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NEWSLETTER

Yorkshire Philosophical Society

Promoting the public understanding of science since 1822

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From the Chair

Dear Members,

We do hope you are safe and well in these unusual times. We are pleased to send you this newsletter with thanks to the members who contributed. The contents certainly demonstrate the range of talents and interests amongst the YPS membership. We are continuing to add more resources to the YPS website and welcome any contributions or any suggestions for guest researchers to approach for reports about their work.

This month members will also receive their copy of the 2019 Annual Report. I am sure you would wish to join me in thanking the Editor, Mrs Carole Smith, and her team, for their hard work in once again producing a publication that is an excellent reflection of the continuing strength of the Society. Carole is now undertaking the tremendous task of producing the bicentenary edition, which will be very much looking forward to the future, in particular reflecting the work of contemporary scientists.

I particularly want to thank Miss Frances Chambers, the Society's Clerk, who has really worked hard ensuring the YPS administration stays on track, from her home in the North Yorkshire countryside. Find out how Frances is getting on in her blog entries "The Clerk in the Country" and read a sample on page 18.



From "The Clerk in the Country" blog

As the venues we normally use for lectures and Café Scientifique remain closed at present we plan to offer some events in the autumn via Zoom. We have just set up a YPS charity YouTube channel where we plan to host recordings of some of these so that people can catch up at a later time on any internet connected device, including many smart TV sets. As venues open up over the next few months we do plan to continue to provide "in person" events but these will need to be held within government guidelines, which may include limiting numbers and other safeguards.

We will endeavour to keep all members updated on these ever changing developments but the easiest way is

Opinions expressed in the articles that follow are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the YPS.

to send information by email so please do ask to join our list if you have an email address.

As you will see below, we have been pleased to offer support to York Museums Trust at this challenging time. It is wonderful to see Museum Gardens open, looking so attractive and providing such a good place to meet friends whilst socially distancing.

On behalf of the YPS Trustees and myself I send you our good wishes,

*Catherine Brophy, Chair
chair@ypsYork.org*

York Museums Trust

In May the Principal Officers and Trustees of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society received an urgent request from the York Museums Trust for a grant to support their work and in particular to strengthen a bid to the Arts Council of England. Trustees agreed a grant subject to the conditions indicated in the following letter of thanks:

To Catherine Brophy, Chair YPS

“I wanted to send my sincere thanks to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society for their generous donation of two grants towards the Yorkshire Museum and Gardens.

As a charity, we are particularly touched and extremely grateful for friends like you who continue to support York Museums Trust especially during these difficult times. Please do pass on my personal thanks to the Principal Officers and Council.

I have noted the following conditions:

1: A grant of £5,000 towards general operating expenses and maintenance, restricted to the Yorkshire Museum and Museum Gardens, and subject to the YMT securing enough other emergency funding to ensure the medium-term future of the Yorkshire Museum and Museum Gardens.

2: A grant of £5,000 restricted to the remediation of the audiovisual and hearing loop systems in the Tempest Anderson Hall. As these systems are of considerable benefit to the YPS lecture programme, the YPS Council would consider making this grant as soon as the YMT authorised work in this area.

Thank you once again for your generous donation of two grants and for your continued support.”

As YPS Patron Reyahn King adds the following message:

“Many YPS members have supported the Trust through donating or supporting our online activity. You have shared and engaged with our collections and stories from your homes. We are so grateful to everyone who has got involved in whatever way.

If you haven’t had the opportunity to make a donation yet and are in a position to do so, now, more than ever, York Museums Trust needs your help.

<https://beta.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/support-us/donate>

I sincerely thank you for your support to date.

Wishing you well and safe,”

*Reyahn King
Chief Executive, York Museums Trust*

News from the Activities Group

Of course, the programme of activities which we were working on was thrown into complete disarray by the Covid pandemic. A major concern was the planned tour to Cambridge and Sutton Hoo. This has now been postponed until 2021, and all who had made payments in advance to ‘Just for Groups’ have received Refund Credit Notes, underwritten by ABTA and the government, which can be used for the 2021 trip, or exchanged for cash by those unable to take part. We hope those members who had wanted to join us, but had conflicting engagements, will now be able to come along.

We were also planning a November tour, which would include a visit to the puppy breeding centre run by Guide Dogs for the Blind in Leamington Spa, and a performance at the Swan Theatre in Stratford. This has been postponed till November 2021, and should be a fascinating trip. Watch out for details on the website.

One tour planned for this period managed to take place in ‘virtual’ form. This was the visit to the recycling plant at Allerton Park. For those of us who are not too familiar with social media, this was something of a ‘voyage of discovery’, but was well managed by the host, and well received by participants. A report follows below.

This leaves us with the challenge of providing activities for the future. Some regular events do not seem appropriate in the current circumstances – reluctantly we have decided not to offer our formal Annual Dinner this year. In the light of the success of the Allerton event, we will try to provide more virtual events - we are looking into that at the moment, and Catherine Brophy is also planning to run one of our informal get-togethers in the flesh for September. Do keep your eyes on the website for other small offerings.

Margaret Leonard

Allerton Waste Recovery Park

Virtual Tour by Emilie Knight, AWRP

9 June 2020

Following the cancellation of the original tours of the Allerton Waste Recovery Park (AWRP) members of the Society were invited by Amey to take part in virtual tours of the site instead. On 9th June, Emilie Knight, Community and Communications Manager at AWRP, presented an overview of the waste management processes at Allerton. This very interesting and informative talk highlighted the level of complexity involved when dealing with our household waste. Ms Knight's presentation outlined the waste treatment process at Allerton but she started by stressing the importance of our sorting and cleaning the bottles, tins, paper etc that we have collected directly from our homes. Recyclables are a commodity and contamination by mixing the wrong materials coupled with failing to clean items can undermine the recycling process. A substantial part of the activities at Allerton are concerned with extracting all the remaining recyclable materials which have ended up in the household waste bin.



Photo: courtesy AWRP

The AWRP is situated on the A168 and is distinguishable from a distance by its tall chimney. It has been fully operational for a couple of years now and receives the domestic waste from a large area of north Yorkshire and York. Waste is delivered to AWRP directly from Harrogate Borough, owing to its proximity. In all other areas there are local collection points which consolidate the waste from their neighbourhood and then deliver it in larger lorries in order to reduce the number of vehicles travelling to the site. Once delivered the waste undergoes an extensive process of mechanical sorting which results in the 'raw material' being segregated into recyclables, organic and non-recyclable waste. The recyclables are further separated into metals and plastics, baled up and sent off-site for processing. The organic and non-recyclable refuse streams are used to generate electricity on-site. Organic waste is sent to an anaerobic digester to produce biogas as fuel for the gas turbine. The

remaining non-recyclable waste is incinerated to generate the steam used to power the steam turbine. Waste combustion operates at 850 degrees Celsius and the final waste gas is subject to chemical treatment and filtering to remove noxious elements. The site must operate strictly within its environmental permit and emissions are continuously monitored to ensure there are no infringements and that undesirable elements are not present in the gases being released into the environment. Even the ash left at the end of the process is treated to remove any remaining metals before being despatched for use as a building aggregate.

The AWRP now handles approximately 320,000 tonnes of waste per annum reducing the amount going to landfill by 90%. In doing so it generates electricity sufficient to power 40,000 homes and increases the amount of recyclable material generated in North Yorkshire. However, an underlying message from the presentation was that we should all take more responsibility for the waste we produce in our own homes by reducing, reusing and complying with recycling regulations. People may remember the debate and opposition generated when construction of the AWRP was originally suggested but I, for one, am grateful it now exists. Until we seriously tackle the amount of waste generated at source in our society then operations like that at AWRP go some way to reduce the environmental impact of our wasteful behaviour.

Those interested can find a short video describing the site's operation using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qW10OFbYz9s&feature=youtu.be>

A diagrammatic representation of the waste treatment process can be found here:

https://wasteservices.amey.co.uk/media/6467/allerton-waste-recovery-park_process-illustration_oct-2017.png



Photo: courtesy AWRP

A final word on the merits of virtual meetings. Many of us are now far more familiar with these than we would have predicted several months ago and, given the novelty of the situation together with the variations in

our technological capabilities, it is to be expected that we experience one or two glitches. However, a virtual meeting is better than none at all and useful when some of us are not able to take part in a physical visit. Having learnt a little more about the AWRP I am looking forward even more to visiting in person and would suggest most people would gain something from such a trip.

Rachel Baker

Emilie Knight ran her virtual tour on four further dates in June. Comments from other members included:

“interesting and informative ... I can thoroughly recommend it”; “illuminating”; “covering all the topics I was interested in.”; “I sent the online links to a friend and he enjoyed it very much too”; “the technology worked well for me”; “very easy to set up and most informative”; “It certainly made me want to visit the site when that is possible.”

Thank you to all who sent feedback.

Notes from the Geology Group

I plan to release some notes on geological activities on a monthly basis. Most will be online, sometimes a link to a self-guided geological walk, some may offer limited access to small groups out in the field. Eventually we may offer live Zoom meetings on a topic and some items may be recorded and put on YouTube.

For August:

1. Virtual Trips:

The Yorkshire Geological Society have four virtual geological walks on the chalk at the coast from Speeton to Sewerby. Find the YouTube site via:

<https://www.yorksgeolsoc.org.uk/virtualfieldtrips/videogeologyguides>

Paul Hildreth, the current President of YGS, narrates four films about the geology at or near Flamborough Head.

We recommend that you subscribe to the channel so that you can go back to it more easily. A subscription to the YGS is also very good value, but not necessary for viewing the films.

The BGS geology map of the area, giving the different chalk strata is at:

<http://www.largeimages.bgs.ac.uk/iip/mapsportal.html?id=1001536>

2. Women in Geology:

Etheldred Benett was a great collector and student of UK fossils in the early nineteenth century, at ease

with sharing ideas and opinions valued by other renowned geologists. She was honoured with a Doctorate in Civil Law of the University of St Petersburg by Tsar Nicholas I.

The YPS and Yorkshire Museum hosted Emily Markham, an MA student and some of her research on Etheldred Benett may be seen on the YPS website:

<https://www.ypsYork.org/resources/articles/etheldred-benett-and-the-making-of-museums/>

3. Online Study:

For anyone wanting to undertake a short course in geology, there are two available this month, free to join. The OpenLearn course may be started any time. The FutureLearn is a live course starting this month but can be joined soon after the start.

- OpenLearn (from the Open University) Introduction to Geology
<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/science-maths-technology/free-courses?filter=date/grid/672/all/all/all>
Other subjects are available!
- FutureLearn, on the past five mass extinction events
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/extinctions-past-present>

4. Trips outside:

If anyone wants to get out and look at some fossils, Hidden Horizons are offering guided trips at the coast, through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hidden-horizons-5979675763>

(Liam Herringshaw says he will be assisting on 7th and 21st August and 3rd September.)

5. Our Museum of the Month

The Rotunda Museum of Scarborough. Built with advice from William Smith and John Phillips as a Geology Museum. View aspects of the geology and archaeology collections online and the Museum reopens on 8th August.

<https://www.scarboroughmuseumtrust.com/rotunda-museum/>

Please note: The Fossil Festival planned for Scarborough in September has been cancelled.

Please keep an eye on the YPS website for additional geological notes each month.

Paul Thornley

Letter from Australia



G'day Friends,

Now that people are starting to work again and cafes and restaurants are re-opening, let me tell you about where I work as life returns to normal. The Central Highlands region of Queensland straddles the Tropic of Capricorn, is located approximately 250 kilometres from the coast and rises approximately 150 metres above sea level. Cattle grazing for the beef market had been the sustaining industry since the late 1800s (though there are now exotics like alpacas and llamas). Contemporaneous with that, the discovery of gem stones (mostly sapphires), commenced the mining industry and names of local towns and villages (Emerald, Rubyvale, Sapphire). A major irrigation scheme has allowed extensive citrus, cereal (mostly sorghum) and cash crops (mostly cotton) production to develop over the last few decades.

The major industry, though, remains mining and the largest employer is coal. All forms of coal are mined from the higher ranked coking coals for steel mills and the lower ranked steaming coals for continuous supply power stations. Coal that doesn't fall into these categories or is otherwise a blended coal (mix of coking coal and steaming coal) is sold as a Pulverized Coal Injection (PCI) product that can allow blast furnaces to perform more efficiently. The geological province that contains all this energy is named the Bowen Basin.

Deposition of sediments into the Bowen Basin occurred across the Permian Triassic boundary with subsidence commencing in the early Lower Permian (approximately 295 million years ago). At this time, Pangea was the worldwide supercontinent and the Neo-Tethys Ocean was yet to form through the rifting of southeast Asia from northern Australia. Eastern Australia that is now Queensland, was located at approximately 60° S and experienced a cool temperate climate much like the current peat forming areas of the world today (for example: Scotland, Ireland, Northern Europe, Western Russia, Canada). For the most part, the

peat bogs formed continuously through slow subsidence with sudden, irregularly timed events (probably earthquake induced) allowing marine sediment incursions (siltstones, mudstones) to partially inundate and terminate these bogs. As a result, we see, millions of years later, coal seam splitting and coalescing at irregular intervals across the basin.

As the Permian progressed and the Neo-Tethys Ocean opened, the subduction zone to the east activated volcanism that allowed eruptions to deposit numerous ash layers of varying thickness over the peat bogs. These are seen today as tuff horizons within the coal seams. The unique ratios of the radioactive elements, uranium, thorium and potassium of each eruption can be seen in the natural gamma ray signature of each tuff and can be traced across the basin as a means of identifying and correlating the coal seams. Zircons extracted from the tuff horizons allow relatively accurate age dating. Knowing this information assists in tracking the types of coal to be mined and the product to be offered for sale. Determining the geochemical quality of the coal characterizes this final product.

The Permo-Triassic boundary is an important point in the history of Earth. Though it required millennia, more than 96% of marine species and 70% of terrestrial species died out. For many years now, a current argument has that a catastrophic event (a single, very large meteorite impact or a series of smaller but no less destructive meteorite impacts) precipitated this extinction. No such evidence for this scenario has been identified to date. An alternative argument, also current, has that the formation of the Siberian Traps – a vastly extensive volcanic province that saw square kilometres of basalt erupted onto the surface – was responsible, but tying the millions of years of eruptions to a specific time remains inconclusive. What we see in the rocks of the Bowen Basin, however, is conclusive and we see a major climatic change occurring over a relatively short (geologically speaking) time period. Recently, researchers have been hunting for this boundary being represented in terrestrial sedimentary rocks rather than marine rocks. The Bowen basin, in its northerly extents,



Peak Range and surrounding grazing lands Photo: thanks to Andrew Wheeler

records this terrestrial event but the research world doesn't seem to have discovered the Bowen Basin. Regardless, the record of the boundary is clear throughout the basin.

The Permian period is argued to have been characterized by a reducing atmosphere, where oxygen levels were as low as 15%. The Permian sedimentary rocks in the Bowen Basin are a grey to very dark grey colour. The Triassic period, on the other hand, is often characterized as being a time when oxygen levels are increasing and the atmosphere becomes more oxidizing. We observe that the sedimentary rocks of this time period in the Bowen Basin are green grey to very dark green grey in colour. Where the dark grey rocks end and the dark green grey rocks begin, marks the boundary. However, the story in the rocks is not that simple for a number of reasons. Does the sharpness of the colour change (and in cored rocks it is instantaneous) represent conformity or unconformity? Before the last of the dark grey rocks are observed, however, there occurs, for a short time (geologically speaking), green grey rocks. The return to grey rocks is not to the dark to very dark grey rocks, but to more lighter coloured grey rocks devoid of the fossil imprints observed within the older rocks. Again, this is a geologically short time period

before only green grey sedimentary rocks of the Triassic are observed. Is this an example of conformity or unconformity? As far as I am aware, no-one has investigated these sequences of rocks in detail to explain these events. It would make for an interesting project and could shed further light on the mass extinction at the end of the Permian.

Stay safe and well.

*Andrew Wheeler
YPS member
Queensland, Australia*

PS In answer to questions from the editor, the gemstones are all secondary source minerals and are only found in the sand and gravels at the surface to about 15 to 20m depths. The original coal mines were shallow underground workings generally not below 200 feet down. Nowadays they are mostly open-cast (also called open-pit and open-cut) mining to 100 to 150m highwalls and are quite extensive. There are hundreds of years of reserves still available in this basin alone. At the moment, whilst the rest of the country is demolishing their own power stations, it's the Queensland power generation that is keeping the lights on - though the resistance is extensive and intensive.

Contemporary Scientist no. 2

Richard Fenwick, plant scientist

<http://www.plantletculture.com>

(trained in Horticulture at Askham Bryan College, York)

“We grow plants in test tubes for use in education or to help save rare plant species from becoming endangered or extinct. We aid in the setup and running of a micropropagation lab, helping to design the gel media, initiate plants into culture and aid in the rapid bulking-up of plant numbers.

“A current example of an endangered species is *Rhododendron* 'Blarney Castle', a gift from Michael White, (curator at Mount Congreve) to Blarney Castle Co. Cork, Ireland <https://www.blarneycastle.ie/> It is a unique plant growing within their grounds, but could easily be lost from a natural disaster or a pest/disease as it's likely to be the only one in the world. The work started in 2019 with the first 1000 plugs being available in 2020. A percentage will be grown on to reach full size and planted within the grounds, with the remainder being sold to their international visitors. The culture will remain in the lab for further propagation and to secure the variety.”



Image credit: Yorkshire Agricultural Society, 2018



Image credit: plantletcultures.com

Keeping singing in Lockdown

Zoom? GoToMeeting, Google Meet, FaceTime, WhatsApp and YouTube - the world has suddenly become a place where people interact using technology rather than in person. It makes you nostalgic for the days when you could use the phone or email a friend to arrange to meet in town!

But today's 'new normal' where people need to stay apart from each other has other consequences, most keenly felt at community events with theatres closed and where you can't even sing in church. The last live productions I worked on before lockdown were for the Community Choir Festival hosted by the Joseph Rowntree Theatre in March, featuring 28 choirs singing at 7 concerts. These were well attended and supported by a growing number of choirs of all sizes, now no longer able to perform together - except over the internet, which introduces some interesting challenges. These challenges are both social and technical, neither of which can be fully overcome as choirs are basically a communal activity, not performances made in isolation. There have been attempts to arrange music at a distance by getting singers to perform their parts individually and then stitch them all together to form a choir - Gareth Malone has done just that for his series *The Choir: Singing for Britain*. This turned the normal tasks of a conductor and arranger on its head and instead required a considerable logistical contribution aided, of course, by sophisticated technology. Not only do individual performances need to be commissioned and recorded but also assembled into a coherent whole in the studio, not on a live stage. Most of us will have experienced the lip-sync and dropout problems that come with trying to work in real time over the internet which exhibits a factor known as latency - basically a time difference between cause and effect. Gareth's project was no exception and whilst his team found software that could calculate the different latency delays for each performer and then synchronise them, that wasn't the only challenge which would have been experienced.

For example, the Rolling Stones put on a live concert in April that showed how difficult it was for even four experienced musicians to play together when they were working over the internet - they experienced delays between playing and hearing each other's instruments of between 100 milliseconds and 250 milliseconds which made it almost impossible to keep in time. It was reported that Charlie Watts had to mime playing his drums to avoid what would otherwise have been a disjointed performance: one of the challenges of using something like Zoom which was never designed to allow a group to perform from different places.

It can also be a problem where the band supporting a live production isn't even located in the same auditorium as the performers on stage and engineering this type of event takes both musical and technical skill in order to get good results. Plus it makes it difficult for the performers to get and receive cues when the musicians are elsewhere, but at least all the musicians are playing together!

A further drawback of stitching together different performances is that of reverberation, which is the time it takes for a sound to die away - the longer it takes, the more 'hollow' the sound seems. When a choir sing together in a venue, the reverberation time affects them all equally, whereas when they are singing in their own homes or garden sheds, the different reverberation time of each part can make the resulting composite sound peculiar. Reverberation can be added electronically to any given musical part, a standard studio production technique, but unfortunately it cannot be subtracted. So even if you send in a brilliant performance but it sounds like it was recorded in your bathroom, it won't be used! Some early production techniques favoured by Motown, Muscle Shoals and other recording studios in the USA used bare surfaces and strange shaped rooms to impart reverberation to chorus lines which would today be recorded 'dry' and then an appropriate amount of reverberation added. If you think that a typical studio might have a reverberation time of 0.5 seconds but that York Minster stretches to 8.5 seconds at some frequencies, anything recorded in these two locations will sound distinctly odd even if they are perfectly synchronised in the final mix.

So whilst technology has enabled us to keep in touch over the internet, the laws of physics do not yet allow us to replace choirs and musical ensembles since their main purpose is to be a communal activity. And arranging to have a coffee over Zoom will never feel the same as doing the real thing.

Peter Wheatcroft

New video tour of a Yorkshire castle

The fortified tower at Ayton, near Scarborough is one of Yorkshire's lesser known medieval castles. Situated on rising ground on the north side of the village of West Ayton, the site overlooks the point where the river Derwent flows south out of the picturesque wooded ravine of Forge Valley into the flatlands of the Vale of Pickering.

The tower was built around 1410 by local landowner Sir Ralph Eure while surrounding earthworks preserve

traces of earlier phases of the castle. The tower was abandoned in the 16th century and is now a ruin that is closed to the public for safety reasons. As a result the tower is little visited though in recent years a great deal of money and time has been spent restoring the remains through the combined efforts of The Friends of Ayton Castle, Historic England and the local authority. Now the opportunity has arisen for you to explore the tower via an on-line video tour created by the local archaeological society.

For the past few years members of the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society in conjunction with the Friends group have organised tours of the castle as part of the CBA Festival of Archaeology. Realising that this was not going to be possible this year, the Society opted instead to film the tour and to put the resulting video on YouTube where in just three weeks it has attracted over 1300 views. The video tour was filmed by members of the Society to a high professional standard and is presented by field archaeologist and historic buildings professional Chris Hall who not only provides an authoritative account of the tower but also takes the viewer around the wider landscape looking at some of the earthworks that make up the rest of this extensive archaeological site. Here is a link to the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvUi4egLegg&feature=youtu.be>

Building on the success of this video the Society has created its own YouTube channel to host more videos on local historical and archaeological sites. Recently posted is a film made nearly 20 years ago about one of the society's excavations in the medieval town of Scarborough. YPS members with an interest in historic buildings will hopefully find the video a useful and entertaining introduction to Ayton Castle.

Trevor Pearson



Members of the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society filming at Ayton Castle

Statistics and Poetry in Times of Cholera and Coronavirus

As a statistician, Covid has provided me with the best of times and the worst of times, wisdom and foolishness, and seasons of light and hope. Scarcely less than in 1792, the world of 2020 has turned upside down. Some have had recourse to statistics and science; others to poetry. Some have resorted to both.

What do these different discourses provide?

The Covid 'hegemonic' discourse has been to "rely on the science". This phrase was used multiple times on Day One, and I immediately sensed bad faith, thinking "They are setting up a fall guy – they want someone to blame. Science will get blamed!"

But what is this thing called science? A short answer might be "Facts". What IS the value of R? Is it 0.7 or 0.9? Why don't you know? Why did you say 0.7 yesterday and 0.9 today?

But Science is more than Facts. It is a way of looking at Facts, and of dealing with them.

It is also – more alarmingly – a way of *constructing* facts. Scientists perform experiments (itself an alarming term), so they decide what facts are needed and arrange to provide them.

At the same time, Science is *less* than facts. It *selects* facts. It may overlook the most important things. This is partly the age-old dispute between science and religion. Nobody really trusts religion to solve Covid, but poetry may be part-proxy for religion, in stressing the important factors that science does not reach.

Many readers will have heard Dorothy Duffy's recent moving poetic tribute to her sister:

*Tomorrow, when the latest Deathometer of Covid is
announced in sonorous tones,
Whilst all the bodies still mount and curl towards the
middle of the curve,
Heaped one atop and alongside the other,
My sister will be among those numbers, among the
throwaway lines,
Among the platitudes and lowered eyes,
an older person with underlying health conditions,
A pitiful way to lay rest the bare bones of a life.
MY SISTER IS NOT A STATISTIC ...*

This poem uses the well-worn phrase "underlying health conditions", which includes many over 50 who don't want to be dismissed thereby. **We don't want to be statistics.** This reflects the ironic maxim often inaccurately attributed to Joseph Stalin, that "One death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic". This harsh quote accurately reflects the fact that statisticfulness demands *bulk* not individuality. This is what Duffy's

poem is protesting about. It sounds alarm-bells regarding “the latest Deathometer of Covid”, and invites us to amplify these alarms across *all* impersonal measuring instruments, from questionnaires to urine samples.

The poem is also protesting about statistics as the science of numbers, which has “If it is counted, it counts” as its first rule and its first warning. But statistics is broader than this – it is the Science of Evidence. Even poetry can be evidence!

However, with Covid, the dominant discourse allows little space for poetry. The ‘hegemonic ideology’ is written in the language of numbers, in particular the language *of the numbers that the government wants us to see*. This focuses our gaze and makes us ignore other areas; the press has been sadly uncritical about the numbers we do *not* have.

From Week 0 of Covid, daily press conferences focussed upon two particular canonical numbers: How many people have tested positive? and How many have died from Covid? These numbers are both fallible – especially the first one, because it reflects the number of tests as much as the prevalence or incidence of the disease.

Deaths may be easier to count, but “Death from Covid” can mean several different things. It is data *constructed* in a hurry, in an emergency, by somebody who has much better things to do than worry about data validity.

More importantly, these canonical numbers ignore context and ratio. One context is *per capita context*. A billion pounds seems like a lot of money. But big populations lead to big numbers. £1 billion is just £15 for every UK resident. On a worldwide scale it is 13 pence per resident. So is £1 billion large or small?

Also, accepting that 100 deaths is 100 tragedies, should we regard 100 deaths as large or as small? The key context question is *compared with what?* Comparing it with zero does not make much sense.

The most relevant comparator is the total number of deaths. In the UK this is generally about 1500-1700 per day. (The world figure is 150,000 per day.) So if there are 100 Covid deaths per day, this represents about 6% of the UK total – not a negligible amount, but not a massive one either. Even at its peak, there were far fewer Covid deaths than non-Covid deaths. And there was also an acceleration effect - some Covid deaths would have been non-Covid deaths if Covid had not got there first. This leads to “excess deaths”. Total UK excess deaths in 2020 may be around 70,000 – some 10% of normal deaths. Of these, one-third or so will be “collateral damage” caused directly or indirectly by the lockdown rather than by Covid itself.

So much for the “worst of times” – without even touching on the travails of unemployment or poverty or fear of it, or even of the difficulties of bringing up children in these troubled times. I have been well-cocooned in my middle-class house with happy family, not many troubles, nice garden, and a predictable income at the end of the month. And the weather has been exceptionally good!

But as a statistician I have been extremely busy. Like others, I have grappled with new technology – new statistical sources and statistical packages, as well as Zoom and suchlike. It has been a good crisis for statisticians, but a tiring one!

Very soon after learning that 75-year old volunteers were not much good for anyone, I set to look for other things to do. After completing a fund-raising marathon over 27 days (a mile per day), I started participating in a very active email discussion group on political as well as technical aspects of statistics. This is open to everyone and can be found if you google “*radstats jiscmail*”. The Radical Statistics Group has a periodical journal, and I very soon found myself editing a “Coronavirus Special Issue”. This is the hundred-page Issue 126 of what is now a very long-lived journal. Again, this is open to all at www.radstats.org.uk

I have also been looking back and making comparisons with previous York epidemics, especially Victorian cholera epidemics. There are many parallels: disease follows fissures in society; crisis demands statistics; science is confusing and uncertain. But then, the rapid evolution of science was opposed by religious leaders who were *very* certain and for whom evolution was anathema. In 2020, religious leaders no longer lead, even if the science is still uncertain and confusing. But today we are confused at a higher level. Also we have learned that - now as then - prevention is more important than cure, even the best policies have unintended consequences, and public health can be more crucial than hospital health. And still, a lot cannot be measured by statistics:

MY SISTER IS NOT A STATISTIC

Her underlying conditions were

Love

Kindness

Belief in the essential goodness of mankind

Uproarious laughter

Forgiveness

Compassion

A storyteller

A survivor

A comforter

A force of nature

And so much more

MY SISTER IS NOT A STATISTIC

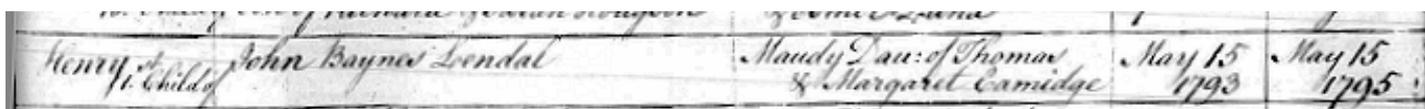
John Bibby

On the trail of Henry Baines ...

In September 1829 Henry Baines, then in his early thirties, was appointed Sub-Curator of the Yorkshire Museum. From that point on, his life is quite well documented, in the Council Minutes and Annual Reports of the Philosophical Society, in the pages of the Yorkshire Gazette, in the private correspondence of those who knew him, and in other sources. He created the Museum Gardens and managed them for 40 years. His skill as a gardener was clear from his previous employment as foreman of the Backhouse nurseries: but his employment was as Sub-Curator of the Museum, requiring different skills and knowledge. The Society recognised that they were *'fortunate in the person whom they have engaged ... qualified by his skill and industry ... with scientific diligence'* in his various roles. How did Henry come to be in this position?

His life up to this point is something of a mystery, with most of the information we have coming from Baines himself, or from his daughter Fanny. When Baines had been working in the Gardens for (only!) 30 years, the Society marked the occasion by presenting him, amid due pomp and ceremony, with the sum of 300 guineas, in a *'fine casket of minster oak'*. Speeches were made, one of them by Henry himself, in which he gave some details of his early life. The casket survives, in the Yorkshire Museum, and contains a verbatim account of Henry's speech: and also, written by Fanny Baines, an account of her father's life, probably written soon after his death in 1878. These two documents are the starting point for investigation of Henry Baines's early life.

"In 1793 I was born in a small cottage over the cloisters of St Leonard's Hospital, then occupied by Mr. Suttle as a wine merchant's vault"



Birth of Henry Baines: Baptismal Register, St Michael le Belfrey

The 'cottage' is long vanished, but its location is just visible over the city wall, to the right of the Multangular Tower. A Corporation lease of 1829, describing Mr Suttell's property, refers to a 'COTTAGE of two low rooms and two chambers' over the vaults. This, presumably, is Henry Baines's birthplace – a modest dwelling indeed. The birthplace presents a small problem for the detective: St Leonard's Hospital after its seizure by Henry VIII in 1539 was Crown property, and even after York Corporation bought the land and buildings in 1675, retained an anomalous status within the City until well into the 19th century. In particular, it formed part of no parish. Residents of the area had to be baptised, married, and buried in a parish, probably – but not necessarily – an adjacent one.

Luckily, Henry was baptised nearby. According to the parish register, he was born on 15th May 1793 and baptised in the church of St Michael le Belfrey, the son of John and Maudy Baynes. Variant spellings of surnames are something of a bugbear in tracking people through parish records! Working backwards from the baptism, John and Maudy Baynes were married on 6th February 1793, also in St Michael le Belfrey. It is by no means unusual for the interval between marriage and birth to be less than nine months!

At his marriage, John is described as 'servant'. Presumably he served Mr Suttle (or Suttell) over whose premises he lived: and probably in a rather humble capacity. George Suttell's will of 1810 makes bequests to a number of servants *'if living with me at my death'*: these do not include John Baynes.

"The first time I put a spade into the ground ... was in [Mr Suttle's] garden, on the site where the fountain and the pond now are. I was then twelve years of age."

A twelve-year old digging in a garden may look, to modern eyes more like play than work. It would not have seemed that way either to Henry Baines, or to George Suttell: this would have been seen by both parties as a proper job. It is worth remembering that the first President of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society, William Vernon Harcourt – Henry Baines's near contemporary – joined the Royal Navy as a midshipman at exactly the same age. Childhood ended early in the early 19th century, for the son of a Bishop and the son of a servant alike.

Early maps and leases show that Mr Suttle's garden lay close to the vaults, immediately outside the City wall, in what in medieval times was the Town Ditch, a strip of

land between the walls of the City and of the precinct of St Mary's Abbey. For much of the 19th Century there was indeed a pond (created, of course, by Henry Baines) and a fine fountain. This survived many vicissitudes and now stands in the back yard of Fairfax House.

After having been employed as a gardener in Halifax...

How did Henry find a job in Halifax? Possibly he moved on from Mr Suttle's garden to a gardening job in the York nurseries of James & Thomas Backhouse? Messrs Backhouse on occasion supplied gardeners, as well as plants, to their customers. Henry Baines first appears on the record in Halifax marrying Rebecca

Bartle in St John's church, in 1823, so was well settled in his job by that date. The first of his five daughters, Ellen, was baptised in the same church the following year.

While in Halifax, he did more than garden. He '*became acquainted with many working men who studied Botany, Entomology and Ornithology, which gave him his first taste for those pursuits*'. These 'artisan naturalists' were men of some repute, corresponding with eminent gentlemanly naturalists across the country. John Nowell (a former handloom weaver, working in a Todmorden cotton factory) and Samuel Gibson (a Hebden Bridge blacksmith) remained in contact with Baines for many years, and are acknowledged in his 1840 *Flora of Yorkshire*. Throughout his time with the Society – and particularly before the Gardens existed – Baines's duties as Sub-Curator involved dealing with the Society's botanical, entomological, and ornithological collections. The Halifax years were clearly formative ones.

... I came back to York and entered the service of Messrs Backhouse ...

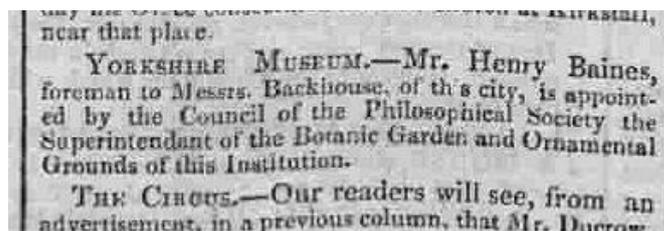
The Backhouse nurseries were at the time located in Toft Green, so it is not surprising to find the increasing Baines family living in the area: the second and third daughters were baptised in the church of Holy Trinity Micklegate in 1825 and 1828, respectively. Baines must have entered the service of Messrs Backhouse between 1824 and 1825. The Backhouses supplied plants to the gentry across much of Yorkshire. Their 1816 catalogue lists thousands of trees and shrubs, including more than 400 varieties of fruit tree alone. By 1829, at the latest, Henry Baines was foreman of the Backhouse nurseries, a highly responsible and demanding position.

There is no evidence that Henry was, at any stage of his life, formally trained as a gardener. However, it is interesting that his career up to this point roughly followed the route to *Becoming a Head Gardener*, explained by John Claudius Loudon in his 1822 Encyclopaedia of Gardening: a few years as an apprentice, followed by years as a journeyman, being employed as a master gardener, finally achieving the status of Head Gardener.

... I was appointed gardener and sub-curator to the Yorkshire Philosophical Society

In 1829, the Yorkshire Philosophical Society's new Museum on the Manor Shore was nearing completion, amid its '*three acres, more or less*' of land destined to be a Botanic Garden and suitable setting for such a splendid building. Clearly there was a need for a Sub-Curator to tend the Society's burgeoning collection of specimens and to manage their transfer from the five

rented rooms over Wentworth, Chaloner & Rishworth's Bank in Low Ousegate; and to create suitably Ornamental Grounds as a setting for the Museum.

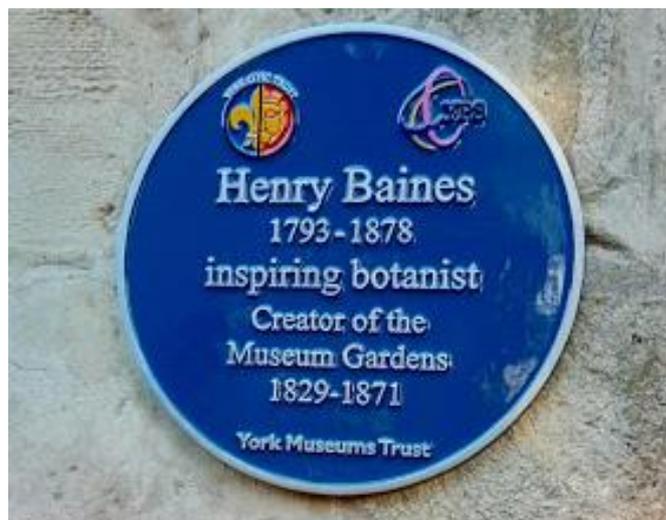


Yorkshire Gazette 26th September 1829

Who better than Henry Baines? It is not clear how the Philosophical Society came to hear of him, but perhaps there is no mystery. Most of the senior members of the Society will have had dealings with the Backhouse nursery and its foreman. Thomas Backhouse had been a member of the Society since its inception. And, of course, the Rev. William Vernon Harcourt knew everybody ...

So the *person qualified by his skill and industry* came to take up the post he was to hold for more than four decades.

Peter Hogarth



Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society (<https://www.facebook.com/Fishergate-Fulford-and-Heslington-Local-History-Group-111013762331316/>) is delighted to announce that the report on the old church of St Oswald in Fulford has just been published in the journal of the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society. <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/UCHUQJTQJWVEW4BEV4TK/full?target=10.1080/00844276.2020.1777787>

YPS was pleased to be one of the sponsors for this project.

Etty

The name of William Etty (1787-1849) is probably not the first you would associate with the Yorkshire Philosophical Society. Born in Feasegate, York, he was one of the most successful artists of his day, becoming a full member of the Royal Academy in 1828 on the death of fellow York-born artist, John Flaxman and a full year ahead of his professional rival, John Constable.ⁱ Better known now for his paintings of nudes, both female and male, this article will show that it is through Etty's portraits that we can appreciate his central place within the intellectual life of York of the early nineteenth century.ⁱⁱ

Unlike many of his friends and acquaintances Etty did not join the YPS as an ordinary member, possibly because for much of his adult life he was based in London, remaining an attender at the Royal Academy's life class 'night after night' throughout his career.ⁱⁱⁱ Nevertheless, Etty remained deeply attached to his home city to which he regularly returned before eventually retiring there in 1848. It was during these periodic visits that he involved himself in civic life, campaigning to save Clifford's Tower and the city walls from what he considered a 'barbarous project' of modernisation.^{iv} Horrified as he was by the fire at York Minster in February 1829, Etty was even more distressed by the plans of Robert Smirke to alter the interior and took his objections to the local and national press. He had what is described as a 'high-church veneration for beautiful antiquity' and is known to have made substantial financial contributions towards the maintenance of Bootham Bar and the restoration of the Minster.

On his annual visits to York Etty often stayed with his 'confidential friend' and 'bosom companion', John Harper, until Harper's untimely death in 1842, an event which affected Etty greatly, referring to it as not only 'an irreparable loss to dear York' but more significantly a '*National* loss'.^v Harper was a member of YPS and by profession an architect. He is probably best known in York for his work on the frontage of St Peter's School and York Theatre Royal, though he was also retained by

the Duke of Devonshire for works at Bolton Abbey.^{vi} When in January 1837 YPS took possession of that part of Museum Gardens down to the river's edge, it was Etty who recommended Harper to report on the state of the hospitium which he had identified as a possible site for a school of art. Although Harper's plans were accepted, the proposal did not proceed.^{vii}

Etty's portrait of Harper (fig. 1) painted in 1841, the year before his death, is one of comparatively few portraits within his oeuvre.^{viii} Portraiture as a genre did not attract the prestige of history paintings but it gave Etty the opportunity to produce some of his most intimate and careful works. Most were not commissioned or on public display, but were representations of his friends and acquaintances. His portrait of Harper is a particularly perceptive and personal image of a young friend. As with his other male portraits, Etty concentrated on the face, drawing attention to it by the dramatic use of highlighting, Harper's dark clothing set off by the white of the shirt front, against the warmth of a rosy background. The careful application of paint to the face and hair is contrasted by the looser texture of the clothing, lending an immediacy to the work and indicating the informality of the sitting.

Others painted by Etty include James Atkinson and John Brook, like Harper both members of YPS. Etty shared many interests with all three, describing long walks in the countryside, for example to

Lastingham "by a route Mr Brook had found by chance" to a place he described as "such a spot as a poet would like to be born at; remote secluded peaceful as an alpine solitude".^{ix} Brook was a solicitor and founder of *The Yorkshire Gazette* in 1819, the publication to which Etty addressed most of his correspondence on public affairs.^x Brook worked extensively alongside Etty to resist the destruction of York's mediaeval heritage in terms of both time and money. When campaigning for the conservation of Bootham Bar in 1832 Etty approached Brook with an offer to paint 'an historic or poetic picture of York' to be placed in a public building, preferably the lecture room of the YPS if the Bar were not demolished.^{xi} Rather surprisingly Brook felt this was too rash a promise and did not pass the offer on.



Fig 1: John Harper

Image: York Museums Trust (YORAG 71-001)

Etty went to considerable trouble to paint Brook's portrait (fig. 2), approaching the task 'as if the sitter had been a stranger'.^{xiii} He is known to have made numerous visits to achieve what he considered a true reflection of his friend's image and character. Etty again concentrated on the face, using a strong directional light, but adding a delicate depiction of the sitter's left hand which gives an added dignity to his thoughtful expression. Brook was known to be bookish and the presence of leather bound volumes in the background indicate that this was a man of learning. Unlike the portrait of Harper, here we see a far more carefully executed painting, Etty taking great pains with Brook's clothing and this shows none of the looser brushwork seen in Harper's image. His approach may also reflect the fact that, unusually, this portrait of his friend was a commission from the York Musical Society of which Brook was the founder. Painted in 1838, the portrait was passed to the YPS in 1872 and thence to York Art Gallery where it is now housed. As an indication of his affection for Brook, Etty painted a copy of the portrait for the family. This affection was obviously reciprocated by Brook who asked to be buried in St Olave's near his friend, William Etty.

James Atkinson's portrait (fig. 3) was painted in 1832. He is well known within YPS circles as being one of the founding members of the YPS following the discovery of fossil bones in Kirkdale Cave in July 1821. It was later that year, in December, that Atkinson met up with William Salmond and Anthony Thorpe to discuss these findings and on 7 December 1822 the first meeting of the YPS was held in Atkinson's home in Lendal.^{xiii} Atkinson subsequently became a vice-president of the society and in 1825 was appointed comparative anatomy curator.

The 1824 report of the YPS records donations by Atkinson of fossil bones from the cave, antiquities and astronomical equipment. By profession, Atkinson was a doctor, practicing as a surgeon at the County Hospital for many years and attached to the York Dispensary which treated those unable to pay. He became well-known for teaching anatomy to George Stubbs. He was also a widely travelled man, a fellow enthusiast with Etty and Brook for York's heritage and was in 1832, the year of his portrait, involved in the establishment of York Medical Society. Atkinson and Etty met through the YPS as although Etty was not a paid up member, he had been appointed honorary member in 1828 on account of his eminence.^{xiv}

Although he knew Atkinson well, Etty took his task very seriously, ensuring that he captured the essence of his subject, and extending his visit to York that year to complete

the work.^{xv} Etty wrote to his niece, Betsy, on 15 October that he had "been busy painting the head of Mr Atkinson of Lendal" and that it had been 'much admired

as a picture and as a resemblance', adding that he had 'gained credit by it'. Alexander Gilchrist in his biography of Etty records that David Wilkie declared it to be 'one of the finest portraits in England', whilst Etty himself wrote that 'the whole power of my art is in that picture; I can do no more'.^{xvi} Again, pre-dominantly in black with a rosy background, Etty recalls the approach of his former pupil master, Thomas Lawrence. The very dark, dramatic background is thrown into relief by the white shirt and face, and allow Etty to bring out the full character of the man. This is a face which is open, earnest but kindly and with a twinkle in the eye and though dressed in black, Atkinson is not forbidding, giving credence to

the friendly disposition of the man who was also known to be vivacious. It is no coincidence that this portrait



Fig 2: John Brook

Image: York Museums Trust (YORAG 982-001)



Fig 3: James Atkinson

Image: York Museums Trust (YORAG 983-001)

was used on the banner at the York campus entrance of Hull York Medical School, welcoming students and staff.

All three of these portraits were visual expressions of the mutual admiration which existed between Etty and his sitters. They were inextricably united in a common cause, the betterment of York, physically, intellectually and socially. Although Etty was not a regular attendee at lectures for obvious reasons, his presence was clearly felt and this friendship an important part of all their lives. It is hard to imagine that such a bond would have existed in the absence of the YPS, a society which reinforced their shared interests and gave rise to continued collaboration. Etty's place amongst these luminaries is nicely reinforced by the calotype photographs taken by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson in 1844 (fig 4). Etty was not present at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in York earlier in the year when delegates had been photographed by Hill and Adamson.^{xvii} Instead, when Etty visited Edinburgh in October, the photographers were quick to invite him to their studio where calotype photographs were taken in the company of his niece Betsy and his youngest brother Charles. It is interesting to note that the solo image of Etty bears a striking resemblance to the artist's own technique as exhibited in the portraits of his friends.^{xviii}

When Etty died in 1849 at the age of 63, he was buried in the churchyard of St Olave's, Marygate, York. His tomb can be seen from York Museum Gardens through the ruins of St Mary's Abbey. The inscription on his tomb bears witness to 'his cheerfulness and sweetness of disposition', whose 'great simplicity and urbanity of manners' 'richly endeared' him to 'all who knew him'. Etty is commemorated by a statue by George Milburn in front of York Art Gallery which, until the recent conservation, was enhanced by an image of Bootham Bar in recognition of his public works.^{xix}

Dorothy Nott

Notes

i. There is a maximum number of Royal Academicians at any one time, so vacancies only arise on death or when an existing member reaches the age of 75.

ii. Even before the establishment of the YPS in 1822, York had nurtured the intellectual exchange of ideas with the York Virtuosi in the long eighteenth century. One celebrated member of the group, active between 1670 and 1683, was John Etty, but thus far it has not

been possible to establish a family connection with William Etty in spite of extensive research by both Leonard Robinson and Tom Etty of Nijmegen, the artist's descendant. See *William Etty: The Life and Art* by Leonard Robinson, (Jefferson, North Carolina and London, 2007): 20-24.

iii. *Arnold's Magazine of the Fine Arts* cited by Martin Myrone in 'Something too Academical: The Problem with Etty in *William Etty: Art and Controversy* (exh cat. York Museums Trust, London, 2011): 53. Etty first attended the RA school in 1807.

iv. *William Etty: Art and Controversy* (exh cat. York Museums Trust, London, 2011): 23.

v. *Ibid*: 241. Harper died of malaria in Naples in his early thirties. He was Etty's junior

by twenty-two years and Etty had expected to spend much of his retirement in Harper's company.

vi. Etty painted *The Strid, Bolton Abbey*, following a trip there in 1841 with Harper.

vii. Etty was, however, instrumental in starting a Government School of Design in 1842.

viii. Etty painted twenty-five portraits between 1812 and 1849.

ix. Gilchrist, A., *Life of William Etty R.A.*, 2 vols (London, 1855): vol 2, 14.

x. Brook was in partnership with George Bulmer, another of Etty's friends. The firm they started is still in existence as Ware and Kay.

xi. Robinson, L. *William Etty: The Life and Art* (Jefferson, North Carolina and London, 2007): 194.

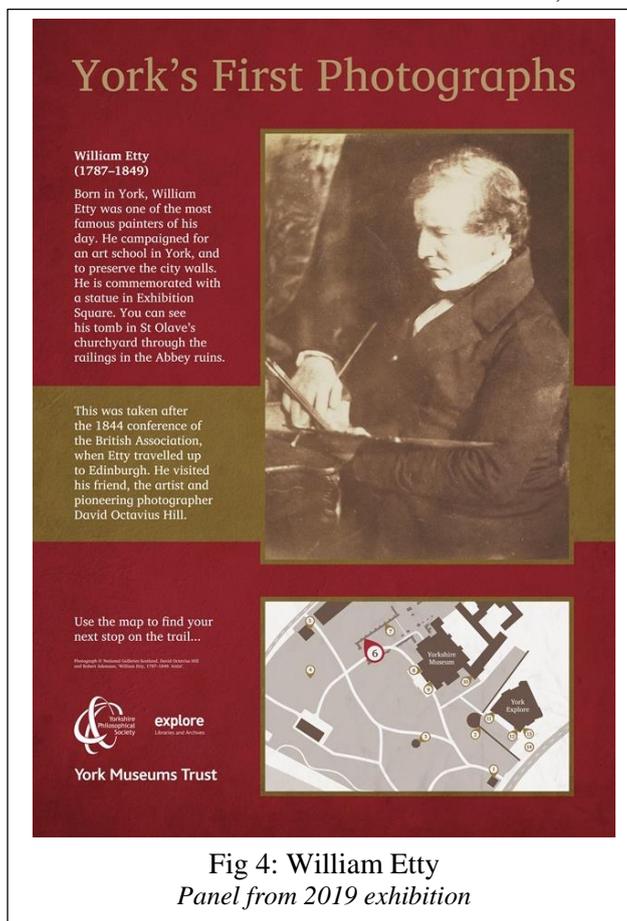


Fig 4: William Etty
Panel from 2019 exhibition

xii. *William Etty: Art and Controversy* (exh cat. York Museums Trust, London, 2011): 235 citing Gilchrist.

xiii. This building has been conserved by the York Conservation Trust and has provided a venue for informal meetings of members of YPS since 2019.

xiv. See article by Alan Cochrane on James Atkinson in *YPS Annual Report* of 2011.

xv. It is likely that Atkinson paid for this portrait as it was painted at his specific request.

xvi. *William Etty: Art and Controversy* (exh cat. York Museums Trust, London, 2011): 234 citing Gilchrist.

xvii. See YPS website for further information on this and the project run by YPS, York Museums Trust and York Explore in 2019.

xviii. This photograph was included in the 2019 exhibition of calotypes in York Museum Gardens.

xix. Unfortunately it proved impossible to conserve the statue without removing a model of the Bar at Etty's feet.

Short Bibliography

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William Etty: Art and Controversy (exh cat. York Museums Trust, London, 2011).

YPS reports

Can you help?

St Olave's church is currently engaged in a project to conserve William Etty's tomb, which is deteriorating and the stonework at risk of collapse. The project is estimated to cost £12,000 and about half the funding has been raised so far. Further details from:

treasurer@stolaveschurch.org.uk



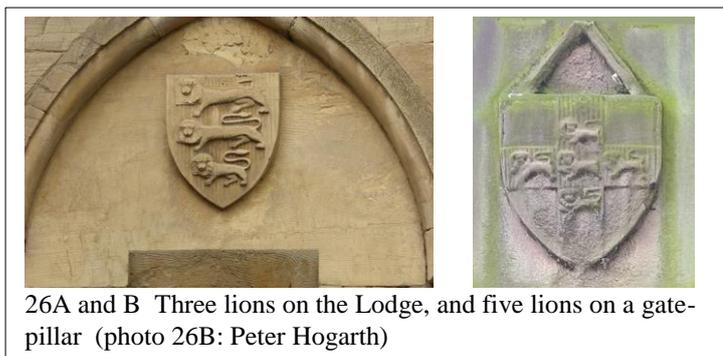
Image: St Olave's Church

We celebrate the re-opening of the Museum Gardens with another extract from Rita Wood's article about George Fowler Jones, "The YPS Lodge and its architect"



25 The Lodge gates

The Lodge Gates are worth stopping to look at [25]. There seems to be no absolute proof that the pillars and ironwork were designed by Jones; they were funded by an individual donation at the time the Lodge was being planned. The stone used is strikingly different from the Magnesian limestone of the Lodge, and might suggest a different origin: this contrast is discussed below. In favour of a link is the fact that the three lions [26A] carved on a shield on the Lodge resemble the five lions on a shield [26B] on two of the pillars in that they have manes forming a ruff encircling the head, and the tooling of the ground is the same in each. A favourable clue to the pillars being designed by Jones is the similarity with a letterform used at the Vicarage at Heworth. ...



26A and B Three lions on the Lodge, and five lions on a gate-pillar (photo 26B: Peter Hogarth)

... The various arms and monograms carved in shields at the entrance have been discussed authoritatively by Hugh Murray in *Heraldry and the buildings of York* (1985), as listed here –

Outside the Gardens, left to right:

On the Lodge itself facing the street: [26A] 3 lions (royal arms)

On the pillars:

- first pillar [13] monogram VR, Victoria Regina; the queen was a patroness of the YPS
 second pillar a crown 'proper' and crossed keys: the See of York
 third pillar [26B] the City of York
 fourth pillar [30] monogram AE, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales; also a patron of YPS

Inside the Gardens, again from left to right

- first pillar [31] monogram WE or EW, or possibly EVV*
 second pillar again, the See of York
 third pillar again, the City of York
 fourth pillar [32] Arms of Harcourt (gules, two bars or). and 'YPS' over the door [33].

*Edward Venables-Vernon had succeeded to the title in 1830; he died in 1847 as Archbishop of York. He was by far the most famous Harcourt, and of sufficient rank to accompany the Queen and the heir to the throne. He was a former vice-President of the society and a major benefactor by his will.

Hogarth & Anderson, p. 5. Thanks to Peter Hogarth, Bob Hale and Catherine Sotheran for supplying much of the above information, collected during research for the *Museum Gardens* book. See also Ian Pattison and Hugh Murray, *Monuments in York Minster*, no. 142.



13 Museum Gardens, gate pillar, the monogram for Victoria Regina (photo: Peter Hogarth)



30 Monogram of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (photos 30-32: Peter Hogarth)

From inside and outside the Gardens, the arms of the See of York are paired with the arms of the City. The royal monograms are paired on the outer face of the pillars, together with the royal arms on the Lodge; inside the gardens the uncertain monogram is paired with the Harcourt arms, and the YPS monogram is on the Lodge [33]. Egerton Vernon Harcourt was a member of Council at the time the gates were built, but it was Canon William

Vernon Harcourt who had had a major role in the YPS, he was the fourth founding member and the first President from 1823-31, so any member seeing the arms would probably think of him. There is public tribute facing the street, and things of relevance to members within the Gardens.

The dark stone used for the pillars makes a striking contrast with the light yellow Magnesian limestone used for the Lodge, particularly since one pillar butts against the Lodge wall. The position of the gates, beneath the spread of a majestic *Platanus x hispanica* Muenchhausen, in dim light and with its deposit



31 Monogram WE or EW or EVV

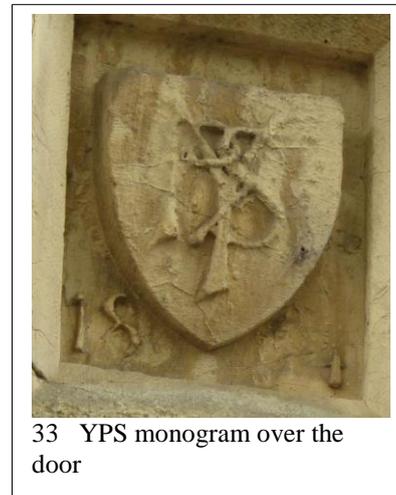


32 Arms of Harcourt

of sticky aphid extract, may be in part to blame for their green and grey streaking - compare the light brown pillars at the opposite Club Chambers which look to be a similar stone. There would still be some contrast, however, and that is awkward until other considerations are taken into account. The materials used around the Gardens have all been examined by Paul Ensom: walls carrying the railings of the Gardens, on the riverside walk and in Museum Street, use Millstone Grit, and the pillars are a finer-grained sandstone, Upper Carboniferous, possibly from Ackworth, it contains 'ochre balls' of limonite. Paul Thornley suggests that the contrast with the Lodge is excused by the fact that sandstones were thought better for low walls where gases and debris collected; they would not show the dirt. For comparison, the pillars for the railings and gate at Bootham Park are respectively of the fine sandstone and Millstone Grit, whereas the contemporary

lodge is in yellow brick with stone dressings.

Yorkshire Museum Botanic Gardens leaflet, *Living Sculpture: a guide to the trees*, undated. Paul Ensom, *Museum Gardens Stone Guide*, locations 13, 27; this is the unpublished work of a Keeper of Geology at the Museum in the 1990s, it was found by the Science Curator, Sarah King, and passed to the YPS Geology Group. Thanks to Paul Thornley, Chair of the YPS Geology Group. Hogarth & Anderson, p. 72-4.



33 YPS monogram over the door

The complete, copiously illustrated, article can be read at <https://www.ypsyork.org/resources/articles/the-architect-of-the-yps-lodge/>. For members without internet access Frances will be happy to send out a paper copy. There is no charge but two second class stamps to cover printing and postage would be greatly appreciated.

Exploration from your armchair

More of our favourites, beginning of course with an addition to our own website:

May Sybil Leslie - another inspiring scientist for our growing collection of Yorkshire Scientists and Innovators:

<https://www.ypsyork.org/resources/yorkshire-scientists-and-innovators/may-sybil-leslie/>

A presentation by the **Environment Agency** about new flood measures affecting the Museum Gardens:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7m3orug1HTQ#:~:text=The%20Environment%20Agency%20is%20held%20a%20virtual%20public,of%20York%20and%20improve%20defences%20in%20Museum%20Gardens.>

Two **photography** exhibitions:

<https://www.scienceandmediamuseum.org.uk/whats-online/50-years-macrobert-award-engineering-innovation>

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/forest-100-year-the-life-natural-landscape>

An exhibition about **Leeds innovators and inventions**:
<https://museumsandgalleries.leeds.gov.uk/virtual-visit/leeds-to-innovation-online-exhibition/>

New entries continue to be added to the **Great North Yorkshire Sons and Daughters** website featured in our February newsletter:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/made-in-north-yorkshire>

How some of our **local cheeses** are made:

<https://virtual.greatyorkshireshow.co.uk/tuesday/meet-the-cheesemakers/>

This summer, the **York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship** is running a free series of online events: 'Second Tuesday Talks'. These informal talks will be held via Zoom at 19:00:

<https://www.conservationyork.org.uk/events/>

To keep an eye on for the autumn:

CBA Festival of Archaeology 24th October to 1st November:

<https://festival.archaeologyuk.org/about>

Finally, a couple of snippets for those who enjoy large machines and stirring music:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zk1C3QI2jA>

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/g231yl2951tzbjg/AAD-MQGiMiV0KqjV3q8BJrvsa?dl=0&preview=DJ_NHS_Thank_You.mov

and don't forget the 'Clerk in the Country' blog on our website: <https://www.ypsyork.org/blog/> To whet your appetite:

"Deciphered with difficulty, the old-fashioned German script revealed telling insights into life in a war-torn land. The writer looked back to working on the farm as a happy time. He remembered regular meals and the farmer's kindness in getting his watch repaired. Now life was much harder, there were shortages of everything, cigarettes were not to be had. "My everyday suit is also my Sunday suit", he wrote."

"When it came to hunting, Twinkle knew some of the theory but had obviously never done any practical work; the only thing she ever caught was a leaf. The vole was proving more difficult than that and made its escape into a flower bed."

"By the time Jonah the Giant Whale visited Selby, it must have been dead and touring the country for several years already. In those far-off days before colour TV and beautifully filmed wildlife documentaries, it drew curious crowds wherever it went. Even the lorry on which it was transported was an object of wonder, said to be the largest in the country."

Diary

We are tentatively beginning to re-schedule postponed events and arrange new ones, but please note that all of the following dates and events are subject to change in the light of anti-Covid-19 measures prevailing at the time. Further information will follow in our next newsletter, planned for November, and on the website: www.ypsyork.org

2020

Thurs 10 Sept - YPS Get-Together

12pm lunch and/or 2pm to 3.30 pm Tree Walk
See leaflet enclosed. Pre-booking essential

Tues 22 Sept, 7.30 pm – YPS & IET Partnership Lecture

An overview of Sirius Minerals North Yorkshire polyhalite project: opportunities and engineering challenges

Matt Parsons (General Manager External Affairs) and Mark Pooleman MEng CEng MICE (Project Engineer), Sirius Minerals (*re-scheduled from 23 March*) *Zoom*

Tues 6 Oct, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

Sustainable development and the CO₂ refinery

Professor Mike North, Department of Chemistry, University of York *Zoom*

Wed 7 Oct, 7.30 pm – Café Scientifique
Achieving farming's Net Zero challenge

Andrew Loftus and James Mills (farmers) *Zoom*

Tues 20 Oct, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

The Roman Quarter

Ian Milsted, York Archaeological Trust *Zoom*

Wed 4 Nov, 2.30 pm – Café Scientifique

To be confirmed – please note new time and venue

Friends' Meeting House, Friargate, York

Free but pre-booking essential on 01904 656713 or chair@ypsyork.org

Tues 17 Nov, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

New Light on Roman Yorkshire: work by students at the Department of Archaeology

Steve Roskams, Department of Archaeology, University of York *Zoom*

Tues 1 Dec, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

Title to be confirmed

Professor Christina van der Felz Cornelis

Zoom and/or venue to be confirmed

Wed 2 Dec, 7.30 pm – Café Scientifique

A Landscape History of North East Yorkshire

Dr Laura Eddey (*re-scheduled from 1 April*) *Zoom*

2021

Tues 9 Mar, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

The Enemy Between Us: The Impact of Inequality

Professor Kate Pickett & Professor Richard Wilkinson

(*re-scheduled from 21 April*)

Tues 23 Mar, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

Title to be confirmed

Dr Christopher Ridgway

Tues 27 Apr, 7.30 pm – YPS Lecture

Relative sea-level changes and the history of the Greenland Ice Sheet

Dr Sarah Woodroffe, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Durham (*re-scheduled from 5 May*)

Zoom lectures – details for each lecture will be sent to members by email. Please note that we plan to record the lectures and make them available on a YPS YouTube channel for viewing after the event.

In consultation with the Charity Commission we continue to work on the arrangements for our postponed **AGM** and hope to be able to send details shortly. **The Lodge** continues to be closed for the present, as we look into measures needed to use it in a safe way. Thank you for your patience.