Eight members of the Architecture Group gathered at Brigg one sunny morning in July and had a most fascinating walk around this little known town under the able guidance of David Jones.

The first and most important stop on our walk was on the bridge over the Old River Ancholme (Brigg is the Anglo Danish word for BRIDGE) and David explained how the settlement grew up as an important crossing point which enabled trade and later, proper markets to evolve. However it was not a proper Parish, it was the point at which four separate parishes, Broughton, Scawby, Wrawby & Bigby converged and it was not given true parish status until 1872, after the present church was built in 1843. However, long before that time it was a bustling, busy market town with a grammar school erected in 1674 and endowed by the Nelthorpe family and still bearing the name ‘Sir John Nelthorpe School’.

The town has an abundance of Georgian and early Victorian houses, most of them still easily recognisable and although modernised, the essential features of the architecture have not been interfered with. The Tourist Office is a particularly pretty Regency building; it was the first to be restored in the later 1980’s when the town council and the local authorities decided to improve the image of the town by restoring the more important buildings to form the present Heritage Centre with the Library below and the Council Offices opposite.

There were so many beautiful buildings that I can only mention three more – the curious pub called the Dying Gladiator with a model of the same above the door – complete with a gory stream of red blood pouring from his bosom – the Georgian town house, now an hotel with equally curious ‘ears’ sticking up from the roof line and (my favourite) a shop called Galdrags and Bags which had an ancient door post, now painted purple, but which was surmounted by a carved face or grotesque – to me it looked like a ‘Green Man’ such as are frequently found in the cathedral or any ancient parish church. I wonder where it came from.

Altogether a fascinating visit, made more enjoyable by the fact that Thursday is also Market Day!

Margaret Campion.