

# Poachings

*David Robinson remembers Canon John Swaby*

In the February issue I wrote about the annual pin and candle auction at Old Bolingbroke. It started seventy years ago when the Ramsden family of Hareby gave a six-and-a-half acre grass field to Bolingbroke parish for recreation which would be let for summer grazing. Recently, and thanks to a local businessman, fences have been renewed, a new gate fitted and overhanging trees cut back. This year, in order to improve chances of the field being let, the auction was part of Robert Bell & Co's grass letting auction in March at the Black Swan in Horncastle.

## CANON JOHN SWABY

Many Lincolnshire people will remember with affection Canon Dr John Edwin Swaby who died in February. He was born at Withern in 1911, educated at Magdalen College School, Wainfleet and King Edward VI Grammar School in Louth, and read History and Theology at Durham University. After a curacy in Louth (1936-40) he was incumbent of widely different parishes in Lincolnshire: Scunthorpe (1940-53), Mablethorpe and Theddlethorpe All Saints and St Helen (1953-60), Barton on Humber (1960-71) and Uffington, Tallington and Barholm (1971-76) - a service of forty-two years ministry in the Diocese of Lincoln, including Rural Dean of Loutheske East (1957-60) and of Yarborough (1964-67). He was made a Canon of Lincoln Cathedral in 1969 and Canon Emeritus at retirement in 1976.

His Doctoral thesis in 1983 was on religious life in Lincolnshire during the Civil War and Commonwealth. His published works include 'A History of Louth' (1952), 'The Marshmen' (1961) - both now sought after in antiquarian book shops, 'Random Rhymes' (1989), 'The Stranded Town: Wainfleet Down the Ages' (1984) and 'Memories of a Lincolnshire Parson' (verses, 2001). His last book was 'Tales of a Lincolnshire Parson'

(2004), an entertaining collection, published by the Louth Naturalists', Antiquarian & Literary Society and still available from Louth Museum at £4.95 or £6 post free.

## WALKABOUT GUIDE

Failure of the speedway meant that Gibraltar Point remained as a wild, unspoiled coastline from the south end of Skegness to the mouth of Britain's biggest estuary - The Wash. With wind-swept sand-dunes, expanses of creek-dissected saltmarsh and a continually growing sandy foreshore, it has a rich community of plants and animals. Just published is a new Walkabout Guide to help visitors explore and enjoy the diverse landscape.

Another development in the 1930s which could have ruined Gibraltar Point was a new seaside town to be called Tennyson Glen. Money ran out and the former Lindsey County Council bought much of the land to prevent such development, and in 1949 agreed a proposal from the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to establish a nature reserve. It is now recognised both nationally (National Nature Reserve) and internationally, and is managed by the Trust under lease from Lincolnshire County Council and East Lindsey District Council.

The Walkabout Guide is a handy companion for an easy access nature walk, choosing from fifteen sections referring to numbered posts on the reserve on a three-mile circular route. Look for samphire and sea lavender on the saltmarsh, listen for the ascending song of the skylark and the alarm call of the redshank in the summer, or take your binoculars in the autumn to see the flocks of migrating waders and other shore birds.

There are a number of good viewpoints overlooking the dunes, the shore and the Wash, together with birdwatching hides at the Mere, Fenland Lagoon, Jackson's Marsh and Tennyson Sands. And don't forget to explore the

interactive and audio-visual displays of the Wild Coast exhibition and Nature Discovery room in the recently extended and refitted Visitor Centre.

## EARTHQUAKE

When was the last earthquake to shake Lincolnshire like the one earlier this year? Answer: at 1.30am on Monday 8 June, 1931 under the Dogger Bank, about a hundred miles off our coast, the shock waves from which rattled Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Louth and as far inland as Market Rasen (the epicentre this year).

## WAINFLEET MUSEUM

The Magdalen College School in Wainfleet was founded in 1484 by William of Waynflete, born in the town and who became Lord Chancellor of England and also established Magdalen College, Oxford. It served as a school until the modern school elsewhere in the town opened in 1966. Two years later the ground floor was converted to a branch library, and in 1993, through the efforts of local resident Cliffe Toyne, the upper floor became a museum. Artefacts on display include farm tools, war memorabilia, china, kitchenware, coins, wildfowling and a Victorian schoolroom with the original teacher's desk.

The volunteer-run museum is open Easter to September on Tuesday, Thursday to Sunday and Bank Holidays, 1.30-4.30pm (admission £2, children free).



MAGDALEN COLLEGE SCHOOL, WAINFLEET