



## Volume III: It's Here...

Local history in Derbyshire reached a landmark with the publication of **Derbyshire Victoria County History Volume III** late last year.

VCH publishers Boydell and Brewer published the book, in late November. This represents the first so-called 'big red book' since volume II in 1907. Volume III deals with the parishes of Bolsover and four adjoining parishes to the north; Barlborough, Whitwell, Clowne and Elmlton (including Creswell).

County Chairman Stephen Bounds explains that with publication in late 2013 and the clash with Christmas the Derbyshire VCH Trust decided to delay an official launch until the new year. He says; 'We wanted time to plan things effectively and give the book the launch it deserved. The 12 April launch should give as many people as possible a chance to attend and for us to say a big thank you for everyone's support.'

Details about the launch are below. Clowne's Heritage High School has been chosen to host the event as it has modern facilities, including a purpose built lecture theatre and is fully accessible. The launch will also be combined with a Marc Fitch Lecture, which will help considerably with expenses. Everyone is welcome to come to the event – not just members – but we do ask you to book (details are below).

The Trust's President, the Duke of Devonshire, will be attending. The event will be chaired by Dr Richard Gaunt, of the University of Nottingham – from one of Trust's leading partner organisations. Members of the VCH's central office at the Institute of Historical Research should also be present as should representatives from other partners who have assisted, such as the county council.

*VCH members should have received separate communication from the membership secretary, Cathrin Wharton, about availability of the new volume, but if you have not, please contact her. Members who have not already requested a mailed copy can still do so, but we will have copies available at the launch event for collection and for sale.*

### The Derbyshire Marc Fitch Lecture

The Marc Fitch lecture is an annual event, first organised in 1956 by **Marcus Felix Brudenell Fitch**.

After the Second World War Fitch developed interests in historical and genealogical matters. This ultimately led to him setting up the Marc Fitch Fund in 1956.

Each year a key-note lecture is given by the fund. This year the lecture is being given as part of our volume III launch. Professor David Hey will talk about 'Derbyshire Surnames'.

Despite the mobility of modern times every county still has its distinctive surnames that were formed locally in the Middle Ages.

Derbyshire has its obvious ones, such as Bagshaw, Glossop and Heathcote, and its more puzzling names, such as Belk, Levick and Shimwell.

The talk will use distribution maps of surnames recorded in the 1881 census returns to show how local surnames can be traced back to their origins.

Do you know anyone called Blanksby, Greatorex or Memmot?

We are very grateful to the Marc Fitch Fund for supporting our launch event.

## ... and you're invited to help us celebrate



You are invited to help us celebrate the launch of Derbyshire VCH Volume III.

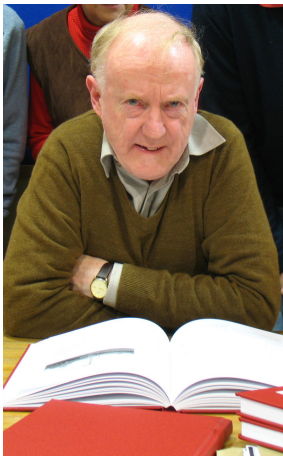
All VCH members and friends are invited to our launch event and associated Marc Fitch Lecture at Clowne's Heritage High School (left) on Saturday 12 April. See over the page for details on how to get there.

The day will start with tea and coffee from 10.15 am. At 11 am there will be a short talk on the book, following which it will be officially launched. At 11.45 am Professor David Hey will deliver the 2014 Marc Fitch lecture. The morning will close with a buffet lunch served from about 1 pm. There is no charge for the launch event or for the lunch.

**Everyone is welcome, but we do need you to book in advance on 07775 780045 or email [treasurer@derbyshirevch.org](mailto:treasurer@derbyshirevch.org). If you know of anyone who might want to come, ask them to contact us as above.**

### Why Victoria County History?

Founded in 1899 and originally dedicated to Queen Victoria, the VCH is an encyclopaedic record of England's places and people from earliest times to the present day. Based at the Institute of Historical Research in the University of London since 1933, the VCH is written by historians working in counties across England and is without doubt the greatest publishing project in English local history. In Derbyshire a charitable Trust helps with fundraising and research. You are reading that Trust's newsletter. See our website at [www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk) for more information.



# VCH Volume III Highlights

What particular highlights might be found in volume III?

Our County Editor Philip Riden (left), who has been a leading light in Derbyshire VCH since it restarted, is obviously delighted that everyone who has supported the project now sees something tangible. He comments; 'I am obviously very pleased that the book has been published. I hope this will demonstrate to members the value of modern VCH parish histories for the serious study of local history in a county. I am very grateful to members who have supported the trust financially since

its inception, and to those members who have helped directly with the research. I hope it will be possible to continue work on the History in the county and see the publication of further volumes.'

Within its 200-odd pages of approximately 31 cms. x 21 cms. size, you will find what are now the common threads of VCH. Within its red, hard-back covers are such topics as a general introduction to each of the communities – covering geology, population and communications. Then follows chapters on land ownership, economic history, social history, religious history and local government. Dig deeper and the area's rich mining history, schools, agriculture and many others receive attention within. Typical (but surely of great importance) is the piecing together of the complex history of landownership in Barlborough.

Those used to the older style of VCH (particularly the still very useful Derbyshire volumes I and II) may be surprised at the amount of illustrations used (some 71 in total). Some maps have been especially drawn for the book. There are also extracts from contemporary Ordnance Survey maps. As is now usual with VCH the index is a substantial piece of work of some 15 pages. References appear at the foot of each page.

In its whole, then, this represents a major step forward in the continuing mission of VCH being the greatest publishing project in English local history and also a fitting tribute to those who have contributed in any way. Supporters may be interested that volume IV is already being compiled. We will tell you more about this in our next newsletter.

**My VCH highlights**

*We asked some Derbyshire VCH supporters what their views were on the publication of Volume III*

## The Duke of Devonshire

*'The publication of Volume III is not only a great achievement, but it also helps fill a number of gaps in the area's history. I look forward to bearing a lot more about the book at our launch event and meeting many of those involved in its production. Congratulations to everyone involved.'*

The Duke is President of the Derbyshire VCH Trust.

## Professor David Hey

*'The launch of the Bolsover volume is a major achievement that will delight local historians throughout the county. It will stimulate research and writing in other parts of Derbyshire and will show local historians beyond the county boundary what can be done by our approach. Congratulations to everyone who has been involved in its completion!'*

David Hey is a well-known and accomplished local historian – also a former chairman of the Trust.

## Dudley Fowkes

*'After some trials and tribulations the faith that our many supporters have had in VCH is now paying off. It's the culmination of much work, in research, production and fund raising. A hearty thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way.'*

Dudley Fowkes should need no introduction to VCH Derbyshire supporters! He's our current secretary.

## Derbyshire VCH Contacts



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## Join us at Clowne's Heritage High School

Heritage High School, is on Boughton Lane, just to the west of Clowne town Centre. Post code is S43 4QG. If you're near to the M1 travel to junction 30 then take the A616 signposted Worksop. At the first roundabout continue following the A616, now signposted Clowne and Newark following the A616 through three further roundabouts. Shortly after the third roundabout take the second right turn and you're on Boughton Lane. Keep looking out for the school. You can't miss it, though it's set back from the road. There's ample free parking on site, with level access into the main entrance, where our launch event is being held.

**Stagecoach in Chesterfield Service 77 passes the school. For further information visit [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)**