

turned to the relevant period in the diary of William Cotton Risley, of Deddington House, which I am currently sub-editing, but, unsurprisingly, to no avail – his beloved wife was days away from death, and he can have had little thought for extraneous events.

Carl has a great knack for popularising local history without dumbing down. The 27 chapters of this book (and many more cases) make us realise that the 21st century is no more lawless than its predecessors; and, I hope, will encourage readers to research for themselves.

Aspects of Helmdon, No. 5, Helmdon Branch W.E.A., 2004. 60pp. £3.50 incl p&p from Audrey Forgham, The Old Barn, Cross Lane, Helmdon, NN13 5QL.

After a gap of three years it is good to see a further number in this praise-worthy series. Contents include a useful article on the shops of Helmdon and a history of the Parish Council from 1894 to date. ‘A Craftsman’s Notebook’ discusses an unusual source, a book whose 196 pages are covered with specifications for a variety of vehicles, farm and domestic items, and plans for cottages. It runs from 1876 to 1901, and probably was kept by Arthur Taylor, a Helmdon carpenter and wheelwright: fascinating, especially for do-it-yourself enthusiasts. ‘Helmdon and the World Beyond’ uses the Parish Constable’s accounts, 1653-1718, to identify the many unfortunates, particularly those formerly enslaved in Turkey or north Africa, passing through the parish helped on their way by relief, small sums of money. Comparison is made with the *Wigginton Constable’s Book, 1691-1836* (ed. F.D. Price, BHS 11, 1971), but Helmdon’s constables provided more detail. The booklet concludes with reminiscences of Jim Watson (b.1911), of Helmdon in the last century, and details of the village website: www.helmdon.com

Brailes History: Episodes from a forgotten past: 3. Alan and Philip Tennant (A5, 56pp). Published by A.J. Tennant, 49 Hawthorn Way, Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire CV36 4FD. 2004. £1.80 (incl. p&p).

Another worthwhile issue of from the Tennant brothers. There are three articles. Colin Haydon, ‘Religious intolerance at Brailes, c.1660-c.1800’ (reprinted from *The Historian*) is an entertaining account of a very anti-Catholic (and Welsh) curate falling foul of the local Catholic great family, the Sheldons, through whose protection many villagers were of the same persuasion. Philip Tennant makes an exhaustive examination of Dugdale’s history of Brailes in his *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 1656, our first real county history, comparing it with subsequent editions and additions. Alan Tennant concludes with a discussion of that neglected census, of 1841, from the point of view of the picture it gives of the village rather than the individual villagers.

J.S.W.G.