

Wing Village Website

A recent e-mail enquiry I received, prompted by a researcher at Cambridge University reading one of my 'Wing Mystery' articles, in this case on 'Wing Windmills', has prompted me in turn to put a few words down on the benefits of the website.

John Oakley, in my view, did a splendid job in first creating, and then maintaining this website for many years. I am glad to see that some enthusiasts are keeping it going, with, as I understand it, some guidance from John.

One of the interesting dimensions for me is the wide coverage and reciprocity of information exchange that I've experienced over historical matters for a goodly number of years, and I'd like to share with readers just two examples.

A missing Listed Building

Many village residents will know that I created a 'Directory of Listed Buildings' for Wing, partly as background work for my writing of 'A History of Wing Village And Its Setting 1066 – 2018', and partly as some of the background work for Wing Village Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

A slide show synopsis of the History was carried on the website for the Wing Fest in 2018, and the Directory was carried in full, later being copied to the Parish Council website too.

Just over two years ago I was approached by a man living in Peterborough who had read both documents on the website and thought I might be able to help him identify the whereabouts of two houses, where his relatives had lived. He gave me the name of a great-uncle in the course of e-mail exchanges.

In the event, I met him in the village, and he gave me a copy of an old photograph of one of the two properties, a large cottage, which he said had reputedly been almost opposite the other property.

From the photograph I was able to take him to the precise spot from where the picture had been taken.

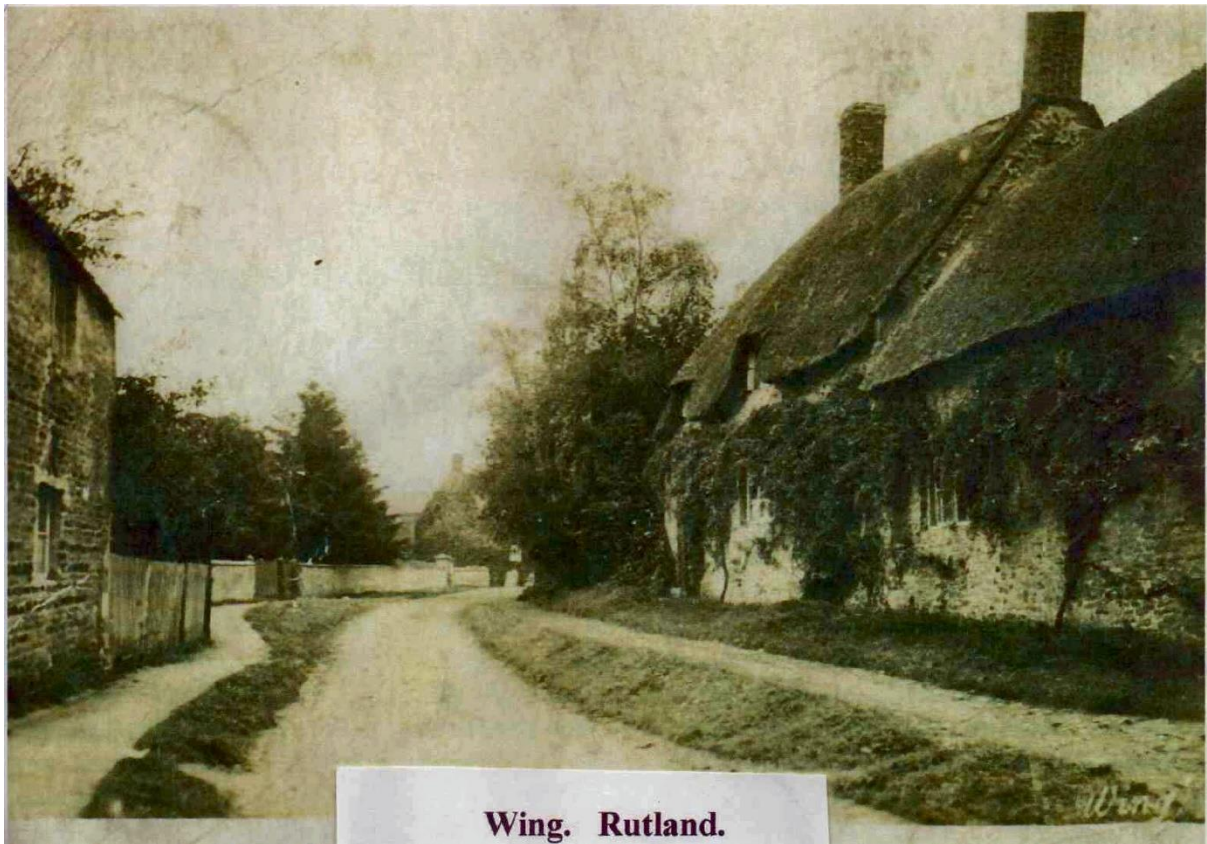
The property in his picture was no longer there, but the property "almost opposite" I was able to show him, in its somewhat transformed state, because I recognised the name he gave me of his great-uncle as appearing in the Deeds and Conveyancing history of 'The Haven', 14 Church Street, a property that converted from Manorial Copyhold to Freehold by its gift from George Wyatt Worrall to his "manservant". After the manservant's death, his wife and daughter sold the property to the great-uncle, financed by one of the very first Building Society Mortgages.

I knew that the great-uncle had never lived in the property, (census data), and was a Steam Engine railway driver, living in Coalville (conveyancing data), a mystery to me, as to why? The visiting informant provided the answer, his brother lived in the missing cottage, almost opposite, and the engine driver rented out the house to relatives. He then informed me that the great-uncle had married the adopted daughter of his brother and gave me her name. He stated that she was the one member of their family for that era for which they had no photograph. The name rang a bell with me and subsequently I was able to provide him with a Wing School photograph from the turn of the century featuring the great-uncles wife as a young girl.

Mysteries solved through reciprocity, but to return to the missing cottage, “almost opposite”, I had been intrigued by a map of Listed Buildings provided to me by Rutland County Council when I compiled the Directory of Listed Buildings.

It showed a fairly large (in plan footprint) Listed Building located along the frontage of what is now 7 and 9, Church Street, and clearly this building no longer existed.

The man from Peterborough had an old photograph of this building! See below. My earlier query/mystery had been solved. Someone, at sometime had demolished this Listed Building Cottage, probably in the 1960's, and in so far as I am aware, for reasons unknown. A very good reason to have a definitive Wing Directory of Listed Buildings with photographic as well as descriptive information for Heritage regulation and posterity.



The ‘Mystery Listed Building’ is the cottage on the right, a site now occupied by 7 and 9 Church Street, 16 Church Street is partially visible on the left, 14 Church Street – ‘The Haven’ is out of sight on the left at the curve in the footpath, both nominated for Heritage Status in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, and the Listed Wing House tennis court wall visible on the left, together with the south gable of Listed 8 Church Street – Inglewood Cottage.

An Earlier Date for Wing Windmill

As mentioned in the introduction above, late last year I was contacted by a researcher at Cambridge University and the reciprocity in this case ran like this:

“Dear David, I have just come across your 2019 article in relation to (wind)mills at Wing, in which you mention a 1209 property transaction in relation to 'the Abbot of

Thorny and Thurstan de Montfort'. I wanted to know whether in your research you had drawn on records in the Thorney Red Book? I have independently come across these records through my very different research relating to debt and wondered whether you had looked at this. Very best wishes.”

I replied - “Thank you for your e-mailed enquiry regarding the Wing (Wind)mill appearing in one of my articles on ‘Wing Mysteries’ in 2019. No, I didn’t reference the Thorney Red Book, I had originally picked up reference to it in some casual local information and then did a bit more research, coming across ‘Medieval Property Transactions in Rutland: Abstracts of Feet of Fines 1197 – 1509’, Published as Occasional Publication no 10, 2013, of the Rutland Local History and Record Society, edited by Bridget Wells-Furby. The reference occurs on page 42, which is part of a list of Feet of Fines for ‘John 1199 – 1216’ item 28, with the reference Calendar of Patent Rolls 25/1/192/2/20. I hope this helps. Best Wishes.”

He then wrote further – “Dear David, That's very interesting – you might then be very interested in the contents of two writ-charters issued by King Stephen, which Van Caenegem dates to between 1135 and 1148 (a dating I have no reason to doubt) and which are found in the Thorney Red Book. My interest in them is entirely for their role in tracing the royal enforcement of purely monetary obligations, but I suspect you will have a more particular interest in them, as they instruct the recipients to reseise the Abbot of Thorney of a mill at Wing. I attach my transcription below and a PDF of folio 21r (link below to digital copy, see digital page 47) on which the writs appear.

Stephanus, rex Anglorum, Thurstino de Montfort salutem. Resaisi abbatem de Thorn' de una sua virgata terre et de molendino de Wenga unde eum dissaisisti post mortem regis Henrici. Er de medietate illius ville quam Robertus frater tuus ei divisit et de 7 marcis argenti quas abbas ei prestitit ei plenum rectum tene. Et nisi feceris, episcopus Lincolniensis faciat fieri. Testibus Alberico de Ver et R. filio Walteri. Apud Norhamp'. [my emphasis]

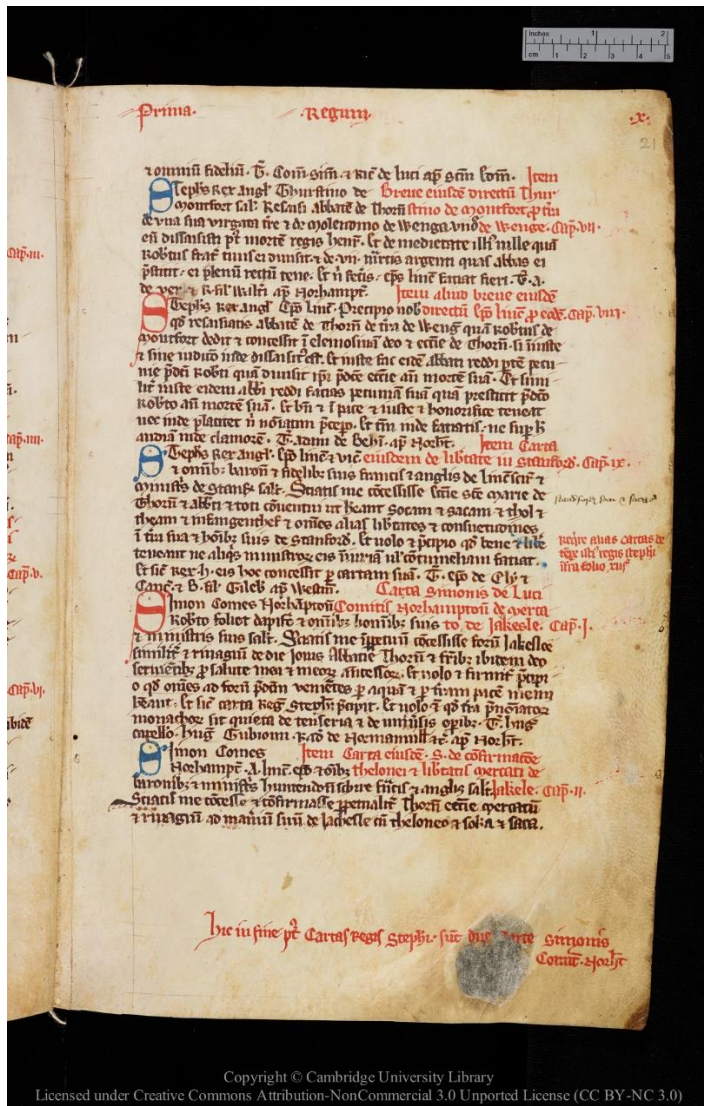
I infer from what follows that Thurston clearly did not in fact reseise the Abbot or render the money his brother had borrowed, as the next entry reads:

Stephanus, rex Anglorum, episcopo Lincolniensi salutem. Precipio vobis quod resaisiatis abbatem de Thorn' de terra de Weng' quam Robertus de Montfort dedit et concessit in elemonsiam de et ecclesie de Thorn', si iniuste et sine iudicio inde dissaisitus est. Et iuse fac eidem abbati reddi partem pecunie predicti Roberti quam divisit ipsi predictae ecclesie ante mortem suam. [continues.]

These would suggest the presence of a mill at Wing as early as the 1130s, or at the very latest 1154 if Van Caenegem's dating is inaccurate? Of course, the reference is not to a molendinum de ventum, and I know nothing of the history of windmills save what I happened to read in your article, but it could be an animal driven mill if not a watermill. In any case, I hope this is of some interest if not actual use to you. Very best wishes”

I then concluded – “Thank you for your reply and for the detailed information, photograph, and source link. I find the material very interesting, not least because it suggests that there might well have been a church building of some sort in Wing before 1170, which is the date most frequently cited, based solely on some ‘original’ parts of the existing Church fabric. In addition, your earlier reference date for a mill still sits within the grounds of possibility for it being a windmill, based on the other research carried out elsewhere and within the Lincolnshire Bishopric reference area.

I don't know whether you looked at the other 'Wing Mystery Articles' I wrote, there were six, but there are inter-connections between three of them; some Church related chronological issues and origin of sponsorship (Article 2), Wing Windmills (Article 4), the location of Wing at a major crossroads of the day (Articles 2,4, & 6), and the functionality of the Wing Maze (Article 6). All four physical sites are closely related in what today is still a small community. Thanks again for your material. All interesting stuff. Good luck with your own work and current project."



The Thorney Red Book.

Village websites can be powerful vehicles for communication, education, and the reciprocity of enlightened information exchange.

David Seviour

21/1/24