

## Snippets

### Jews in medieval Tickhill

William the Conqueror invited Jews to settle in England. Until their expulsion in 1290 by Edward I, Jews lived under a series of restrictions imposed by monarchs as the following examples show:

- Until 1177 only one Jewish cemetery was permitted - in London. After that time 10 cemeteries were allowed including one outside York's walls by the River Foss, an area known as Jewbury. Jews who died as far away as Nottingham or Lincoln were taken to York for burial. Quite possibly the bodies of Jews taken from Nottingham to York passed through Tickhill - it is known they went through Ollerton.
- From the mid-12th Century Jews were subject to a special tax or tallage levied by the Crown.
- A further restriction was that in the 13th Century Jews had to wear a tabula or badge on their outer clothing. The tabula was a fabric patch some 2" by 4", representing the Tablets of Law to symbolise the Old Testament; originally from 1215 it was white but from 1275 Edward I decreed it had to be yellow, and worn above the heart by all Jews aged over 7. An early 14th Century illustration of a Jew wearing a tabula can be seen in *The King's Jews* page 17.
- It was also in 1275 that Edward I's Statute of the Jewry tried to limit and then end lending money at interest by Jews, taking away a main source of income.

Most of the Jews earned their living lending money; a few had other occupations such as physician, goldsmith or pawnbroker. Jews who loaned money had to have bonds drawn up with their debtors and from 1194 these were placed in arches or strong boxes in places such as York and Stamford. The majority of people would not have been able to borrow money. Debtors had to have a seal or access to the owner of one (who could lend it as a guarantor) to use on the bond outlining the loan, they also had to have surety to cover the loan and a name that could clearly identify them - at a time when surnames as we know them did not exist for the great majority of people. This still left some with a need for loans, for example, to pay fines, to stand surety for another, to go on crusade, to enhance their social standing or to extend their property or land holdings. In the late 12th Century it is believed that royal officials were almost continuously in debt. From the end of the 12th Century a branch of the Exchequer known as the Exchequer of the Jews monitored the arches and any disputes in which Jews were involved. If any Jews had unpaid taxes, bonds held in the arches could be taken into the King's hands and their repayment made to him.

Jews were known to live in several places in the south of Yorkshire including Brodsworth, Doncaster, Rotherham and Wakefield as well as Tickhill. The names of Jews associated with Tickhill in the 13th Century are Abraham of Tickhill who had a son, Moses, and a second son Isaac who lived in Norwich. According to the Calendar of the Plea Rolls which recorded the work of the Exchequer of the Jews, Moses was owed £10 by Henry son of Robert of Clayworth in 1275. The Sheriff of Nottingham was ordered to sell the goods and chattels of those holding land formerly belonging to Henry to recover the debt and these people included John (Clarel), Chaplain of Tickhill Castle. Another Jew associated with Tickhill was Benedict, mentioned in the Fine Rolls of Henry III on 20 November 1260. Benedict held land from Reginald son of Robert of Styrap as security but Reginald was to be allowed 'reasonable terms' and obtain sustenance from the land. Benedict's son Josce also lived in Norwich. Elias of Tickhill had a son, Mansell, who lived in Tickhill in a small cottage in bad repair before the 1290 Expulsion according to a survey of former Jewish properties. After the Expulsion Edward I took over the Jews' properties and their records of money loaned so the debts could be repaid to the King.

Why might Jews settle here when there was no synagogue or archa? Potential borrowers included religious houses, people associated with the castle and its administration of justice as well as local landowners. For example, Hugh of Wadworth, abbot at Roche Abbey c1179-84 borrowed £1,300 from Jews in York to expand the abbey's holdings at Roxby some 5 miles north of Scunthorpe. Hugh's successor Osmund (abbot 1184-1213) obtained relief of payment to the Jews from Richard I who, with the Pope, confirmed the abbey's possessions. A second example is Philip of Kyme who farmed in Tickhill in 1162-66 before becoming Sheriff of Lincoln in 1167. He did not repay the debts incurred while he was in Tickhill until 1174-5. The presence of a castle here could also have been a factor, not only because it might house possible customers but also because it might afford protection. Dangers are illustrated by attacks on Jews in different cities, most notably York, in 1190.

After Edward I banished Jews, the majority sailed to France but in February 1291 Philip IV banished them and two months later expelled all other Jews from France. Jews were not readmitted to England until 1656 on the orders of Cromwell.

Further information can be found in: Mundill, R. R., *England's Jewish solution*, C.U.P. 2002, Mundill, R. R., *The King's Jews*, Continuum, 2010; Lipman, V. D., *The Jews of medieval Norwich*, The Jewish Historical Society of England, 1967; Lipman, V.D., 'Jews and castles in medieval England' in *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, Vol. 28, 1984, pp1-19; Golding, B., 'Simon of Kyme' in *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, Vol. 27, 1983; Richardson, H. G., (ed) *Calendar of the Plea Rolls of the Exchequer of the Jews*, The Jewish Historical Society of England, Vol. 4, 1972.