

# Nottinghamshire

## **Robin Hood hat**

Perhaps Nottinghamshire is most famous for the fictional character, Robin Hood. Stories and films were produced about his exploits in Sherwood Forest, where he was said to rob the rich to help the poor, have been read and seen by many world-wide. Together with his 'Merry Men' and Maid Marion he always managed to outwit his enemy the Sheriff of Nottingham.

*Lent by Jim, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Postcard of Jesse Boot and tablet bottle**

Jesse Boot, who originally helped his widowed mother run a small herbalist shop in Goose Gate, Nottingham, realised it was possible to buy in bulk and sell for a profit. The business grew rapidly and shops were soon appearing in many towns. A large factory was built at Beeston, where both drugs and beauty products were manufactured. Jesse was knighted in 1903 for his generosity to the city, and to the University of Nottingham.

*Lent by Sheila and Carol, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **First page of the piano conductor's copy of *The Dam Busters March***

Eric Coates was born in 1886 at Hucknall. He is famous as the composer of light music of the early 20th century. The Dam Busters March was written for the film of the same name. A movement from his London Suite, the Knightsbridge March, was used as the signature tune for the BBC television programme 'In Town Tonight'.

*Lent by the Boots Orchestra.*

### ***Sons and Lovers* by D.H. Lawrence**

The author David Herbert Lawrence was born in Eastwood, the son of a coal miner. Most of his books were set in Nottinghamshire which he called 'the country of my heart'. His controversial final work 'Lady Chatterley's Lover' was originally banned from publication.

Other notable Nottinghamshire authors include Lord Byron, Alan Sillitoe, Arthur Mee and Geoffrey Trease. Now Nottingham is a UNESCO City of Literature.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

### **Postcard, Pilgrim Country**

Scrooby in north Nottinghamshire was the meeting place for a group of Separatists led by William Brewster of Scrooby, Richard Clifton, rector of Babworth, and William Bradford of Austerfield. They are more widely known as the Pilgrim Fathers, who sailed to the New World in 1620 aboard the Mayflower, to seek religious freedom.

Sneinton near Nottingham is also famous as the birthplace of William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

### **Postcard, The Dukeries**

Within Sherwood Forest were five large estates all at one time owned by dukes, hence the area became known as The Dukeries. Clumber House (Dukes of Newcastle) was demolished in 1938. The National Trust now owns the park. Thoresby Hall (Dukes of Kingston) is now a hotel. Worksop Manor (Dukes of Norfolk), a Smythson house, is now privately owned. Welbeck Abbey (Dukes of Portland) is now lived in by a descendant. Rufford Abbey (Earl of Scarborough) is now a country park with some of the monastic buildings still visible.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Civil War coin**

Newark is a market town on the River Trent where it is crossed by the Great North Road. At the time of the Civil War it was a Royalist stronghold. After the defeat of the king the parliamentarians gave the order for the castle to be slighted and it is still a ruin today. The spire of the parish church still bears a hole caused by a cannon ball.

*Lent by Ann, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Postcard, the Bramley apple window in Southwell Minster**

Southwell Minster is the cathedral for the diocese of Southwell & Nottingham, which was established in 1884. The beautiful building is particularly noted for the 'leaves of Southwell' carving near the chapter house. In 2009 a new window was installed to mark the 200th anniversary of the Bramley apple, which was first grown from a pip in a cottage garden in Southwell.

*Lent by Pauline, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Postcard, the River Trent**

The River Trent enters Nottinghamshire in the south west and then turns northwards. There are important road bridges at Clifton, Nottingham and Newark and a toll bridge at Dunham. At one time the river carried a large volume of freight but today is used for pleasure boating.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Toy tractor**

The south and east of Nottinghamshire are mainly agricultural areas. Laxton village is unique in still using the medieval open field system of farming. The three open fields are divided into strips rented by the farmers. One field is for wheat, one for oats, peas, beans or barley, and the third lies fallow, in rotation. A court leet is held annually in the local inn and fines are imposed on anyone encroaching over their allotted land.

*Lent by Margaret's grandson, Harry.*

### **Festival of Britain glass**

In 1951, when the Festival of Britain was celebrated, Trowell was chosen as Britain's Festival Village. It was to represent the rural community. The fact that it was near the centre of England and that it had an unusual name also influenced its choice. The glass is a souvenir of the Festival and bears the festival logo.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

### **Trent Bridge Cricket Ground ticket holder**

The world famous cricket ground at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, was laid out in 1838 by William Clarke. He had married the widowed landlady of the Trent Bridge Inn because the land next to the inn was ideal for a cricket ground! It is now a regular Test match venue as well as being the home of the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club.

*Lent by Mary, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

### **Nottingham lion fridge magnet**

Nottingham's Council House, which replaced the Exchange, was opened in 1929. It has a dome on top in which hangs the clock bell known as Little John.

On either side of the main frontage are two carved stone lions. These, particularly the left-hand one, have always been used as a meeting place for local people.

*Lent by Ann, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

### **Postcard, Wollaton Hall**

Wollaton Hall is a house designed by Robert Smythson for Sir Francis Willoughby which was completed in 1558.

The Willoughby family, originally from Willoughby on the Wolds, had become wealthy from the profits of coal. The Hall was sold to Nottingham Corporation in 1925 and became a natural history museum. Some of the parkland was sold for building but much still remains for the public to enjoy.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Nottingham lace**

During the 19th century Nottingham became famous for machine-made lace. The lace was used to decorate clothes and to make curtains. John Heathcote's bobbin net machine was followed by John Leavers' bobbin and carriage machine. Large factories were built around Nottingham and the Lace Market quarter became the commercial hub of the trade. There is a collection of lace pattern books at Nottinghamshire Archives which shows the range of designs.

*Lent by Sheila and Ann, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Framework knitting**

The framework knitting machine was invented by William Lee of Calverton in 1589. It led to a cottage industry in many villages especially in the south of Nottinghamshire. A Framework Knitting Museum at Ruddington, is housed in a former workshop with the typical long, high windows. Several frames there can be seen working. In the early 19th century the 'Luddites' smashed many frames in protest against low wages and poor conditions.

*Lent by Ruddington Framework Knitting Museum.*

## **Coal**

Coal was mined mainly in the west and north of Nottinghamshire. Originally coal was obtained from bell pits and later from shallow shafts on the exposed coalfield. As production increased in the 19th century with the concealed coalfield around Mansfield, new colliery villages were built, for example at Clipstone and Bircotes. The Barber-Walker company owned many of the collieries and had offices at Eastwood Hall. By the end of the 20th century all the mines had ceased production.

*Lent by Janis, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Gypsum ashtray**

Gypsum was mined in the south of Nottinghamshire, particularly at Gotham, Kingston on Soar and East Leake, and in the Newark area. The alabaster was used in many local church monuments. Gypsum was made into plaster for the building trade among many other uses. Lord Belper, who owned the Kingston mine, also had a Fine Arts Company which produced small goods, like the ashtray. East Leake is now the headquarters of British Gypsum in the UK.

*Lent by Sheila, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Telecommunications nameplate**

Telecommunications equipment manufacturing has been part of Nottinghamshire's heritage for over 100 years, employing upwards of 10,000 people at its peak. It has included names like: The National Telephone Company, British L M Ericsson Manufacturing Co. Ltd, Ericsson Telephone Limited, The Plessey Company, GEC Plessey Telecommunications (GPT), Siemens and Marconi. The manufacturer's nameplate is from the Ericsson Telephones Limited (ETL) era which lasted from 1926 to 1961.

*Lent by Graham, VCH Nottinghamshire.*

## **Newspaper article on Stanford Hall**

Stanford Hall was built in the 18th century as the home for the Dashwood family. It was bought in 1928 by Sir Julian Cahn and then later sold to become a Co-operative College. Having been empty for some years it was purchased in 2011 by the 6th Duke of Westminster to establish a Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre for injured Service personnel. Following extensive additional buildings it welcomed its first patients in 2018.

*From Sunday Times 23.12.2012*

## **Wooden goose**

The annual Goose Fair was originally held in Nottingham Market Place and named for the geese, with their feet tarred, which were driven from Norfolk to Nottingham in early October each year. It began in the Middle Ages as a trading fair. More recently it has become a fun fair. When the Council House was built the fair was moved to a site on the Forest. It continues to be a regular fixture every year.

*Lent by Pauline, VCH Nottinghamshire.*