



The Markenfield Irregular

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DRONES are getting a bad press at the moment, with over 800 flights cancelled at Gatwick because some had been spotted threatening flight paths, and more later at Heathrow. But as Dr Jones' article in The Friends' newsletter describes, they can be beneficial too.

It is disappointing, however, that the sites shown up by the archaeological dowsers' work in 2010 were not confirmed. It had been uncanny to experience the dowsing rods moving in the hand as they passed over parts of the "lumps and bumps field" - Scheduled as an Ancient Monument - and our ancient Courtyard. Such movements were to specific patterns, which appeared to make sense. The six dowsers had not been briefed beforehand about what might have been there and their integrity is undoubted.



Image: Dr Keith Jones

TWELVE PHOTOGRAPHS of Markenfield during the First World War have been discovered by Sarah. They are of high quality and were taken in 1916 by George Hepworth as part of a lecture-series given by him to the Hebden Bridge Local History Society about a number of Historic Homes of Yorkshire including Castle Howard and Norton Conyers.



The first and most notable thing about the pictures is that, in the intervening century, almost nothing has changed. There are different details, and outside looks a bit drab and unplanted, but that is all.

The most striking photo is that of the then tenant farmer Robert Foster standing at the front door. He rented the farm from 1894 to 1916, the year he died. The Ripon Gazette wrote "Mr Foster had been concerned at the damage done to the land, which had been used as a manoeuvre area for troops from the Ripon Camp". This was a reference to the two fields on the NE of the Estate, still called The Trenches, which had been commandeered by the Army to train young conscripts in the art of trench warfare before they were sent out to France to face the real thing, many never to return.

OPEN DAYS this year will run from
Sunday 5th to Sunday 19th May and
Sunday 16th to Sunday 30th June.

We will also be opening the gardens on Friday 14th June for the National Garden Scheme,
to help them raise funds for the splendid charities the organisation maintains.
Volunteers will be invited nearer the time.



MARKENFIELD WITHIN THE MOAT is Listed Grade One as of outstanding architectural and historical interest. The Farm Buildings, to the South of the moat, are Listed Grade Two.

These Farm Buildings consist of two large, tall, sixteenth century stone barns, one extreme left and one extreme right; and a single-storey part-gabled structure running between, imitating the style of the Gatehouse, dated 1853. The latter was most probably built by JR Walbran, who did much good work here at that time. It is interesting it was built shortly after the

railway came to Ripon, which suddenly enlarged the market available to the farm from how far cattle could be driven on foot in a couple of days, to the whole of the North of England.

A recent collapse of part of the roof of the East-facing barn has revealed the fine English Oak timbers that support the heavy Yorkshire stone roofing slabs, known as "tiles". Many have already fallen inside and are being carefully preserved, but the whole roof is in a bad state and needs substantial repair. This barn is in the farm tenancy, but is understandably unused by tenant farmer Andrew. Inside is a fine large space, crying out to be taken in hand, cleaned up, repaired, made safe and put to good use...

