, he joined an artillery unit in 1914. When Bernard was unable to control his horse during a review, his commander got him a bicycle. In September, 1915, Newman fixed a puncture for the Prince of Wales. "*I think he preferred a bicycle to a horse for business purposes in those days, and I think he was right: certainly I copied his example myself for the greater part of the war.*"

Anyone who has ever ridden a bicycle any distance will know that neither the weather, the roads nor other road users always co-operate. In Russia, sand, sometimes eight to ten inches deep, proved almost impossible, so he took to the railroad tracks, alternating between the worker's path and bouncing over the sleepers. In parts of Romania no one had ever seen a bicycle, and "*startled horses reacted badly, as did English horses to motor cars thirty of forty years before*". Unlike earlier cyclists who had to force society to accept their rights to the road, Newman saw himself and his bicycle as intruders on the peasants' roads. He tried to stop riding before dark, in part from fear of wolves.

Newman cycled because he loved it, even if others misunderstood him. It was assumed that he was too poor to travel by train and on one occasion a guide at an oasis in Tunis offered to show him around for a reduced price because, since he had arrived by bicycle, he must be in reduced circumstances. While travelling in post Second World War Germany, he rode for a time with a group of German youths who could not understand his interest in cycling. Even though he was much older he had ridden further that day than they had, and remained fresh enough to outride them.

In 1932, during the depths of the Great Depression, he suggested to an editor at the publishers Herbert Jenkins that he should follow the route of the Three Musketeers. D'Artagnan was one of his few childhood heroes who remained heroic in adulthood, and when a chance to follow his travels appeared, Bernard took it.

He wanted to follow the trail as closely as possible, yet riding a horse appeared an impossibility and a motor car too modern. Since the trail covered one thousand miles, walking was out of the question. *"I decided at last on a bicycle: it has the approximate speed of the horse, and is not so blatantly modern as a car: what is more it can go almost anywhere"*. It permitted slower travel so as not to miss the atmosphere. Except on two occasions when he had to carry it, *"my steed faced all difficulties with a spirit that would have amazed D'Artagnan's yellow horse"*. When the editor learned that England had ten million cyclists, he asked Bernard if he could ride a bicycle. *"Could I ride a bicycle? In the Trail of the Three Musketeers was the first of my long series of cycle-travelogues. They have provided me with bread and butter, and sometimes jam, for more than twenty years."*

He began following D'Artagnan's route on a Sunday morning, feeling just like his hero *"off to make his fortune."* After several miles of lonely riding, he stumbled into an Orleans road race. When spectators sarcastically scoffed, he turned onto a tow path, where a runaway horse forced him into the Loire. *"Already I had perceived that I was no D'Artagnan: those spectators would not have jeered twice at him!"* When he failed to cover the sixty leagues D'Artagnan had covered in twelve hours, he put it down to the musketeer's not having to pedal a bicycle. Despite this ignominious beginning, he continued on to Paris, where he found cycling *"a nerve-wracking business."* After a month's travel he returned to England and applied for life insurance, wondering why he had not completed the application before the journey. In response to the question about his nerves, he replied he had just come from cycling in Paris, and the company accepted his application without further question.

On his second excursion, during which he followed the Danube from the Black Forest to the Black Sea, he *"made a great friend of my bicycle"*, elevating the relationship between rider and bicycle to a more intimate level. He refused to see his only link to England, which served him faithfully every day, as merely a collection of steel tubes. *"I called him George. I used to argue with him as we rode along together. It was nice to speak English occasionally."* After his return to England he went on the lecture circuit, where an official ridiculed him for naming his bicycle George. *"I politely and gently replied that I had taken a perfectly ordinary British bicycle, which had previously carried me round twenty-one European countries; had ridden him through Yugoslavia and Albania, along roads which were among the worst in Europe; that my only casualties had been a few spokes; that he had not had even a single puncture; that he had never balked at the most impossible conditions; that he had aroused envy and admiration everywhere for his sterling qualities, and that a bicycle which could do all these things, carrying a thirty-pound pack and a fifteen-stone rider, was a credit to England, and deserved the best name England could provide"*.

Between tours Newman frequently appeared on the BBC's Children's Hour, which received a letter from a young girl who remembered George but forgot Newman: *"When is that man coming on again who has a bicycle named George?"*

He based his first travel book on a walking adventure, though he found it limited his range, while trains and buses limited his flexibility. He believed travelling by car indicated wealth, thus separating him from the peasants he wanted to meet. When he talked to people from a car, they responded to his questions from a distance, standing to attention and calling him "sir." When he met the same people the next day riding his bicycle, he found them much more friendly and easier to talk to, more relaxed and forthcoming. On his bicycle he averaged six to ten miles an hour, planned his own route and changed it as necessary. He carried his belongings in his Great War rucksack, which gave him total freedom to come and go as he pleased. He averaged fifty to sixty miles a day, with plenty of time to explore and see the sights. By travelling in this way, he demonstrated how people on restricted incomes could do the same.

Newman's bias for English bicycles approached obsession. In the Estonian university town of Tartu, the students had cheap German machines, *"which can only by courtesy be called a bicycle at all"*. He rode with a teenager who thought his Swedish bicycle superior to English models. When challenged to a race, Newman suggested a coasting competition and easily outdistanced him. When the young man learned who he rode with, he exclaimed in awestruck terms, *"so this is George!"*. In Pomerania, even though he was not a racer, Newman accepted a challenge to race.

George, a Starley with a three speed Sturmey Archer gear, raced over a two-kilometre road course in a series of elimination heats, romping *"home an easy winner by fifty yards."* Newman left Plevlje with a twelve year old on a cheap German bicycle *"which rattled and groaned at the rigours of the road. George regarded his opposite number with the utmost contempt; in the lower stages of the climb George moved along majestically in bottom gear while his German comrade made remarkably heavy going."* Not only did Newman prefer English bicycles, he always rode with an English Brooks saddle, going so far as to keep the saddle when he changed bicycles. In Burgundy, near Lyons, one of his saddle springs broke, which left him riding with a gentle slope. Unfortunately, the replacement spring he acquired was slightly larger, which left him with a gentle slope in the opposite direction. *"However, I preferred this to the French saddles offered as possibilities, they had no springs at all."* After travelling the Balkans, Newman found England a pleasant place to live. *"Only by seeing other lands do we appreciate the virtues of our own; we in England don't know when we are well off."*

Newman followed his Three Musketeers ramble with an excursion from the Black Forest source of the Danube to its end in the Black Sea. While all of his bicycle travel books sold consistently, which dramatically supplemented his income from the British Civil Service, this one became one of his most popular travel books. Twenty years later, with *The Blue Danube* out of print, Jenkins, his publisher, asked him to retrace his route, especially since both the political and social environments had changed. In *Still Flows the Danube* Newman spent much time reflecting on the changes wrought by communism and the Russians, especially in Austria which was still under divided occupation. From Austria, he went to Hungary. Following several delays he entered, but without George. While there he borrowed bicycles for day trips. Newman's second trip along the Danube came between the uprisings in East Germany and Hungary. He noted some resistance to communism, but believed too much liberalization would lead to harsh repression. Given the difficulties he endured entering Hungary he ended his trip there, without attempting to acquire visas to either Rumania or Bulgaria. As he retraced his steps he fell ill in Munich. Appendicitis led to peritonitis and an order from the surgeon that he was to avoid any strenuous activity for the next three years. Sticking to that instruction his next travel book, *Unknown Germany*, did not appear until 1958, at which time he rode a motor cycle named Norman.

During the Second World War, when German propaganda was beginning to damage the relationship between England and the United States, the Ministry of Education sent him to North America to strengthen the ties.

Returning to England, Newman used the knowledge and experiences he gained in North America to lecture throughout England. Generally, Newman gave a mid-day lecture at a school, factory or club and then one in the evening for the general public. When he arrived at the Raleigh factory in Nottingham, the workers teased him for riding a BSA. Their factory made very few bicycles during the war, as it had "more urgent business", but the manager was pleased Newman's name had risen high enough on the waiting list that he expected to have a bicycle for him before the end of the war.

Bernard Newman continued cycling and writing for the decade following the end of Second World War. In his last travel book, *Visa to Russia*, he flew to Moscow and made day trips on rented bicycles, which as one might expect, did not equal George. On three of his post war rides Newman travelled with his daughter Hilary. It is only fitting that since father rode a bicycle named George, the daughter travelled on Bess, King George's consort. Though Newman's children managed to beat him at nearly every sport they played, he remained able to cycle further and faster, waiting for them to appear so he could ask what had kept them.

He always travelled wearing a coat with shirt and tie, riding slowly and engaging the people he met along the way. He summed it up nicely during his journey to North America during the Second World War: "My tour across the Maritimes sounds like a mad gallop, but it did include some hours of ease, when I was able to borrow a bicycle and ride out into the countryside, halting at random to talk to the folk I met."

In 1956 he was a guest 'Castaway' of Roy Plomley on Desert Island Discs. Amongst the music he chose was 'Che farò senza Euridice' (What is Life?) from Orpheus and Euridice. Soloist: Hilary Newman, his daughter.

In the Civil Service journal Opinion of November 1948, when reporting on his resignation, it was pointed out that “He was the first Englishman to go behind the ‘Iron Curtain’. He was nearly on the scene of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima. (He had described such a bomb three years earlier.) He interviewed Aung San a few hours before the Burman leader was assassinated. He has lived with Balkan gypsies and worked on a collective farm in Russia. He has hunted lion with the Masai, armed only with a bow and arrow, was chased by an elephant on his fiftieth birthday, flew across the Atlantic in the first Liberator, did a job for Walt Disney in Hollywood. Has appeared in radio features from the Brain's-Trust to the Children's Hour, has ridden his bicycle across sixty countries, appeared in grand opera in Paris, and has written comic songs for Arthur Askey. In his spare time, he has given over 3,000 popular lectures in the last seven years, for several years he has headed the "popularity poll" for lecturers, flying over 100,000 miles and uttering 20 million words. Is this the potted biography of a civil servant?”

Bernard is one of the very few people to have an entire column to himself in “Who’s Who”.

So, a man of mystery. What conclusion have you reached? Was he a spy or did he achieve his ambition of inventing a new way of writing a ‘thriller’?

At the beginning of this article I remarked on Bernard’s lifelong friendship with Arthur Dawkins. It became customary for Bernard to send Arthur a signed copy of his latest book. In 2009 Arthur’s daughter contacted the Dixie Grammar School Association to enquire whether they would like to receive Arthur’s collection of these signed copies. After some negotiations relating to their delivery, there were fifteen of them, we received them on 16th October and they were presented to the School on the 19th.



**HERBERT E. BLACK      1914 - 1940**



## **SGT. PILOT HERBERT E. BLACK RAFVR.**

Herbert Ernest Black was born on June 12th 1914 at Measham and Gwen Cuthbert on August 8th that year at Ibstock. When Bert was a few weeks old he was taken to Ibstock, where his father had become landlord of the Waggon (sic) and Horses. His father was a rural district councillor and later became the village postmaster. Gwen spent her early life on High Street where her father owned a shop. Bert and Gwen went to the same village school, passed their grammar school scholarship together, were confirmed at the same ceremony at St Denys's Church, and one joined the Scouts, the other the Guides.

Bert cycled each day to the Dixie Grammar School at Market Bosworth, where he excelled, especially at sports, playing for the school's cricket team. Gwen attended Coalville Grammar School, again excelling. Bert and Gwen played in the same team which represented the county at mixed hockey. Bert studied to be a weights and measures inspector, based at Coalville, while Gwen qualified to be a teacher. The pair were inseparable and in love.

In 1939 Bert joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, receiving training on Tiger Moth aircraft at Desford. World War II started that year, and early in 1940 Sgt. Pilot Herbert Black was posted to 226 Squadron RAF stationed in France. When our forces withdrew from France, Bert returned to Desford, but not before flying over Caldecote Road School in Leicester where Gwen was teaching. At 7am on June 17th 1940, Bert threw a pebble at Gwen's bedroom window to wake her. They dashed to Leicester to obtain a special licence, and were married that afternoon at St. Denys's Church in Ibstock. The happy couple spent the following four days of Bert's leave on honeymoon in Matlock.

In the summer of 1940, the RAF had 286 Spitfires and 463 Hurricanes to defend the United Kingdom. The Luftwaffe had nearly 3,000 aircraft at its disposal. Bert, by now a fighter pilot, was with 32 Squadron and then later 257 Squadron where his Flight Commander was Pete Brothers, later Air Commodore Peter Brothers CBE, DSO DFC and Bar. In October Bert was seconded into 46 Squadron. He transferred to allow two Polish pilots, who were close friends, to remain together.

On October 29th, at around noon, four Hurricane squadrons attacked a Luftwaffe force over Deal in Kent at 22,000 feet. Bert and his fellow pilots attacked the bombers so exposing themselves to the covering German fighters, Messerschmidt BF 109s. The German bombers suffered heavy losses and fled for home but not before Bert was intercepted and badly strafed a BF 109. (Continuously machine-gunned by an enemy from the air.) Most of Bert's leg had been gored and the cockpit was a mass of flames. From over 20,000 feet the blazing Hurricane spiralled into a death dive. Eventually Bert freed the jammed hood and baled out, happy to see his parachute open. Although in terrible pain he was aware of two Hurricanes covering his descent to prevent enemy aircraft from machine gunning him.

Gwen raced to Ashford Hospital in Kent to find her husband with severe burns and serious injuries. On November 9th, 1940, on the tenth midnight of Gwen's vigil, and during the 55th air raid since she had been there, Bert died. He is buried in the graveyard at St. Denys's Church. They were married for just five months.

On the evening of November the 16th, 1951, at a meeting of The Old Bosworthian's Association, a plaque listing the names of former Dixie Grammar School pupils who were killed in the second World War was unveiled and dedicated by Canon Payne, the Rector of Market Bosworth. Amongst those names was H. E. Black. Displayed on the wall of the corridor leading to the main hall in the School it was passed by hundreds of pupils every day. I was one of them. But we took no notice of this plaque whatsoever! Bert's name was there in full view but it did not register with any of us.

Then in 2007, fifty six years later, The Dixie Grammar School Association received an E-mail from the Headmaster's office asking if we knew anything about a former pupil, Herbert Black. No! No-one had any knowledge of him as a former pupil. It was suggested that we might do some research into the life of Herbert Black as the Battle of Britain Historical Society would like to dedicate a special plaque to his memory. It was only then that the tragic story of Herbert's life came to light.



When the facts were known the decision was taken. Of course the School would be honoured to allow the B.B.H.S. to install a special plaque as part of their plan to place such plaques in the last school attended by every Battle of Britain pilot.

The School was delighted to host a commemorative assembly for the unveiling of the plaque on Wednesday October 15th 2008. A full school assembly and commemorative service was attended by the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Lady Gretton, members of Sgt Black's family, the Mayor of Hinckley and Bosworth, Chairman of Leicestershire County Council and representatives from the RAF, the Royal British Legion and the Dixie Grammar School Association. Following a short presentation about the life of Sgt. Pilot Black, the commemorative plaque was unveiled by his niece Mrs Elaine Hall.

D.G.S.A. member Graham Rawlings then set about finding Herbert's grave. We now knew that he was buried at St. Denys' in Ibstock but whereabouts? After hours of searching it was finally located, overgrown and full of weeds. Over the next few weeks it was cleared and fresh gravel laid. It was now ready for the first of what has become an annual laying of a Royal British Legion poppy wreath by students from the Dixie Grammar School and members of the D.G.S.A. A simple service of remembrance usually attended by the Headmaster, a few members of Staff and a small group of History students.

In 2019 attention was drawn to the Leicestershire County Council's Green Plaque Scheme and the decision was taken that the School should nominate Herbert for this prestigious award, which differs from others in that it is made following a vote of the general public. The nomination proved successful and Herbert was awarded a Green Plaque and so it is the people of Leicestershire and beyond who have seen fit to recognise this former pupil's sacrifice in this way.

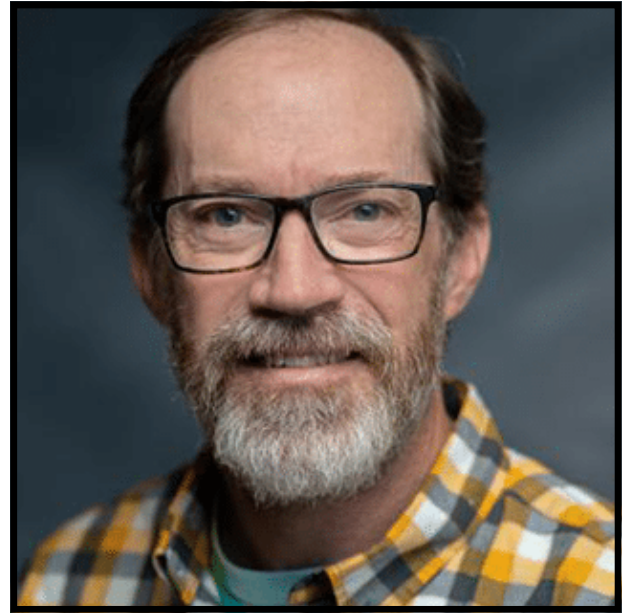
The plaque, which is attached to the wall of The Waggon (sic) and Horses, Herbert's former home, was unveiled at a special ceremony on October 13th 2022 by Dr. Kevin Feltham, Chairman of Leicestershire County Council.

Link to the GBNews report on YouTube.

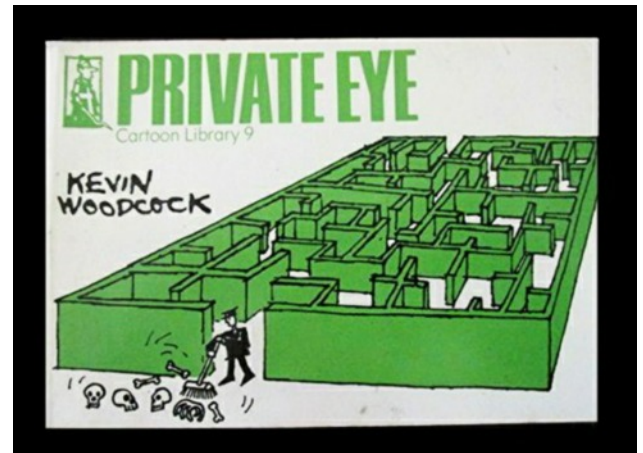
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIdGgwUsuWw>



**TONY HOLLAND**  
**1932 - 2014**



**KEVIN WOODCOCK**  
**1942 - 2007**



## Tony Holland and Kevin Woodcock

Over the past five months I have introduced members to five former pupils of the Dixie Grammar School who have changed the lives of many people in lots of ways. This month I would like to tell you about a couple of men whose main aim in life was to make us smile. Yes, Dixie produced two world famous cartoonists, Tony Holland and Kevin Woodcock. I'll begin with Tony's story.

He was born in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, on 7th August 1932, the son of a schoolmaster. His family moved to Market Bosworth, living on Station Road about three hundred yards from the School. He started in Form 1, the Preparatory Department at Easter 1943. Tony had already passed the entrance exam and so moved into Form 2 in the September. He worked hard and was top of his form in most subjects for nearly all of his time at school. He was popular and a good all rounder. He was the opening batsman for the school cricket team and his great love of cricket remained with him for the rest of his life. Nicknamed 'JOSH', because he was always "joshing around" (engaging in playful, harmless fun). He acted in form plays, and took the lead in the school production of 'Abraham Lincoln'.

In the sixth form, one day Josh bounced into the room between lessons and saw three girls apparently sharing small coloured sweets. As expected, he grabbed some and gobbled them up, to the delight of the girls, for they were Bob Martins' Conditioning Tablets for dogs. The girls were more than satisfied with the success of their trick, although the ring leader was severely reprimanded by her mother, fearing for Josh's life. He, however was none the worse for being reconditioned.

He studied French, History, and English in the sixth form, and was subsequently entered for the Dixie Scholarship to Emmanuel College. However on the first day of the exam he was hospitalised in Cambridge with blood poisoning. So ended his chance there, but he subsequently took his degree at Sheffield University in History and French. Two years of National Service followed his time at University. He elected to go into the RAF, and was posted to Cardington, where in company with other graduates, he spent his two years testing new recruits. Whilst there he and his friends started a light-hearted magazine for the base entitled 'Goon Shine' and this is when he first started cartooning.

He taught English and History for a while at Hinckley, and then briefly in London, until he became established as a professional freelance cartoonist and illustrator. A self-taught artist, Tony sold his first cartoon to the Daily Sketch in the 1950s, and later drew a series of long thin cartoons for the paper, called "Tall Story". These were printed vertically along the gutter and ran for eighteen months. In 1963 Tony became City cartoonist on the Sunday Telegraph, producing a series of pocket cartoons entitled "Nine to Five." In 1966 he began another series in the Daily Telegraph, under the title "Day by Day" and he also provided cartoons for the paper's "Peterborough" column working alongside Basil Hone. Each cartoonist submitted three roughs a day, one of which would be selected for the next day's paper. Tony drew for the Daily Telegraph for more than 30 years, and held the record for the most years served as a freelance cartoonist in the paper's history.

In later life he became in demand as an After Dinner speaker, and was a popular member of the Cartoonists Club of Great Britain. He was always a creature of habit, working long hours into the night and early in the morning to get his topical cartoons ready for the dailies and journals. He only took a few days off occasionally to visit family in Dawlish and even then sending his work in. He also loved to walk the Kennet and Avon Canal with his friends. Tony continued to work until he was hospitalised with cancer. A month later he died at his home in Hampstead in November 2014. He is remembered very fondly by all who knew him, for he was well known for his kindness, encouragement, quick one-liners, warmth of character, self-deprecating nature, and perhaps most of all, for his humour.

Now the story of a recluse, Kevin Woodcock.

Kevin was born at Leicester General Hospital. After attending Holmfield Avenue Junior School in Leicester in 1954 he entered the Dixie Grammar School, Market Bosworth. It was here that he met a good friend of the M.B.S., Graham Rawlings. Graham still has an "original Woodcock" cartoon in an autograph book from their time at School.

Kevin then went on to study at the Leicester College of Art from 1961 to 1964. At first he tried to make a living by painting people's pets, but advertisements placed in a local newspaper yielded no clients. He then took on a variety of jobs, working variously as a farm labourer, van driver, petrol-station attendant and bus driver before becoming a full-time freelance cartoonist in 1970.

Kevin was perhaps best known for his captionless and rather surreal drawings, which appeared in *Private Eye* and *The Spectator* from the 1970s to the 1990s. Influenced by the work of Rowland Emmett, André François and Ronald Searle, his drawings, usually single-frame but sometimes in two or more panels, rarely had captions and were always signed with his full name in capitals and written over two lines.

His boxy vehicles and angular figures were instantly recognisable and his imaginative ideas once led Richard Ingrams, former editor of *Private Eye*, to describe him as an artist who "specialises in architectural fantasies and surreal effects". He usually worked in pen and ink, drawing straight onto A4 art or thick typing paper without sketching first; for colour he used watercolour and gouache. He occasionally also used collage.

He contributed cartoons to *Private Eye*, the *Daily Sketch*, *The Spectator*, *Knave*, *Fiesta*, *Brain Damage*, *Punch* and *The Oldie*, among others. In addition, he published three collections of his work: *Private Eye Kevin Woodcock* (1978), *City Rules OK* (1983) and *You Are Here: the best of Kevin Woodcock* (1987). More than 40 of his drawings were reproduced in *The Penguin Book of Private Eye Cartoons*.

His drawings were exhibited in London at the Cartoon Gallery, founded by Mel Calman, and (with those of Ken Pyne) at the Jack Duncan gallery. A number of his cartoons were also included in "Eye Times", an exhibition to mark the 35th anniversary of *Private Eye* held at the National Portrait Gallery in London in 1997, and in "Private Eye at 45" held at the Cartoon Museum (2006-07). Examples of his work can be found in the collection of the British Cartoon Archive (formerly the Centre for the Study of Cartoons and Caricature) at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

By nature reclusive, Kevin was rarely seen among the journalistic community and very few of his editors or fellow cartoonists ever met him. This is borne out by the fact Graham Rawlings tried to contact him in 2004 to invite him to a reunion of former Dixie pupils to celebrate 50 years since joining the School. In spite of several attempts he received no reply. Though he was a member of the British Cartoonists' Association for many years, he seldom attended their events and his only known public appearance was in 1981 when he was interviewed in his Leicester studio for a BBC2 Arena programme about *Private Eye* cartoonists. Sadly Kevin died in July 2007.



**PROF. DAME CAROL BLACK GBE**  
**1939 -**



**The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire,  
G.B.E.**

## **A Christmas Carol - the life of Professor Dame Carol Black GBE, FRCP, FMedSci. so far.**

On Boxing Day 1939, just a few months after the start of the Second World War, a little girl was born in Barwell, Leicestershire. Born to a couple who had longed for a child for years her arrival at Christmas time came as a special blessing. Both of her parents were members of huge Victorian working-class families. After marrying late in life, they found it difficult to have children and baby Carol Mary eventually arrived when her mother was in her mid-forties. Possibly in an attempt to keep her in good health, they fed her a great deal. Dame Carol describes herself at that time “as a little, round Michelin person with masses of blonde curls”.

Her home in Barwell was set amidst the shoe factories for which the village was famous. Children born into this background were expected to follow a set routine. Leave school at fifteen and get a job in one of factories. There would have been little hope of any further secondary education. The brighter ones might progress to a more responsible position within their chosen factory, maybe becoming the foreman in charge of a small group of workers, but that was all they could expect for the next forty or fifty years. The situation was clear, you had been born into this lifestyle, get used to it. You were trapped.

Carol’s father was typical of one trapped in this way. He was an accomplished singer with a fine voice and as a young man won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music. He wasn’t able to go and later became deeply resentful about the life he never had. Instead of a career on the national, or even international stage, he had to be content with simply local success. As a young girl Carol soon became aware of thoughts that there had to be more to life than a 9.00 to 5.00 factory existence.

She managed to pass her 11 plus exams and qualified for a place at the Dixie Grammar School in nearby Market Bosworth. Could this be her escape route? She was the first member of her family to qualify for a grammar school education and so there was no one to advise her on what to expect. Furthermore, what on earth was “University”? A whole new world was opening up for young Carol as in September 1951 she took her first steps into this new world of academia and for the first time met the fearsome character of her new Headmaster, the harsh disciplinarian, W. F. Gosling.

Pupils at Dixie were divided in to A and B streams. The A stream was for the brightest pupils whilst the slower learners were put into the B stream, giving them a further year to prepare for their General Certificate of Education examinations. Carol was placed in the B stream. Mr Gosling struck fear into most of his pupils but what became obvious to Carol was his commitment to excellence, his belief in the children of the school, and his desire that as many of them as possible should do well. It did not matter what type of background you came from, it did not matter whether your family was rich or poor if you had the aptitude and were willing to work hard, Mr Gosling was behind you. During her years at the Dixie Grammar School she slowly changed from being a rather awkward eleven-year-old into someone who had more confidence and believed that she really could go to “University”.

Under Mr. Gosling’s guidance she did work hard and successfully passed her “O” level GCE exams meaning that she could stay on and study for the “A” levels which would enable her to apply for a place at university. In 1957 her hard work was rewarded when she was made a Sub-Prefect, her first taste of the responsibility of leadership. In 1958 she won the Hopewell Prize for History, passed her “A” level exams, was awarded a County Scholarship and made a Full Prefect. In 1959 she won the prize for Good Conduct, presented annually by the Chairman of the Governors. She was promoted to Head Girl and accepted by the University of Bristol.

She chose to study History inspired by the brilliant and exceptional teacher, John Moreton. His approach to teaching History was to concentrate on the people and their lives rather than dates of battles, treaties and constitutional matters. Carol found his approach captivating and throughout her time at Dixie this was the subject that interested her most. Her mind was made up, at Bristol she would study History. However, when she got to university, it was all completely different and she found it very dull and not helped by a ‘blue stocking’ tutor, Dr Sharpe.

But her time at Bristol was not all doom and gloom; she was elected as Senior Student within her Hall of Residence and followed this by becoming Lady President of the Student's Union. Throwing herself into these roles helped her to develop further her leadership skills while relieving her of what had now become the drudgery of her studies. By the end of that first year, she knew that she wanted to study medicine instead. She was in need of that sense of discovery, to feel that she was doing something that would improve people's lives. At last, in 1962, she was awarded a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and Carol could concentrate fully on her new interest in medicine.

It was unlikely that she would get in to medical school as she had only studied Science to O-level, so she tried a different route. She would become a Medical Social Worker. However, the Course Director knew that she really wanted to become a doctor and she was advised to apply for a place on the 'pre-medical course' called 1st MB at Bristol University and was accepted. The lesson she had learned was that "if you think you've made a wrong choice, speak up. It's never too late to correct such mistakes". But, sadly, her plans were thwarted, because Leicestershire County Council Education Authority (perhaps not unreasonably) would not support someone who already had a degree and so for financial reasons she had to give up her place on the course.

Totally frustrated with the mess her life was in she decided to join Voluntary Services Overseas and teach. She asked them to "Send me as far away as possible" and so they did, with a posting to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in the Central Pacific Ocean. (These are now called Kiribati and Tuvalu). When she arrived, after nine days sailing from Fiji on a copra-collecting boat, she discovered much to her surprise, that they were planning to pay her a graduate salary which meant that she could save enough money to start the course. She immediately sent a telegram to Bristol asking them to let her take up her place the following year, which they agreed to do.

During her time at university and in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Carol wrote several letters to the editor of *The Wolstanian*, Dixie's school magazine. In one she describes in detail the landscape of the beautiful atoll of Tarawa. How different from the grubby back-street factories of her home town. In another she wrote of preparing for a celebratory feast when "dressed in a grass skirt and garlands of flowers I can almost believe that I am a South Sea Islander."

Returning to England in 1965 she enrolled as a mature student in the first intake of 'pre-clinical' medical students at Bristol University where she won prizes in surgery, obstetrics and pathology. In 1970, at the age of 30, she graduated with Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degrees. She obtained full registration with the General Medical Council the following year. After graduating, Carol stayed in Bristol to work in general hospital medicine as a junior doctor. It was here, when unable to treat a dying patient, her interest was seized by Scleroderma, a rare auto-immune disease involving the excess production of collagen in the skin and, often fatally, in internal organs. Her higher medical training was in London and from there she became a rheumatologist at the West Middlesex District General Hospital. There she began developing a special service for Scleroderma, secured her first Wellcome Foundation grant, and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1988.

In 1989 she moved to the Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead as Consultant Rheumatologist, becoming Professor of Rheumatology in 1994. She built a comprehensive centre for Scleroderma and related connective tissue diseases, continuously funded by programme grants from Arthritis Research UK. This became a recognised NHS referral centre delivering a hub and spoke outreach service with thirteen clinics across the UK, bringing together specialists to undertake joint clinical trials and research. As a result, the life expectancy of Scleroderma patients was significantly improved, and the death rate decreased dramatically. The Centre for Connective Tissue Diseases at the Royal Free Hospital, which developed from this work and of which she became Head, is internationally renowned and flourishes to this day. In 1999 she became the hospital's Medical Director.

In 1997 she was elected onto the council of the Royal College of Physicians and in 1999 she became Clinical Vice-President of the college. In 2002 was made a CBE in recognition of her clinical and research work on Scleroderma.

Also, that year she was elected President of the Royal College of Physicians, only the second female President since 1518. She was very clear about the contribution she could make in this role and the changes that needed to be made. She remembers with considerable satisfaction the work that she did, including that on the career path of women in medicine. It was this role that also helped her to realise that she could work effectively with the government. She maintained one day of hospital practice until 2006

Carol currently has 12 Honorary degrees but one that gives her special pleasure was awarded in 2003, an honorary Doctorate of Science, from the University of Bristol where she had studied medicine and then in 2005 she became a Dame of the British Empire, the equivalent of a knight. Dame Carol stepped down as President of the Royal College of Physicians in 2006 and became Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and the government, led by Tony Blair, made her its National Director for Health and Work. Her interests in the social determinants of health (education, nutrition, transport, housing, work etc.) had been born whilst President of the college. Her first report for government “Working for a Healthier tomorrow” was a seminal report that changed behaviour and practice in the world of work.

From 2006, for ten years, Dame Carol chaired the Nuffield Trust for Research and Policy Studies in Health Services, a UK charity that aims to improve health by assessing and influencing healthcare policy-making, its vision being to help achieve a high-quality health and social system in the UK. She guided the reshaping of its role and structures in a changing environment, enabling the Trust to function as an independent authoritative voice on health matters in the United Kingdom and internationally.

Still maintaining her ties to her old school, in 2007 Dame Carol accepted the invitation to become a Patron of the Dixie Grammar School. The following year she delivered the Address and gave out the prizes at the School’s Speech Day. That same year she delivered the Address at the Founder’s Day Church Service celebrating the Twenty Fifth Annual Reunion of the Dixie Grammar School Association, an organisation consisting of over three hundred former pupils.

In 2010 her recommendation to change from a “Sick note” to a “Fit note”, the official statement from a registered healthcare professional giving their medical opinion on a person's fitness for work became law.

The coalition government asked her to work with David Frost, the Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, to do an in depth review of sickness absence. The study was sponsored jointly by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and was entitled “Health at work – an independent review of sickness absence.” This review has influenced policy for several years.

In 2009 she was appointed a Trustee of the National Portrait Gallery a role she filled for 8 years. In 2012 she stepped down as National Director for Health and Work, and in September became Principal of Newnham College, one of Cambridge’s colleges for women. In this role she took a great interest in attracting women from a wide range of backgrounds and established the annual Rosalind Franklin outreach conference for sixth formers, 80% from the state-maintained sector, from schools that rarely sent anyone to Cambridge. In collaboration with the Judge Business School she built a Women in Technology programme to encourage women to enter with confidence the world of business, technology and enterprise.

2013 saw her name added to the BBC Woman’s Hour Power List of 100 which aims to survey the achievements of British women across public life and offer some measure of the progress women have made in society. Its intention is to shine a light on the top female politicians, business women and leaders in their field – from areas as diverse as finance, education, health, engineering and the arts, and to show how much power these women have in modern Britain.



In 2015 the Prime Minister, David Cameron, asked her to advise him on whether withdrawing out-of-work sickness benefits from those struggling with drug or alcohol addiction or who were obese would encourage them to seek further medical help for their problems. The recommendations did not suggest that this would be an effective way forward but out of the review came 'return to work pathways' which have been shown to be effective for this cohort of patients.

On the lighter side of her life in 2016 she was invited to become a "castaway" on the BBC's Desert Island Discs. She regarded being invited as a great honour. "Music has played a big part in my life, and my choices included everything from Mozart to Gene Kelly to Tea for Two so that I would be able to carry on practising my tap dancing while cast away. And my luxury? Chanel No. 19, of course!" She has also been the guest of Jim Al-Khalili on the Life Scientific.

In 2018 she was appointed Chair of the British Library, the national Library of the UK and one of the largest libraries in the world. Its collections include more than 150 million items in over 400 languages.

2019 saw her finish her term as Principal of Newnham College, satisfied that she had used her skills and experience to help the students develop self-confidence, become more resilient and be willing to take more risks. She is keen to see more women have the courage to go on to careers in industry, technology or as entrepreneurs.

Dame Carol was then appointed by the government in 2019 to undertake an independent review on the supply, demand, treatment, recovery and prevention of illicit drugs. Such drugs drive 50% of homicides, 49% of serious acquisitive crime and a third of our prison places are filled by drug dependent people.

She was also selected as Chair of the 'What Works' Centre for Ageing Better. 2021 saw her publish a fourth major independent review for the Government.

Last year Dame Carol collected yet another Honorary Degree, this time she was conferred as Doctor of Social Sciences by the University of Hong Kong and I quote from the Citation; *"As an Expert Adviser to government, she authored three influential independent reviews on workers' health and wellbeing issues, pivotal to productivity and national policy. Galvanising widespread support from government, employers and others, she put across the core message that maintaining the health and wellbeing of employees throughout their working lives not only helps them and their families and the wider community, but also improves the economy, with increased productivity and reduced welfare costs. A fourth major independent review for the UK Government, published in 2021 - on illicit drugs, their demand, supply, treatment, recovery and prevention - has led to a new 10-year anti-drug strategy, with allocation of unprecedented additional funding for addiction treatment and recovery, with re-motivated workforce and collaborative working across government, hopefully leading to a safer society, with fewer homicides, reduction in serious acquisitive crime, and fewer drug-dependent people in prison."*

I wonder if that "rather awkward eleven-year-old" had any idea of what life had in store for her! Who could possibly have thought that as she took those first tentative steps into secondary education she would eventually have an impact on all of our lives? Wouldn't William Gosling have been proud of his pupil? We all will be proud and curious to see what our alumna does next!

An E-mail I received at 23:10 on 03/01/2024.

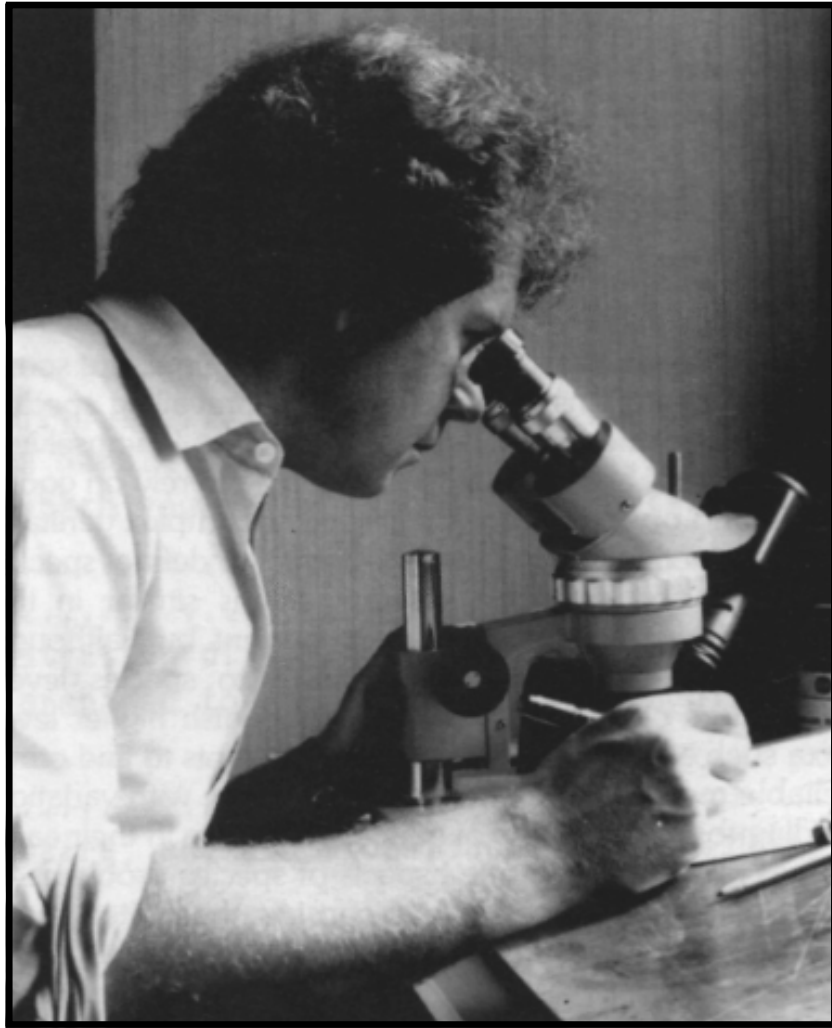
**Dear Walter, Did you see I got a GBE. I am delighted Carol**

A Grand Cross is the highest rank in the Order, and is very rarely awarded, recognising only the most exceptional and sustained service to the UK.

**From Newnham College, Cambridge;**

New Year Honours 2024: Former Newnham College principal Dame Carol Black awarded rare Dame Grand Cross after work on illicit drugs.

Professor Dame Carol Black, the former principal of Newnham College, Cambridge, who wrote a hard-hitting independent review of the impact of illicit drugs on society, has been made a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (GBE) for public service.



**DR. MICHAEL J. ROBERTS**

**1945 - 2020**

**CAUTION**

**This document contains**

**SPIDERS**



Michael John Roberts, “Mike” as he was known to his friends, was born in Leicester. His mother was well known locally as a talented artist. He started at Dixie in 1956 and proved to be hard working and studious. His mother had always encouraged the development of his exceptional observational and technical skills in a variety of artistic media, and so naturally he did well in Art. By the time he left school in 1962 he had submitted, and had accepted, 42 of his works for showing on the BBC’s programme “Sketch Club”. Although the BBC cannot confirm it, we believe this to be a record number!

However, Michael’s wish was to become a doctor. Art was purely a hobby. So with this in mind he worked hard to ensure exam results that would get him a place at university. He had always had a keen interest in wildlife and natural history and his extra-curricular activities in this field were strongly supported by the Head of Biology, Mr. H. I. James.

In 1962 the hereditary Governor, Sir Wolstan Dixie, gave permission for Mr. James to set up a Field Study Group on his land in order to record the wildlife around Beau Pool in Bosworth Park. As you can imagine Michael eagerly accepted the opportunity to join and became one of the more active members. It was at this time the he became interested in, if not obsessed by, SPIDERS!

His school work went well and he passed eight subjects at “O” level and three at “A” level, including winning the “A” Level Prize for Biology. This was sufficient to win him a place at Sheffield University to study Medicine. Before leaving he presented a copy of a book, “The Atom”, to the School Library then set off to become a doctor.

Michael graduated from his studies at Sheffield in 1968 and began his career as a General Practitioner. It was during his time at University he became more focused on spiders and he took on the challenge of studying and illustrating them. He clearly felt that he could improve on the standard of illustration of both genitalia and whole body images and thereby ease the way for the novice, who may have struggled to find a way through the identification keys of the day. He also recognised the advantages of spider illustrations at greater than life size. In March 1968, while resident in Sheffield, we find him being admitted to membership of the British Spider Study Group, at its Annual Meeting. This was the successor organisation to the Flatford Mill Spider Study Group and then became the British Arachnological Society (BAS). By this time, he had honed his illustration methodology and technique and produced the first of his characteristic larger than life colour illustrations.

As a GP, he is remembered by former patients for the spider pictures in his surgery! One wonders if he treated arachnophobes? At the time, as well as carrying out local surveys, he was also working on spider specimens from various Royal Society expeditions to the Indian Ocean. He finally published papers on these spiders from the Seychelles and the Aldabra Atoll in 1978–9. Clearly an achiever, he was elected to the Council of the BAS and served, almost continuously, from 1973–1985.

By the late 1970s, he was producing more full-colour illustrations, using inks, and considering the possibility of publication. He is remembered as having a stall at the Wigan Insect Show, advertising his natural history illustration skills. While in Sheffield, he was establishing a successful medical practice and developing an interest in using acupuncture as a treatment for various ailments. Indeed, at least one BAS member had their ‘arachnologist’s knee’ successfully treated. His receptionist, Debbie, became his second wife and, together, they wrote the spider chapter in *The Natural History of the Sheffield Area and the Peak District*.

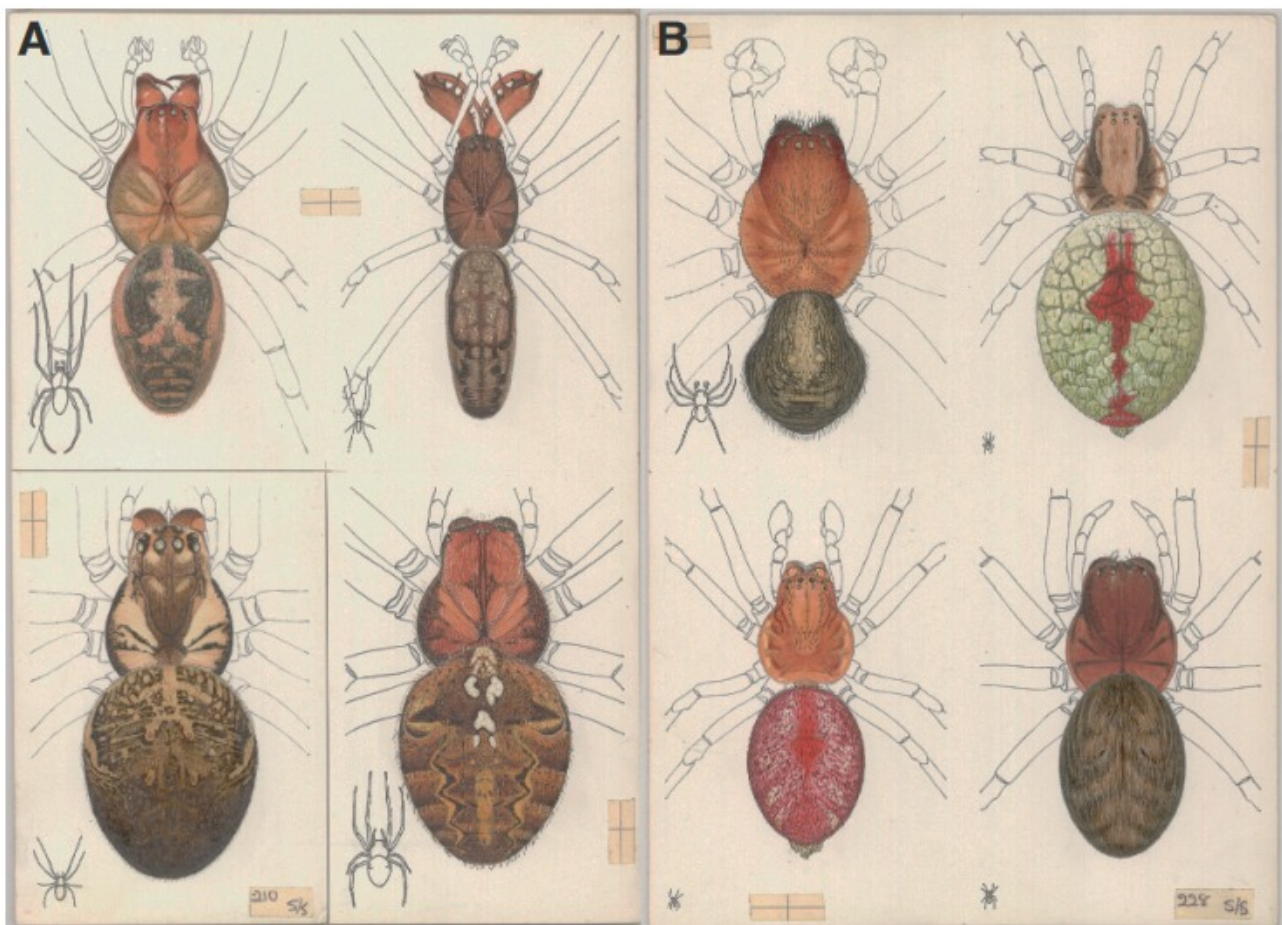
The spider illustration project finally came to fruition when Basil Harley of Harley Books agreed to publish *The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1985. Michael later discovered that another publisher, who had rejected the opportunity, subsequently entered it in a trade magazine competition for the “Oddest Publisher’s Reject”, not realising it had already achieved success! That tickled Michael. Around this time, he was elected to the position of Honorary Secretary of the BAS, which he held from 1986 until 1997.

In the Spring of 1990, he announced that he was giving up medicine, and moved from Sheffield to a run-down farmhouse with three acres of land in Banffshire: Burns Farm near Cornhill. Michael proved his versatility by taking on most of the renovation and settling down to “the good life”. What would have been the chalmers (loft accommodation for farm workers above the farm buildings) was converted to a lab/studio and Michael was up with the sun working on his illustrations.

The next project was the publication of an updated, compact edition of *The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland*. This New paperback version was published in 1993, with the original text bound in one volume and the plates separately for ease of simultaneous reference. Several spiders which had been added to the British list, perhaps due to the increased spider recording his book had generated, were added in an appendix with new illustrations and descriptions.

In his studio, work was now beginning on a small-format field guide, to be published by Collins. This covered all families but included only the larger and more distinctive of the money spiders (i.e. not the tiny black ones). This was for a more general audience, at a much lower price point, but still making it possible to identify all larger species. The big problem for him was that he was unable to use the illustrations from his previous book (for copyright reasons) in this new book. Nothing daunted, he set about redrawing and creating a series of new plates with the legs intricately interwoven to fit the smaller format. The Collins Field Guide was published in 1995 and is still in print (now by HarperCollins). It was so popular that it was translated into Dutch and French (two editions) and in total has sold over 40,000 copies—quite spectacular for a field guide, and even more so for one on spiders!

Michael produced a staggering 1350 spider-related plates, which were published in “*The Spiders of Britain and Northern Europe*” (1995), “*The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland*” (1985 & 1987), “*Spider Families of the World and their Spinnerets*” (2015) and “*Gnaphosid Genera of the World*” (2007). The Natural History Museum in London (NHM) now owns all of these plates.



From *The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland*.

A plate 135; B plate 7. Both 265 × 185 mm.

Credit: *The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.*

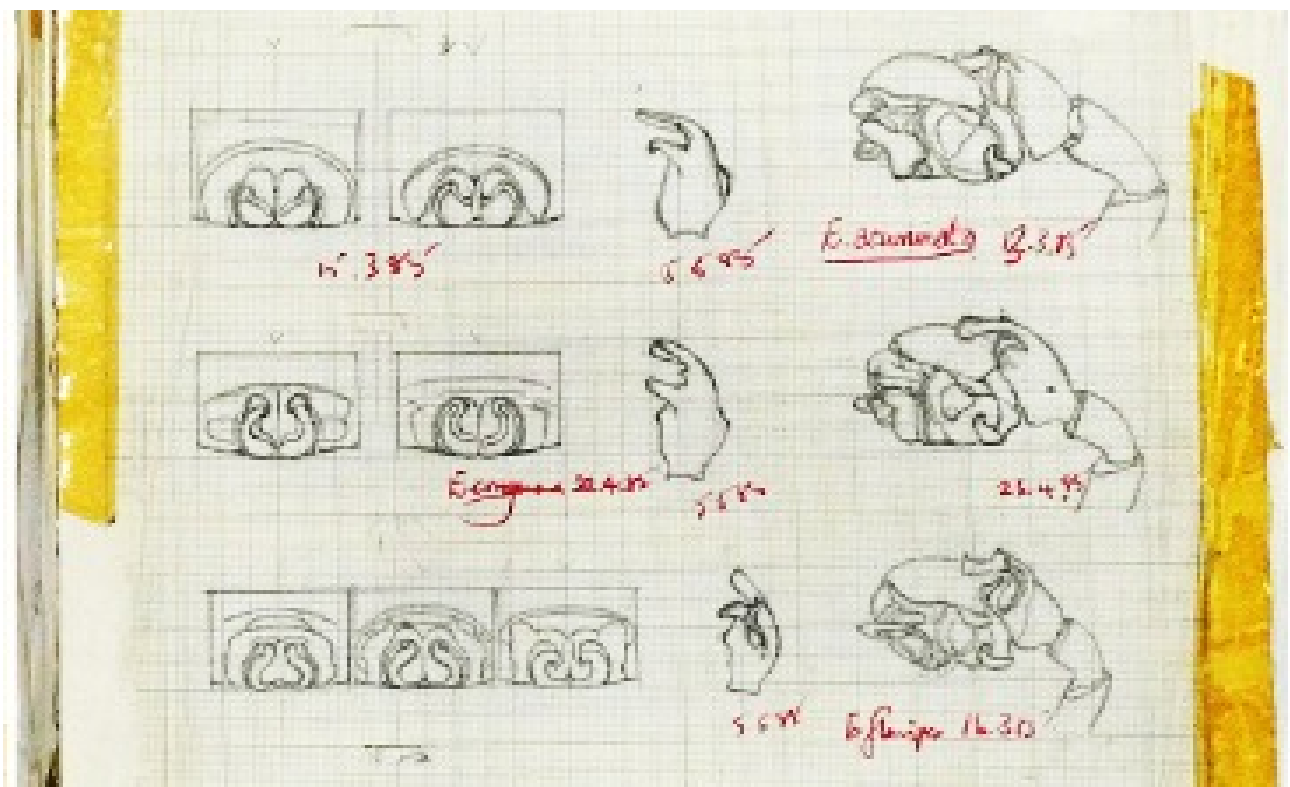
The Michael J. Roberts archive forms part of the Special Collections in the Library and Archives Department. It is specially housed in two locked glass-fronted cabinets in a locked room.



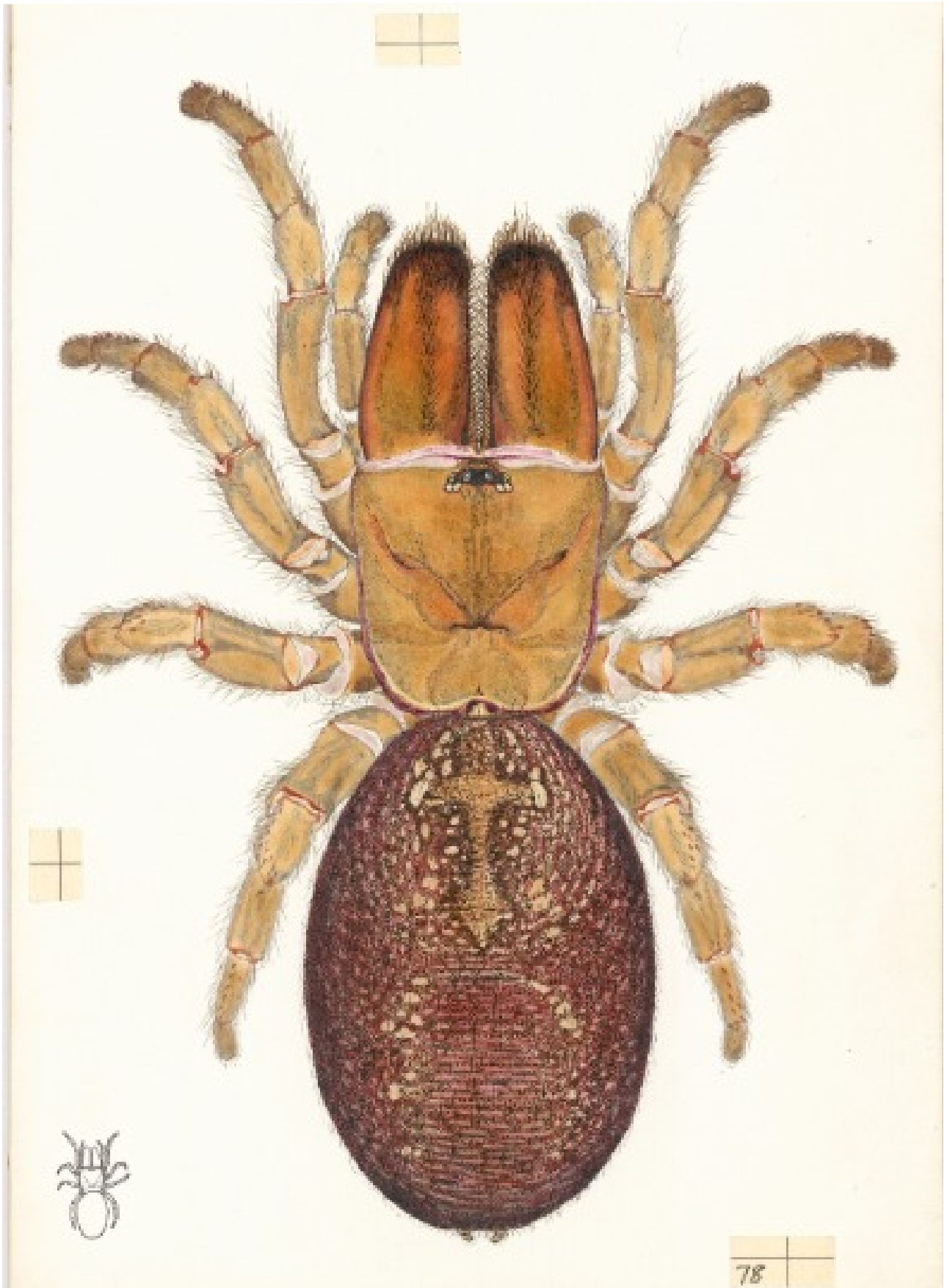
One of the two locked cabinets housing the archive and an example of a bespoke box containing plates from part of the archive.

*Credit: Janet Beccaloni.*

The artist had glued several works to a non-archival back board. This back board is yellowing, delaminating and warping. However, to try to remove the plates is more likely to cause damage than leaving them in situ. Several pages from the “Collection of approximately 600 graphite drawings, tracings and MS. notes of spiders c. 1990s” are edged with Sellotape. Sellotape is non-archival cellulose film with glue and is always a conservator’s nightmare because over time it discolours, loses its adhesive properties, and stains the medium to which it is attached.



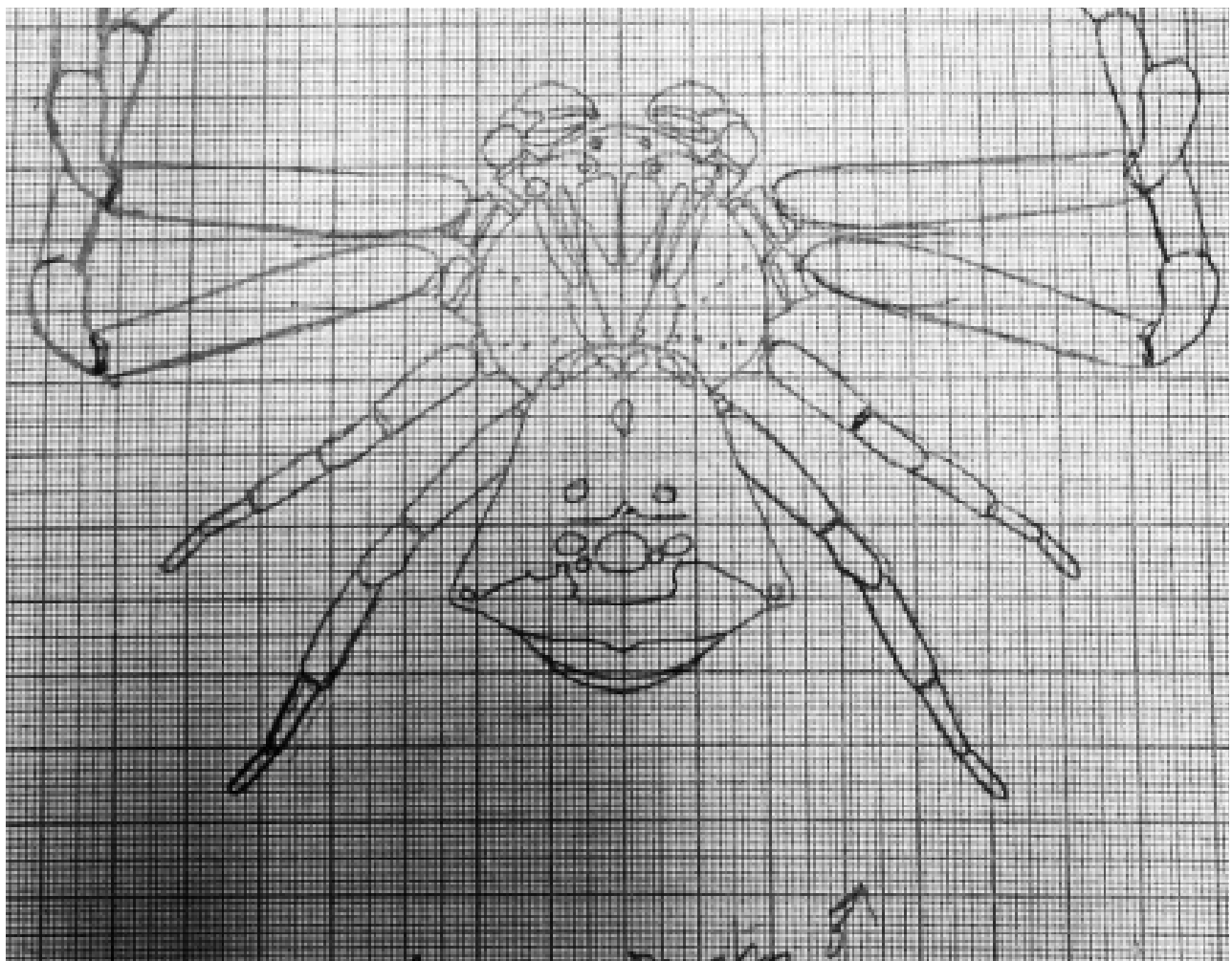
Michael used pen and ink, as well as watercolour, and a combination of the two. To produce his stunning images of webs and egg sacs, he used both black ink on white board and white paint on black board. Almost all of his whole-specimen plates are in watercolour. Below is an example of one of his beautiful large colour plates. In this illustration one can see the gorgeous use of colours and the extremely finely detailed hairs.



*Atypus affinis* Eichwald, 1830 (Atypidae), plate 1, 265 × 185 mm, from *The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland*.

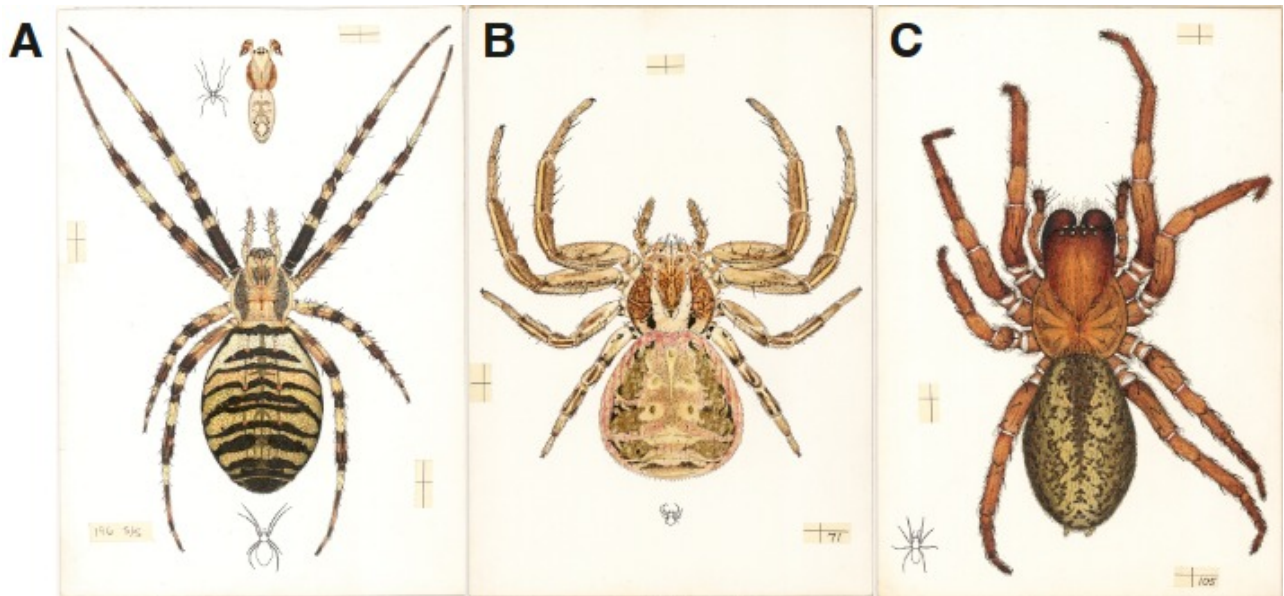
*Credit: The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.*

How Michael produced his extremely detailed plates becomes clear when studying the undigitized collection of graphite drawings on graph paper. He was drawing at a very consistent scale from the microscope and using graph paper to allow him to scale up for the final drawing to maximise the detail and resolution available in the photo reduction which was necessary for the published images. So essentially scaling up the image to get the detail in and then reducing for the final image. This of course makes the lines appear finer and provides the detail we so value. He then used the age-old technique of tracing in order to transfer these graphite images onto the art boards he used for his final plates. The accuracy of Michael's illustrations compared to the live specimens can be seen from the example below. His skill is undeniable.



Showing how Michael used graph paper to achieve the accuracy of his illustrations. From the "Collection of around 600 graphite drawings, tracings and manuscript notes of spiders".  
Credit: Jan Beccaloni.

Michael employed several techniques when positioning his spiders on their plates. Although he was drawing from preserved specimens, he endeavoured to depict a life-like attitude. For example, the legs of spider A in the plate below are depicted as if it is sitting in its web. The distinctive leg positioning of the crab spider B is depicted as in life. The uneven leg positioning on specimen C is typically found in alcohol-preserved specimens which cannot be manipulated into life-like positions.



From “The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland”.  
Credit: The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.



From “The Spiders of Great Britain and Ireland”.  
Credit: The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.

*Mike died on 26th October 2020 at his home in Chirnside. The study of arachnology has lost a great talent. Mike was taken from us far too soon but the hours spent at the microscope, or with pen and brush on his drawing board, would amount to more than most mortals could achieve in several lifetimes. What of his legacy? Several important books, great art, making the study of arachnology more accessible and influencing three generations, and counting. We are grateful to the many people have contributed memories and details to this sketch of Mike’s life in spiders.*

*He had no truck with email or the internet and certainly not Twitter, but we will end with one online quote which sums up how many of us will feel: “Roberts’s books guided me through much of the last five years of research in the most comprehensive yet accessible manner. His achievements are truly exceptional. A great loss to science.” Many of those who expressed their sadness had never met him but were influenced by his books and illustrations.*

Taken from his obituary by Mike B. Davidson, British Arachnological Society (BAS)

Finally here are two of Michael’s exceptional illustrations. PTO.



