Friends of the Department of English Local History

# NEWSLETTER

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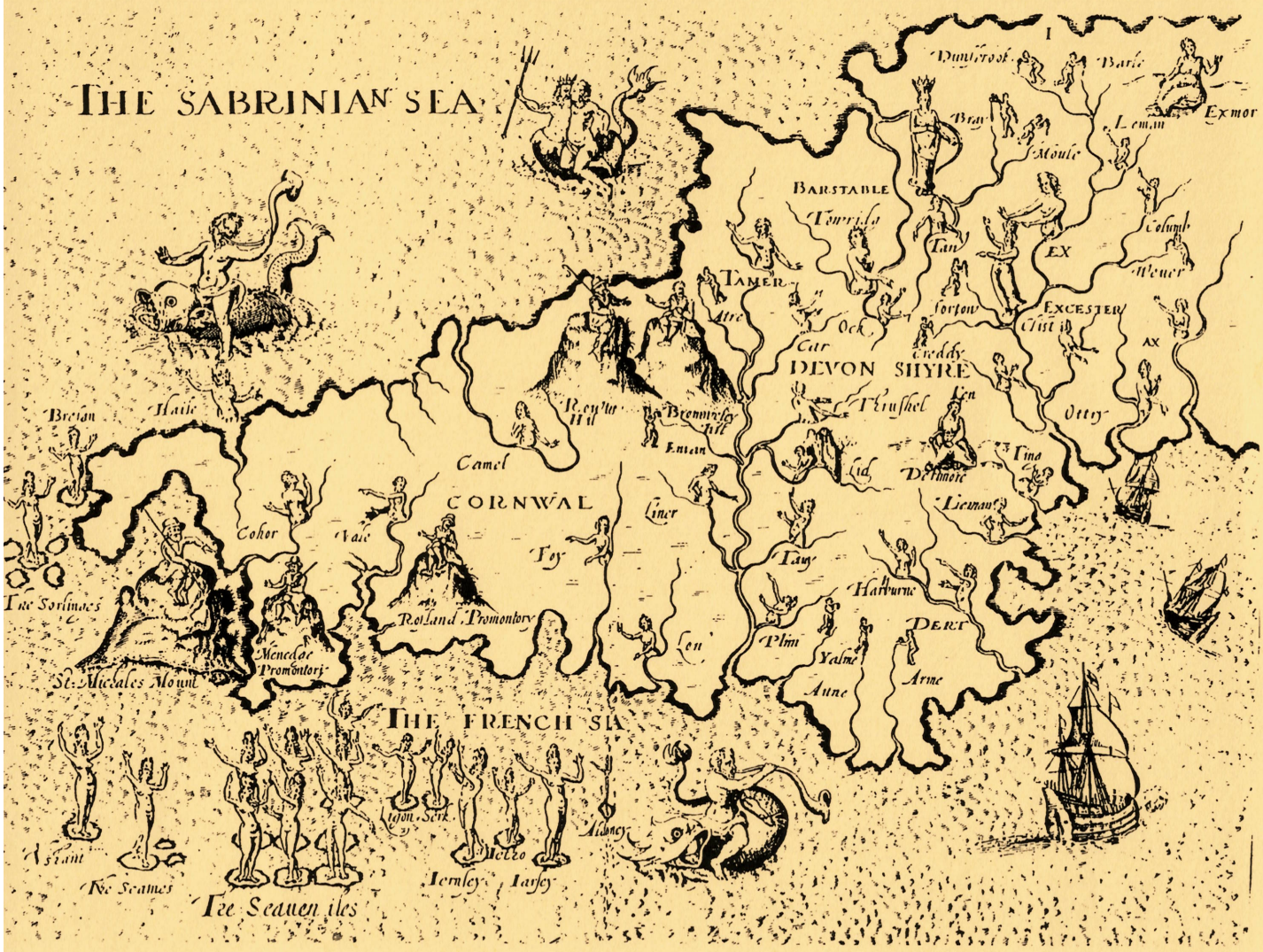

# CONTENTS



The cover shows the map of Cornwall and Devonshire published with the original edition of Michael Drayton's *Poly-olbion* in 1612.

## EDITORIAL

Although this is the first *Newsletter* to be published under the *nouveau régime* of a formally constituted Committee of Friends, and a new editor to boot, readers will find little change in the style, and only a little in the format, from those which have been produced by the accomplished editorial team of the last several years. There is, however, significant change to report on other fronts.

Of greatest moment is Charles Phythian-Adams' retirement, effective on 1st October 1997, from the post of Head of Department which he has held with such distinction since 1982. Charles joined the Department as a Junior Research Fellow in 1966 and was awarded a personal chair in 1989. He has - miraculously - managed to combine a busy administrative and strategic role with inspired teaching, at the same time carrying out research that has led to many influential publications. As if all this was not enough he has served on a wide variety of boards and committees and has raised the profile of the Department of English Local History (and thereby the University) both nationally and internationally. It is a fitting testimony to his leadership that he retires when the Department has again achieved a Grade 5 in the Higher Education Research Council's Research Selectivity Exercise (see the article immediately following this editorial). We are fortunate in that he will remain among the denizens of Marc Fitch House for some time to come as he is taking up an Associate Teaching Contract. This year's 'Talking to Friends' interview reveals something of Charles' personal view of the last 31 years in English Local History (and much more besides), but for the moment I am sure that all Friends, including generations of former students, will join with the editorial team in thanking him for his massive contribution to our experience, understanding and enjoyment of the discipline, and in wishing him a long, happy and researchful retirement.

Another milestone has been reached with the award of the first Friends' bursaries. A long cherished aim has thus been realised, but if the arrangement is to be perpetuated, fund-raising efforts will need to continue unabated. In this connection you are all urged to support the Grand Raffle to be promoted during 1998 which year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Department under W.G. Hoskins. Arrangements are in hand to celebrate this jubilee in appropriate ways: Dr Joan Thirsk will deliver the ninth W.G.Hoskins' Lecture and, later in the year, a second special lecture is planned in association with a Departmental Open Day to be sponsored by we Friends. Much effort will be expended in organising these and the other events of the year (see Diary Dates) and offers of help may be addressed to any member of the Committee. For those of you who live too far away for help to be a practical proposition we hope that you may be able to attend on at least one of these occasions.

## THE DEPARTMENT

### YET MORE SUCCESS IN PEER REVIEW

In 1996 the Department received two glowing reports on its work. The first came on a cold December morning when, by electronic mail, we heard that, for a second time, we had achieved grade 5 in the Higher Education Research Council's Research Selectivity Exercise. Grade 5 is described as 'research that equates to attainable levels of international excellence in some sub-areas of activity and to attainable levels of national excellence in virtually all others', and was achieved by four other departments in the University.

Also in 1996 the Department was reviewed by the University's Academic Review Committee, in advance of a possible review by an external auditing body. Staff assembled high piles of paperwork about our activities and procedures, and were grilled by the committee in a day-long sitting. Students also appeared before the committee to give their views of the Department's work and to prevent 'cover-up' by staff. Eventually the committee produced its report, of 71 paragraphs. Highlights in the report included the following:

* The Department of English Local History is a centre of national importance since it is the only department in the country exclusively dedicated to the study of English local history.

* The Department is to be congratulated in all areas of its activity. It occupies a distinctive place in the academic world, and the general air of self-confidence in, and enthusiasm for, its unique mission have been very evident in the interviews with staff and students that have taken place during the review. The Department has generated a community of scholarship which clearly benefits both teaching and research.

* The Department has been consistently pioneering, and it is very much to its credit that it has taken the obligation of modularising its course as an opportunity to develop further the 'Leicester approach' within its curriculum structure.

Students who appeared before the committee on our behalf are warmly thanked.

### SEMINAR PROGRAMME 1996-7

The Langton Hundred, which occupied land in the Welland valley and its northern watershed, was the focus for the paper given by Paul Bowman (Departments of English Local History and Archaeology, University of Leicester) who inaugurated

the seminar season with 'Settlement and territory in pre-Conquest south-east Leicestershire', based upon work for his interdisciplinary Ph.D. reported in last year's *Newsletter*. Dr Bowman, while admitting how much we had yet to learn, suggested that the evidence revealed by systematic field-walking pointed towards a well-populated and intensely cultivated countryside in the late Iron Age and early Roman period. This was followed by retraction from the higher ground in the fourth century, which continued into the Anglo-Saxon period when there may have been some reversion to wood-pasture around the watershed as settlement intensified in the vale. This predilection for the valley - a flat landscape of continuous settlement - may have led to some early (7th or 8th century) nucleation engendered by the nature of Anglo-Saxon society and the power of Mercian kings.

The somewhat contentious case for a 20% Danish revaluation of the Mercian hide, such that a proposed Gartree wapentake would have contained 576 carucates to 480 Mercian hides, was argued. The perceived basis of 'fiscal symmetry' was held to account for discrepancies and this was well illustrated by the generally greater township sizes (acreages) to the west of the Lipping brook compared with those in the more fertile east.

Kate Parkin (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester), presented us with what she claimed to be but a footnote to her forthcoming Ph.D. thesis in 'Of deathbeds and bailiffs: land transfers in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire at the time of the Black Death'. Concerned with the need to 'grasp the full implications of every entry' in the Wisbech court rolls in order to illustrate socio-economic and demographic analysis, Kate questioned the 'deathbed' categorisation accorded by Larry Poos and Lloyd Bonfield to certain forms of villein land transfer. These were distinguished by being made out of court by way of a third party (at Wisbech always the lord's bailiff except during the currency of the Black Death), and had been held to be symptomatic of a growing flexibility in the application of customary law and in the ability of customary tenants to dispose of their holdings as they willed.

Analysis of the Wisbech evidence indicated that 'out-of-court' was a more appropriate category than 'deathbed' as in 57% of 143 such surrenders where death was not explicitly said to be imminent (approximately half of all out-of-court cases), subsequent court-roll entries made it clear that the former tenant lived on. Deathbed transfers could be seen as a sub-category of 'out-of-court' but the basic distinction was between 'direct' (i.e. normal in-court), and 'indirect' transfers allowed for sickness or incapacity other than mortal illness. Moreover, such indirect surrenders had effect whether or not the individual survived and, in that wise, did not differ from other *inter vivos* transfers. They could not therefore be seen as advancing villein inheritance strategies as the essential process of surrender *in manu domini* was preserved.

'Mangoplah Kookadinni or Coogiecooginna: place-naming and Australian local history', was the fascinating title of the paper given by Dr John Atchison (University of New England) Honorary Visiting Fellow in the Department for much of 1996. As interesting was his *exposé* of the myth of Australia as a romantic frontier society. The reality was of a largely urban population of which only 5% live in the interior and one-third are within 20 km. of tidal water.

Dr Atchison referred to late 19th-century 'blocking-out' of the now sought-after convict heritage and, in speaking of the development of Australian historiography between the wars, referred to three organising principles of Australian history. The first of these related to its society's capacity to resolve conflict and accommodate change borne of early influences stemming from the 18th-century enlightment; the second to its identity as an independent nation within the British Empire; and the third to a growing sense of place and landscape.

It was in the last of these contexts that the Australian National Place-Names Project was described along with some of the difficulties inherent in categorising the 70% of place-names which are of aboriginal origin. These derive from 250 languages with a range of diversity equivalent to that between Gaelic and Benghali. The irony of a latter-day official preference for aboriginal names in parallel with the suppression of the native peoples was also noted. Imported names were also discussed, many of which reveal much about the origins of early settlers and the phased establishment of essentially coastal communities from the original focus which grew outwards from around Sydney in New South Wales.

Twentieth-century oral history based upon some 120 interviews was related by Elizabeth Robinson (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester) who, equipped with her tape-recorder, gave us '"You got the job you'd chose to do". Life experiences, education and choices of working women in Rugby 1890-1950: an oral history.'

First describing the nature of Rugby and its principal industries, Elizabeth moved on to outline her methodology and approach to obtaining interviews. These were mainly with women born into established Rugby working-class families with limited career horizons often bounded by the expectation of marriage. Job choice was rarely autonomous being conditioned *inter alia* by limited opportunity, family expectations (often gender related), and financial restrictions. While some showed awareness of the way

in which they were constrained most displayed a stoic acceptance of their environment and often followed parents or siblings into employment which was effectively chosen for them.

The perceived hierarchy of employers in the town was described and in particular the pre-eminence of BTH (which provided clerical apprenticeships for Grammar School girls) and English Electric, in both of which companies there was the attractive prospect for many of meeting with, and perhaps marrying, a graduate apprentice. The beneficial educational influence of Rugby's Day Continuation School, established under the Education Act of 1918 and supported by the major employers, was noted by some interviewees but overall the stories told were of limited ambition - even then often thwarted by parental or financial constraints.

'The meaning of night-walking in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century London and provincial England' presented by Dr Paul Griffiths (Department of Economic and Social History, University of Leicester) was based upon his study of crime in the early-modern period with two-thirds of the data emanating from London and in particular the records of the capital's Bridewell prison.

A range of misdemeanours and persons associated with 'nightwalking' (a term that was not defined by statute but yet left those accused liable to prosecution) was described. These ranged from the vague 'suspicious folk ... who eavesdrop' and 'strangers or other persons of ill-fame' to the more specific 'prostitutes' and 'thieves'. The 'femininisation' of the offence during the early seventeenth century in London, when between 1618 and 1642 94.2% of convictions were of women, was noted and compared with the medieval period when vice had been only one of many concerns and men were as likely to have been arrested as women. Although men were slightly more likely to have been arraigned for theft than women, this was not seen as significant and more gender specific were the male 'crimes' of drunkeness, absconding from masters and abusing officers of the law.

Provincial records provided evidence of a wider range of male offences than in London including those committed by fire-raisers, pedlars, chapmen, vagrants, rogues, vagabonds, sheep stealers, slanderers and, in one case, grave-robbers. Proportionately fewer female offenders were recorded in the provinces but, like the men, were described in more various ways than their metropolitan counterparts - idle, loose and pilfering women, scolds and scurrilous balladeers, being a few of the epithets accorded to them.

In spite of the apparent contrast between London and the provinces, Dr Griffiths hesitated to draw firm conclusions about an essential polarity of approach to male/female criminality, preferring to link this to the growth of London and the key part that the Bridewell played in an institutionalised drive to combat crime.

Professor Peter King (Nene College of Higher Education) induced a sense of *déjà vu* with his account of 'The rise of juvenile delinquency in England 1780-1840. Changing patterns of perception and prosecution'. In questioning whether swingeing increases in recorded juvenile crime after the Napoleonic wars were real or arose from attitudinal changes, Dr King first described the pattern of these increases and then discussed possible reasons for temporal and regional diversity.

In the late 1810s and early 1820s urban areas generally experienced very large increases compared with the countryside, although such differences tended to decline thereafter. Superficially this might have been explained by the fast growth of towns, the rapid transition from rural to urban ways of life, levels of unemployment, the decline of apprenticeship (and in rural areas service-in-husbandry), the role of factories as 'generators' of crime, and perhaps (particularly in London) actual starvation. Industrialisation itself was seen by some to be a prime cause and yet urban conglomerations that were not primarily 'industrial', London, Bristol and metropolitan Surrey, also experienced high levels of prosecution which might suggest that it was not so much 'manufacturing' in cities like Manchester, but 'multitudes' that were the dominant factors. However, change in the criminal justice system itself probably played a larger part in the tripling of recorded crime in the early years of the nineteenth century. This was possibly partly due to the greater ease, and lesser expense, of prosecution, but also arose from a new set of discourses on reasons for, and treatment of, crime. The first juvenile reformatory was established in the 1780s and by the 1810s concerns about the example of the French Revolution and its possible contagious effects, the supposed indolence and shiftlessness of the burgeoning working class as revealed by their young, reaction to philanthropic campaigning against capital punishment, and the percentage decline of hanging as a penalty, all helped to condition the attitudes of the upper classes. Such debates brought about a growing urge to control the poor and to punish aberration. Such feeling fed on itself so that as prosecutions of juveniles rose, so did levels of concern.

Although some doubts about root causes remained, Dr King perceived a 'constellation' of factors that led to the increased incidence of recorded juvenile crime. This conjunction included the higher proportion of juveniles in the population as a whole, unemployment, homelessness, and judicial change, all

of which were underscored by a core wish to discipline and reform by a society that was reacting to, and at the same time reinforcing, a new discourse.

A pictorially unillustrated account of Dr Malcolm Jones' (University of Sheffield) 'The undiscovered country: popular art in late medieval and early modern England' cannot do justice to his theme. Although he warned that early book and pamphlet illustration should not be taken at face value as representative of either place or period in England because of extensive copying and adaptation, for instance of Breughel's Flemish or Italian *Commedia dell'arte* scenes, Dr Jones displayed a splendidly assorted collection of images. These were not only taken from printed material but also from carvings, including bench-ends and misericords (only 5% of which portray a religious subject), rood screens and pilgrim badges, good-luck charms, monumental brasses and drinking vessels. While some of the content was overtly religious much was delightfully bawdy or crudely scatological, often relating to cuckolds or scolds. Some examples were exhortatory as in a banner from the Civil War, while others were polemical as found in misogynous material and anti-papist tracts. Popular art often related to old saws, pictorial puns and proverbial follies, for instance the shoeing of a goose, the flogging of a dead horse, or the fencing-in of the cuckoo as attempted by the men of Gotham.

Other pictorial forms found on playing cards, inn signs, firebacks and interior decoration were discussed in the enthusiastic question and answer session that followed.

'The multiple estate phenomenon revisited', was the subject of Dr Dawn Hadley's (University of Sheffield) paper. Challenging the orthodox view of the medieval estate with origins as a multi-vill territory which had typically fragmented by Domesday to single vill status, Dr Hadley concentrated on examples drawn mainly from the northern Danelaw. Here she found some evidence of early tenth-century origins in places such as Southwell, Hope and Sherburn-in-Elmet and even admitted the possibility of late seventh-century formation for Breedon-on-the-Hill. However, she considered that the nature and diversity of lordship and the complexity of Anglo-Saxon society as transmuted by Danish influence made any simple categorisation of such estates difficult. Mapping revealed a complex, overlapping pattern of rights, obligations and allegiances which she yet did not believe were the result of fragmentation. She also pointed to the operation of fusion rather than fission leading to the late creation of certain Domesday sokes.

Drawing a degree of distinction between ecclesiastical estates and others, Dr Hadley ventured that Anglo-Saxon charter evidence, although showing that huge tracts of land were given to the church and later, lords, such grants were often superimposed on many free landholders. However, she also suggested that estates could have been put together piecemeal and pointed to the instability of land-holding patterns pre-Domesday. In conclusion, describing estate forms as various as Polonius's cloud, she argued that it was difficult to trace Domesday estates back to the Anglo-Saxon period.

Further, although there had been some previous estate structure this was largely in the context of a free peasantry which militated against the accepted model of a highly regulated, much exploited, countryside. The northern Danelaw in particular presented a very unstable, shifting, backcloth which, added to the complexities of the Anglo-Saxon heritage, meant that any one set of rules for the description of the early estate was impossible to formulate. An attentive but somewhat sceptical audience asked many questions and made a number of critical observations.

The final seminar of the 1996-97 season was 'Cosmo-choro-poly-grapher: the life and work of John Norden', given by Dr Frank Kitchen (Steyning Grammar School, West Sussex). Chiefly known for his topographical and historical descriptions of English counties contained in the unfinished series *Speculum Britanniae* and his cartographical works, John Norden was in modern parlance a 'workaholic' who achieved much more besides. Although his early life is obscure and he was over 40 years of age before the first volume of the *Speculum*, devoted to Middlesex, was published in 1593, this had been preceded by *Speculum Northamtoniae* dedicated to Lord Burghley who seems to have promoted the Privy Council's subsequent support for the intended series. Norden had earlier exhibited another aspect of his character in 1584 when he published a very popular devotional work, *A Pensiue Mans Practise,* which went into 40 editions. To the end of his life this dichotomy of interest continued (apart from a period when it was politically inexpedient) but his main work was concerned with the execution of numerous manorial and estate surveys. Many of these were made for the up-and-coming gentry but also for King James I, great lords like the Cecils and, due to their sometimes shaky patronage, the Government as represented by the Privy Council.

Rarely satisfied though he was with the monetary return for his various commissions, nevertheless Dr Kitchen estimated that Norden already enjoyed an income in excess of one thousand marks over five years towards the end of Elizabeth's reign and towards the end of his life lived in a style well beyond that of lesser gentry or established

merchants. In spite of having two sons who assisted in his surveying business Norden never relinquished his own active involvement and in his 60s personally surveyed 23 manors of the Duchy of Cornwall. Although such surveyors were often disliked and feared by the tenantry because of the potential revaluation of their properties, Norden was by no means in the pocket of his employers and, for instance, opposed the conversion of arable land to pasture.

Apart from the *Speculum*, maps, surveys and religious works, this remarkable man also published poetry, didactic works on surveying practice, panoramic views of London and early guides to the capital for the benefit of country dwellers. When he died in 1625 he left just £29-19-4, barely the equivalent of £13,000 today, having clearly lived up to what he perceived to be meagre returns, which perception, however, never diminished his zest for work.

In the ensuing question and answer session particular interest was expressed in the possibility of learning more about Norden's obscure early life and several suggestions made as to how this might be researched.

**Mike Thompson**

**VISITOR TO THE DEPARTMENT: SENY HERNANDEZ**

The editor asked Professor Seny Hernández, Honorary Visiting Fellow in the Department from February 1997 until February 1998, to write an article for the *Newsletter* about her academic career, research interests and perceptions of the English way of life. Seny Hernández took her first degree at the *Universidad Católica Andrés Bello* in Venezuela and then pursued a number of postgraduate courses in qualifying as Master of Political Sciences at the *Universidad Simon Bolivar*. She took her doctorate in Social Sciences at *Universidad Central de Venezuela*, where she had worked in several areas of administration, as Head of Department, Academic Coordinator in the School of International Relations, and also as Administrative Director of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences. She now teaches Research Methodology and is Professor *Agregado* on a year's sabbatical leave from the University; the following is her account of what has brought her to the Department and of her view of our way of life.

'Probably because of the different subjects I have studied, my research interests have also varied. They started with critical analyses of several Venezuelan and foreign writers, followed by social epistemiology; the work of international information agencies in the case of central America; myths and socio-economic organizations; Latin-American diplomacy in the 21st century; corporatism and political participation in Venezuela; and regional identities.

The field in which I am now engaged in the University of Leicester is concerned with local interests in modern English urban societies as a way to approach English identities. This subject area was suggested to me by Professor Charles Phythian-Adams and I am applying his theory of Cultural Provinces in England to my research. The word 'culture' in this context identifies the relationship between local people and social institutions, found by the reading of regional newspapers from different provincial cities and towns and comparing them with inner London as a way of exploring centralization in modern England.

These urban societies have been classified according to their socio-economic structure, as determined by the methodology of the 1991 census. It is interesting to look at what is happening in an industrial city like Carlisle, where interest is moving from industrial development to the conservation of gardens and parks; and to a growing new town such as Basildon where it seems that everyone featured in the local newspaper is identified not only by name, but by their address as well.

Through my everyday experience here in England, I have been trying to explain Englishness by looking at the English way of life. Here, I have to confess, that for me there have been two ways of exploring the subject - the idealistic way and the realistic way. To illustrate what I mean by the idealistic way I refer to some generally known examples. My admiration for English people started when I was a child watching *Ivanhoe* on TV. Throughout several programmes I said to myself 'Those English must be the kind of people with enough courage to fight strongly for what they believe'. Again, during my adolescence the transcendental English character for me when I read Shaw's *Pygmalion* was Professor Higgins. I imagined him as a cold, indifferent man, with a great deal of knowledge and with an enormous and innate sensibility which he did not want to show to others. Several years later I read the novels of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in which Sherlock Holmes lived through the pages. Reading Sherlock Holmes I learned that finding the truth depends on the way you look at reality. Nevertheless, I cannot leave out of this list the ideal epic image of British people represented by King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, which illustrates how legendary and mythical origins, from the Celtic period, have contributed to a nation's birth.

The images and episodes in the lives of these characters created for me a mental picture of the ideal Englishman and Englishwoman; a gentleman and a lady who knew exactly how to behave. No matter how

different the circumstances, such people could never lose their tempers.

I now see the reality in the way of life in England and in Leicester - which is that there is no single way of life but many. England is a melting-pot of people coming from different nationalities and cultures. Each group has its own way of life and most of them want to preserve their culture. When you are walking in England, for example, it is very easy to differentiate British people from outsiders for they always keep to the left as if they were driving on the streets, while the others do not do that. It is like a British personal instinct that people from the U.K. have developed from their origins.

The relationship between people and land is expressed in marvellous ways and I think this has tremendous meaning. Very often people from England simply enjoy being English. They keep memories of their own past in each county where they were born; not only because of their childhood remembrances but also because of the link that always seems to keep each person in touch with his origins.

Weather of, of course, is another relationship that the English have with their land. English weather is not just weather - it is *English weather*. Weather as part of the land has become a very important topic of conversation because it is so unpredictable and affects people's behaviour. I have found that summer weather, for example, creates an atmosphere of sociability that winter does not. It seems to me that at heart each English man, and woman, is a gardener. As their home is their castle, the land where the castle is has to be carefully cultivated. That is the reason why Leicester is the city garden.'

## FUNDED DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME

A Leverhulme Special Research Fellowship, to be held in the Department for two years from October 1997, has been awarded to Dr Graham Jones, previously Honorary Visiting Fellow, for the purpose of launching the projected national electronic atlas and database of medieval saints' cults in England and Wales. A fifty per cent contribution towards the cost of the project was granted by the Aurelius Charitable Trust.

The first part of the atlas will deal with the pre-Reformation diocese of Lincoln, which covered nine modern counties from the Humber to the Thames. It involves the systematic recording and mapping, parish by parish, of evidence for the cult of saints - from the dedications of churches to the titulars of fair days. It also takes account of many other aspects of veneration, such as side altars and images in churches, the names of holy wells, field-names, and the dedications of religious houses, hospitals and gilds. The project relies for the most part on medieval documentation, particularly wills. Earliest recorded dates and other important material is included in the database for the purpose of analysis.

One important feature of the project is that it looks for patterns of distribution - spatial, temporal, and thematic - and attempts to interpret them. Such an investigation has not been attempted previously, and it promises to provide a significant tool for research in a wide range of historical inquiry. Not least, it may help to elucidate patterns of regional culture.

A feasibility study for the atlas was funded by a 'seed-corn' grant by the University's Research Board and assisted by Dr Alan Strachan of the Department of Geography. The project parallels and complements the research programme into Religious Pluralism conducted in the Department by Keith Snell and Alisdair Crockett.

Dedication by angels of St Werstan's chapel. Malvern

Illustration of stained glass used by Graham Jones as the frontispiece to his thesis 'Church dedications and landed units of lordship and administration in the pre-Reformation diocese of Worcester' (1996).

## NEW DATA-SET - MEDIEVAL LAY SUBSIDIES

Two lay subsidies have been made available on the World Wide Web through the University's webserver (parrot): Lincolnshire 1332 and Rutland 1296. The last, comprising about 1800 taxpayers, is completely available now, but the first, encompassing over 19,000 contributors, is only partially complete. As at the beginning of September, the Parts of Holland and Kesteven are finished and up on the site, but Lindsey only incipiently so (some thirty parishes). It is hoped, however, to make fairly rapid progress with Lindsey by setting up the **html** files at home and transferring them by disk to the webserver.

The contents page of the Lincolnshire subsidy contains a map of the county showing the three Parts. For Holland there is a map showing all the settlements mentioned in the subsidy. Ultimately some images will also be incorporated into the pages containing the tax data, such as the Easter sepulchres and sedilia at Heckington and Navenby constructed about the time of the subsidy or the castle mound at Castle Bytham. Although these photographs have been taken, the priority is being directed to setting the data first.

Each taxable unit (township/parish) has a separate page linked to the contents page. To access the contents pages, point your web browser to this URL:

**http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/pot/intro.html**

It is best to use a graphical browser as the data are set up in tables.

**Dave Postles**

## THE JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE

You are again reminded that this is the time of year when you might consider a submission for the John Nichols Prize. This is available for a scholarly essay not exceeding 20,000 words which considers some theme or aspect of English Local History sympathetic to the Department's approaches. The closing date is 31st December and we aim to make a recommendation for the Prize by early March. The value to the winner (if any) is £100 and an element of prestige. Submissions for the award are coordinated by Dave Postles who may be contacted in the Department for fuller details and description. However, M.A. course participants in receipt of a distinction for their dissertation may simply send Dave a note that they wish their dissertation to be considered for the Prize.

## *MIDLAND HISTORY* - POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE

The Department hosted this very successful event, sponsored by *Midland History* and organised by our own students, on 17 May 1997. More than thirty postgraduates from many institutions around the country attended, all of them having research interests in the midland counties. Nine papers were given and lively questioning followed each one. The subjects ranged from 'Bullish markets: the value of urban property in 13th-century Coventry' to 'Rugby women: choosing and finding a husband 1920-1950'. Rural and urban subjects were covered and while some speakers focussed on broad social questions, such as 'Emigration and the new Poor Law, 1834-1860', others shared their enthusiasm for individuals like 'Philip Doddridge (1702-1751) the forgotten giant of the eighteenth century'. It was agreed that the format of the day worked well, giving the maximum number of people the opportunity of presenting something of their work to an interested and informed audience. Everyone left having had a most stimulating day, and taking with them the knowledge that while they are ploughing the narrow furrows of their research, there are others in neighbouring fields with whom enthusiasm can be shared.

**Sylvia Pinches**

## UNIVERSITY OPEN DAY

In common with other departments Marc Fitch House was open to visitors on 15 March 1997 when, after a slow start, we had a steady trickle of interested, and interesting, people to view the displays which members of the Department had spent so much time putting together. Our visitors found much to engage them in the three video recordings of W.G. Hoskins' television programmes on the Lake District, the Black Country and Norfolk; the interactive palaeography and Latin tutorials demonstrated by Dave Postles; computer maps illustrating religious pluralism provided by Alasdair Crockett; the evocative combination of Charles Phythian-Adams' voice-over commentary on F.L. Attenborough's slides of Leicester and Leicestershire; a comprehensive display of Hoskins' publications, notebooks, other working documents, and general memorabilia including his corkscrew and a book, *Wine as Medicine*, in which he had inscribed 'W.G. Hoskins - his New Testament'. To round things off John Wallis and Keith Snell inveigled a variety of recorded remininiscences from visitors in their makeshift oral history studio set up in the Common Room.

The day led to the recruitment of several new Friends and to the generous donation to the Departmental archive by Mr K.R. Wadd, of detailed notes that he had taken of Hoskins' Vaughan College

lectures in the 1940s (see article below). Another interested visitor, and new Friend, was Mrs Tricia Berry of Wigston who, coming from the village of *The Midland Peasant*, is particularly interested in Hoskins and has since traced his various addresses in the area. She is now personally seeking to have a Blue Plaque affixed to 12 Sandy Rise, Wigston, where she has established that he was living when his son was born in 1935, before moving to 23, Shanklin Avenue, Knighton, by 1938.

## DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS FOR 1996

**A. Crockett**

(with I.R. Bowler, D.G. Clark, B. Ilbery and A. Shaw), 'The development of alternative farm enterprises: a study of family labour farms in the northern Pennines of England', *Journal of Rural Studies* 12:3 (1996), pp. 285-95.

**V.E.L.Davis**

*Leicester Celebrates: Festivals in Leicester Past and Present* (1996), 107 pp.

**H.S.A. Fox**

'Exploitation of the landless by lords and tenants in early medieval England', in Z. Razi and R. Smith, eds, *Medieval Society and the Manor Court* (1996), pp. 518-68.

'Landscape history: the countryside', in D. Hey, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History* (1996), pp. 266-73.

ed. *Seasonal Settlement: Papers Presented to a Meeting of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* (Vaughan Papers in Adult Education 39, 1996), 69 pp.

'Introduction: transhumance and seasonal settlement', in H.S.A. Fox, ed., *Seasonal Settlement* (1996), pp. 1-23.

'Cellar settlements along the South Devon coastline', in H.S.A. Fox, ed., *Seasonal Settlement* (1996), pp. 61-9.

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## STAFF CHANGES

**Bruce McGarva**

Funding for Bruce's work of cataloguing and accessioning maps and books, and recording them on a Map Room database (first reported in the 1994 *Newsletter*), came to an end in July after valiant attempts to have it extended. The following is his own account of his work and time in the Department.

'As far as my work on cataloguing is concerned, at present on the Department's database are the complete collection of maps (including the rarer ones in the Small Map Room), together with the Map Room books and pamphlets. Also catalogued and recorded on the database are the slide collections of W.G. Hoskins, Professor Maurice Beresford, and an architectural collection donated by Mrs Janet Martin. The orginal glass negatives of Principal F.L.Attenborough have been re-photographed as 35mm slides and contact prints, thanks to a gift from the Aurelius Charitable Trust. Some 60% of the Fitch Library's stock has also been input.

During my time in the Department I have accessioned over 300 maps, many of which have been donated, and some 160 pamphlets and village or church guides. In addition to my work on the database, much has been done on sorting, boxing and listing the archive collections of papers and notes (Hoskins, Steer, Hart, Wright, etc.) although not all of these are yet on the database. The compilation of the database has been a considerable project which, once it is fully accessible online, will be of enormous benefit to future historians and researchers, both in the Department and elsewhere. It is therefore with mixed emotions of satisfaction and sadness that I leave the Department, although it is gratifying to know that my 'legacy' lives on. Unfortunately, for those would-be researchers relying on my much vaunted memory, rather than the database, to help them find the 1590 tithe map of Radlett, or slide of the village green at Little Calstock in 1943, I can only offer my regrets when saying that this facility will no longer be part of the service.'

**Ken Smith**

Ken has been a familiar figure in the Department since May 1993 when he volunteered his services to help with the accessioning and cataloguing of books for the Marc Fitch Library. While continuing in that capacity he has also become well known for his cartographic skill as a draughtsman and has helped to enhance several publications by members of the Department, and at least one thesis. He also carries out research for staff and for himself. From October 1st 1997 this much valued contribution will be more formally recognised by his appointment as an Honorary Visiting Fellow in the Department.

**Mike Thompson**

Following the completion of his Ph.D. thesis Mike is also appointed as an Honorary Visiting Fellow from October 1st. He hopes to publish several papers arising out of his research and to assist Harold Fox in the formulation of a detailed proposal for research funding from the ESRC.

## RECENTLY COMPLETED THESES

**Margery Brown** (this notice should have appeared in the last *Newsletter*)

'Aspects of parliamentary enclosure in Nottinghamshire' (Ph.D., 1995)

This study is concerned chiefly with the practical administration of enclosure and its social consequences rather than with post-enclosure agrarian improvements. The considerable diversity to be found within the parliamentary process has been stressed, particularly with regard to the physical enclosure of land. All the acts and awards for Nottinghamshire rural parishes have been examined, and the majority of the awards analysed to illustrate the varied distribution of land. The chronology and density of parliamentary enclosure in this county have also been determined, but doubts are cast upon the feasibility of relating the dates of the acts to contemporary economic developments.

A survey of opposition to local enclosure has been undertaken and attention has been given to the possibility of enclosure-related employment and the probable condition of the landless labourer or small owner. In addition the accounts of overseers of the poor have been examined in an attempt to clarify the relationship between enclosure and increased expenditure on the poor. Results from this investigation are inconclusive, but receipts from standard poor-rate levies have revealed both the increased value of property at enclosure and the fact that such enhanced valuation could be effective at an early stage of the process.

Finally, the costs of a sample of Nottinghamshire enclosures have been estimated, and although local evidence would appear to suggest that basic fencing materials were cheaper than have sometimes been supposed, it is concluded that general enclosure expenses have probably been underestimated. Attention has also been drawn to the large allotments which were awarded in many parishes as compensation for tithe. This diminution of the amount of land available for general allocation is regarded as a further expense of enclosure for those

proprietors whose acreage was thereby reduced.

**Michael Thompson**
'The Polden Hill manors of Glastonbury Abbey: land and people *circa* 1260 to 1351' (Ph.D., 1997)

Research for this thesis draws on evidence from manorial surveys of 1189, 1239, 1260, 1317 and 1325 and all extant court and account (*compotus*) rolls pertaining to the manors of Shapwick with Moorlinch, Ashcott, Walton, Street and Greinton in the period 1258 to 1352. The contiguity of this manorial bloc which was subject to common lordship enables a close study of differences of custom and practice, and demographic experience, within a spatially limited compass.

Following a brief account of the sources and early history, the distinctive topography of the Polden vills as illuminated by 13th- and 14th-century descriptions of the demesnes is examined. The operation of a classic two-field system of open-field farming and how this was subject to change in a process of demesne rejuvenation fed by land reclamation, is then described.

These introductory chapters provide the background for the principal themes of the thesis relating to Polden demography, peasant standards of living and stratification of wealth in the first half of the fourteenth century. In what it is hoped will prove to be an important contribution to the ongoing debate about the nature of the 'crisis' of the early part of the century, comparisons are made with other areas of lordship, most notably the nearby Winchester manor of Taunton the retailed demographic experience of which has been, until recently, so influential in forming perceptions of the period.

The development of tenurial structure, characterised by 13th-century growth in the size of customary holdings and, notwithstanding the growth of cottar and smallholding classes, the absence of fragmentation, is described in Chapter 3, which concludes with an account of the unique nature of Glastonbury's manor court records as they pertain to the resident landless men (*garciones*). This leads to an analysis of the *garcio* and tenant data in an examination of demographic aspects, which includes population trends, household size, acres per head and mortality before, and during, the Black Death.

Detailed 'accounts of works' provide the basis for an in-depth examination of the agricultural year and changes over time in the utilisation and application of customary service, the work of the demesne *famuli* and of waged labour. Estimates of total labour demand (demesne and tenant combined) and the way this was satisfied are also made. Chapter 6 attempts a reconstruction of peasant budgets and living standards by reference to 'model' tenants and analyses the comparative wealth of individuals and communities as revealed by the Exchequer lay subsidy of 1327.

Finally the extent to which the study supports Sir Michael Postan's thesis of a subsistence crisis, engendered by population growth outstripping adequately fertile acres, which heralded the onset of demographic decline in the 1310s, is discussed in Chapter 7 which, in its consideration of possible alternative interpretations of the evidence, also questions the extent to which the Polden vills were characterised by peasant solidarity in the face of demanding lordship.

Five appendices relate to work done on establishing the size of the Polden virgate; demesne crops - types, acreages; sowing rates and yields to seed and in bushels per acre; entry fines (reliefs) and inheritance channels; the wages and liveries of the demesne *famuli*.

**Teresa Hall**
'Minster churches in the Dorset landscape' (M. Phil., 1997)

This thesis examines the minster churches of Dorset in relation to their immediate and intermediate environs within the context of the recent minster debate. It begins with the identification of high-status churches through the use of a table of weighted characteristics. These churches divide into three types: primary minsters, monastically owned churches and Alfredian foundations. The *parochiae* of the minsters are compared with the units of royal demesne and the hundreds, leading to the conclusion that both were based on the royal demesne. Many of the minster settlements have river names (a strong determining characteristic) resulting from the royal demesne consisting of large geographically-based units with river names. The boundaries of the *parochiae*, where discernible, followed influential landscape features (rivers and watersheds) to a greater extent than the subsequently formed parish boundaries. Examination of the previously suggested relationship between minsters and villas (which led to claims that the Saxon church in Dorset merely filled in an existing British system) found no direct link between the two, more Roman remains being found in association with minor churches than with minsters.

The morphology of the settlements of the high-status churches was investigated, revealing areas of rectilinear planning centred on the minsters around which medieval suburbs had grown, leading to the conclusion that the dominant form of enclosure around the primary minsters of Dorset was rectilinear. The factor of very sparse evidence for continuity of British Christianity, together with the uniform rectilinear planning of the minsters along 'Roman'

lines in new locations, is seen as pointing to a suppression of the British church probably as the result of the victory of the Roman faction at the synod of Whitby and the reinforcement of that view by archbishop Theodore and his Wessex pupil Aldhelm, first bishop of Selwood.

## M.A. DISSERTATIONS FOR 1996-7

**Jean Bateman**

'Those who fought, those who prayed, those who worked: the secular clergy and laity in the archdeaconry of Northampton in the late Middle Ages.'

The medieval church touched the lives of all members of society and the focus of this dissertation was to examine its influence on parochial communities and how it affected the relationships between the clergy and the laity in the late Middle Ages. Major sources of information were the various printed volumes of bishops' registers published by the Lincoln Record Society. Though these are incomplete, they did provide enough detailed information which, when used with other local sources, created snapshots of both the clergy and their parishioners. Central to the investigation was the relationship between the clergy and the laity and the tensions which were created by the fundamental spiritual and temporal needs of both. The exchange of gifts which underlay the whole of medieval society was no less important within the community of the parish. Within the archdeaconry the clergy portrayed a wide diversity of social background, ambition, spirituality and commitment to their parish, while having to adjust to the prevalent economic, administrative and cultural changes. A questioning of the motives behind the many charitable foundations and pious acts, of the laity and the importance of their spiritual and social activities within the community of the parish, provided some answers and raised more avenues of inquiry.

**William Bates**

'The churches' mission in South Derbyshire and North West Leicestershire, 1901-1911.'

The aim of this dissertation is to describe and analyse Edwardian Christian mission as it was practised and received in a small industrial area of the Midlands. Sources consist of denominational records, allowing extraction of statistical information, and local newspapers supported by pictorial and photographic evidence. The primary method was to separate the spiritual appeal and evangelistic aspects of religious practice from its moral and socio-political implications in order to discover how the tensions inherent within were balanced. Less precise facets of mission relating to the presence of churches within local societies, including a consideration of building programmes and competition, are discussed independently both to add a human dimension and also to elucidate further the extent to which churches were outgoing or inward looking. The results suggest that Edwardian evangelicalism in particular turned outwards more than much of the historiography implies. Mission was only partially Christocentric, however, being conceived primarily in terms of eradicating evil both from the individual soul and the Empire, especially Britain. Much Christian energy was spent in promoting a simplified gospel and moral code to the working classes with methods which sometimes degenerated into attempts at coercion or emotional manipulation. In the process the commitment of internal constituencies increased but in spite of this, or perhaps partly because of it, church attendance declined. The conclusion is that revivalists, who prided themselves on their mastery of communication techniques, related poorly to the biblical gospel and to their hearers. Nevertheless a short term spiritual awakening within the mining communities of South Derbyshire's urban core did occur, to some extent because Nonconformity was perceived to be in sympathy with, and fighting for, working class interests.

**Rachel L. Brady**

'A comparison of attitudes towards domestic service in England during the Victorian period and the early to mid-twentieth century.'

The aim of this dissertation was to compare general attitudes towards domestic service from the viewpoint of both employers and employees during the Victorian period and the early to mid-twentieth century. To achieve a comparison, secondary sources relating to the Victorian period were examined in relation to contemporary oral interviews with participants in domestic service and people whose families had kept servants. In spite of some limitations, due partly to the enormity of the subject compared with practical limits on the number of interviewees, revealing comparisons could nonetheless be found. In respect of employer/servant relations, rewards for servants and the social life of a domestic servant, Victorian employers generally exhibited a much more authoritarian and controlling attitude towards servants which manifested itself in many ways. In comparison, servants in the early to mid-twentieth century found, in many cases, that they were more highly valued and seen as a necessary tool to a lesser extent. Their treatment was much improved and their value to employers was seen to be more tangibly expressed.

**John S. Clarke**

'Turnpike roads in Shropshire: part of the development of communications in the West Midlands.'

The Roman roads fell into decay in Anglo-Saxon England. Drovers' routes and packhorse trails were inadequate for commercial prosperity and for the comfort of travellers and officials. Thus, after the dissolution of the monasteries, which had had an interest in maintaining communications, in an act of 1555 the responsibility for roads was thrust on parishes. This was not uniformly successful and in 1663 the first turnpike road was set up. This essay is the history of the turnpike roads in Shropshire, at the western edge of the West Midlands: their background, their development and their demise. Canals started to be built a few years later but they did not affect the turnpike; it was the coming of the railways in the 1850s which brought about the end of the turnpike era. In 1895 the last turnpike was abolished and the newly-invented motor-car enjoyed comparative freedom of movement. Tolls remained on a few bridges and most ferries but by 1996 the government was thinking of imposing tolls on motorways, the successors to the turnpikes.

**Celia Cordle**

'The culture of the hop: Wealden Kent, 1830-1996.'

This investigation looked at three distinctive, although related, aspects of hop culture:

1. At how general changes in cultivation, and innovations - like nineteenth-century wirework and insecticides, the 1950's picking machinery, and current plant breeding work, including dwarf hops and related changes in harvesting - were experienced at local level in the Weald. Farm accounts, oral evidence about three farms, and other taped information were used in the context of current scholarship and work on plant breeding; attitudes to, and of, hop pickers were included, as was the work of hop dryers.
2. At the Borough (Southwark) nucleus of hop factors who graded and sold hops for Kentish farmers. Street directories, maps and architectural evidence were used to show their decline, and amalgamations, relocations, and changes in marketing following entry to the European Economic Community.
3. Hops are associated with Kent, and the nature of the plant, pickers' memories and the roundel oasts have helped to create a powerful mythology; this is discussed using literary, pictorial and other material.

The farm accounts and oral evidence added to knowledge of hop growing, and were illustrative of larger changes, although each farm's circumstances were unique. Factors, and the Borough district generally, were very interesting to study, and both farmers' and factors' work contributed to generalised perceptions of the hop and its mythology and place in Kentish culture.

**Jacqueline Edwards**

'Brewham Lodge, Somerset: from receivership to sale - highlighting legal matters of the period 1799-1816.'

Using Brewham Lodge and its owners as an example, this dissertation examines debt, and the subsequent problems receivership entailed, leading to sale during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Reasons for settlement and mortgage debt are examined by using archival material from the Wiltshire Record Office, which includes details of letters between lawyers, the receiver, family members and the potential buyer of Brewham Lodge. Problems are highlighted by the introduction of other allied areas, e.g. procedure in the Court of Chancery, the Inns of Court and Chancery and legal personnel. Included are references to Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* which serve to evoke the atmosphere of legal proceedings in Chancery.

For the period under review, this dissertation aims to contribute to the debate on aristocratic indebtedness by providing background material on legal aspects of the period and by noting the improvements and changes in Chancery procedure and real property law as regards the strict settlement.

**Alan W. Fox**

'The agrarian economy of six parishes in the Wreake Valley from 1540-1680.'

The aim of this dissertation is to study the agrarian economy and, particularly, the development of enclosure, from 1540 to 1680 in the six parishes lying to the west of Melton Mowbray in the Wreake Valley of Leicestershire. Brooksby was already enclosed in 1540, Hoby was partly enclosed in the 1580s, Kirby Bellars and Rotherby were fully enclosed in the seventeenth century, and Asfordby and Frisby-on-the-Wreake stayed open until the 1760s.

Throughout the essay, but particularly in Chapter 2 which reviews the literature on enclosure, references are made to works on agrarian history, particularly those by Beresford, Everitt, Goodacre, Hoskins, Martin, Parker, Spufford, Thirsk, Weatherill and Yelling.

Chapter 3 is concerned with demographic issues and most of the Wreake Basin is studied in some detail in order to explain the specific events in the six parishes. Diocesan and Hearth Tax returns are used in combination with parish registers. Chapter 4 looks more specifically at actual farm economies mainly through probate inventories but also through other sources such as glebe terriers.

The final chapter concludes that population loss (or lowering of the rate of increase) was a usual accompaniment of enclosure, although effect rather

than cause. Emigration from parishes was usually sudden at enclosure, so much in fact that some immigration of people with new skills was needed. Surprisingly, emigration from the open parishes was ultimately higher, if more gradual, than from the enclosing ones, for the continuing high birth-rate there, even at times of disease and famine, resulted in overpopulation. Enclosure almost inevitably produced a change from predominantly arable to pastoral farming, but in five of the six parishes cattle became more important than sheep, although both were much more important in value than in open-field parishes. The effect of enclosure in nearby parishes was to produce an increase in arable farming in the remaining open parishes.

**Ian D. J. Hunt**
'A change of direction: for the rural economy of North West Leicestershire, 1791-1841.'

The study attempted to establish the impact of the late eighteenth century passion for improvement on the character of selected townships in North West Leicestershire between 1791 and 1841, particularly in the contexts of occupation and regional cohesion.

The main documentary sources for the study were the Census Returns for the years 1801, 1831 and 1841, particularly the enumerator returns for 1841, together with various enclosure awards, land tax returns, and Leicestershire poll books located in the Leicestershire Record Office. The works of John Nichols, William Pitt and William Marshall provided invaluable local references and the works of other authors given in the bibliography provided invaluable background material.

The study concluded that livelihood risk had increased substantially by the time of the 1841 Census as seasonal unemployment in agriculture, and frequent temporary unemployment in mining and quarrying, continued with little alternative opportunity for subsistence after the various commons enclosure awards of the Region were implemented. In addition, returns in the framework knitting industry became even more variable than hitherto as it became oversubscribed. There was little effective attempt to find other means of diversification to the former commons, once they had been placed out of bounds by enclosure. In concert with these developments, as communities became more concentrated and more dependent on distant markets, the distributive system became more complicated and communities became more parochial and less inclined, or less able, to participate in the region's internal commerce. The longer term future in employment was to be in dominant towns developing trading relationships with other towns - dominating the commerce of their hinterlands increasingly dependent role rather than providing them with services for their rural economies as in the past.

**Ray Joyce**
'Intellectual, cultural and religious life in late eighteenth-century Derby.'

Inspired by Joseph Wright of Derby's well known painting, *A philosopher giving that lecture on the orrery, in which a lamp is put in place of the Sun*, this dissertation sets out to describe the intellectual, cultural and religious milieu in which such activities took place.

Chapter 1 surveys the intellectual life of Derby during the late eighteenth century. Aspects considered include the rise of circulating and subscription libraries and early attempts to found a philosophical society which, however, only flourished when Erasmus Darwin became involved c. 1783. Connections between the Philosophical Society and the masons and other, more radical groups, are also considered.

The artistic and cultural life of Derby is then examined in Chapter 2, with main reference to musical and theatrical activity along with painting and porcelain. This leads to a consideration of the religious life of the town. There is a brief description of the five parishes, the clergy who staffed them, and an account of the arrival of various nonconformist groups and their attempts to establish permanent congregations. The relationship between the churches and the wider community as expressed in different types of charity and the founding of Sunday Schools is also examined.

The study concludes that late eighteenth-century Derby had a flourishing intellectual and cultural life and that, although the churches lacked personalities of real distinction, religious life was not without interest.

**Phillip Lynd-Evans**
'Morphology of villages in the central region of Lincolnshire from the early Saxon period.'

An attempt has been made to establish the forms of settlement layouts in villages of central Lincolnshire (South Lindsey and North-East Kesteven) from about the early Saxon period and to determine changes which have taken place. The situation of thirty villages are recorded together with a brief account of the geology and topography of the area.

Documentary research was limited to the more obvious and readily accessible sources and material including unpublished Enclosure and Tithe maps in the Lincolnshire Archive Office, also more recent Ordnance Survey maps. Consistent use was made of Domesday Book and other medieval taxation returns and population statistics (lay subsidies/feudal aids, etc.).

A system of classification developed by B.K.

Roberts based on the spatial patterns of village components has been used to analyse the chosen settlements. Starting with two primitive types of root plans, those based upon rows, and those based upon agglomerations, this simple morphological classification builds upon three premises, basic shape, degree of regularity, and the presence or not of an integrated green. As might be expected, there is considerable diversity of village types found in the landscape and this is true of the settlements studied.

It is certain that even after villages became established they were subjected to continual change and alteration. Historical documentation is important as well as field work, but in the former case there is a lack of it for long periods.

As a result of these constraints, it is virtually impossible to determine the exact style of settlement plan first established in what is currently accepted as being the Saxon period.

**Gerald McHarg**

'Cell by the sea. The study of the priory of Saint Bees in its religious, economic and cultural setting within the barony of Coupland and Cumbria as a whole.'

This is a study of St Bees Priory from its foundation in twelfth-century Cumbria, the last part of England to come under the rule of the Normans, to its dissolution in the time of Henry VIII. Its growth in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is examined in the light of its acquisition and development of new lands and gifts, and its decline is traced to the Scottish wars and the natural disasters of the fourteenth century. Although it was a cell subordinate to the great but distant mother-house of St Mary's Abbey, York, it exercised a considerable degree of autonomy, which is illustrated in a discussion of the ministry of religious houses in Cumbria and in its dealings and disputes with local landlords and the neighbouring Calder Abbey.

The scope offered to the priory for commerce and trade is discussed in the wider context of other religious houses and Cumbria as a whole, along with selective treatment of secondary and unofficial markets of the coastal lowlands.Some assessment is attempted of the agricultural conditions prevailing at the time, and the plight of the landless is considered. The Register of the Priory of St Bees has a rich and varied repository of information and serves as a basis for the whole study. The chronicles and registers of the other monasteries in the north-west enlarge and illuminate the temporal and spiritual role of the Church in the region. The Chronicle of St Mary's, York, offers information on St Bees Priory which is otherwise unrecorded.

**Brian Palmer**

'Landscape, economy and peasant society. The Ramsey manor of Elton 1279-1347.'

The aim of this dissertation is to reveal some aspects of the landscape, economy and peasant society of the Ramsey manor of Elton, in north west Huntingdonshire, in the seven decades prior to the Black Death. The major source of data is the volume *Elton Manorial Records, 1279-1351*, transcribed and edited by S.C. Ratcliff, which contains manorial accounts and court rolls for the period. The Hundred Rolls of 1279, the Cartulary of Ramsey Abbey and the Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1327 and 1332 are additional sources. Two unpublished surveys of 1605 and 1747-8 have proved invaluable in recreating retrospectively the medieval landscape of the manor.

The open fields are reconstructed from the pre-enclosure survey, the Elton Field Book of 1747-8, which details the orientation, abuttals and ownership of all land in the parish. Fieldwork and aerial observation enable surviving ridge and furrow features to be mapped. The Lay Subsidy Rolls allow a tentative allocation of topographic surnames to be matched to the village plan. Elton's double entry in Domesday Book points to a complicated manorial history, with two manors and six open fields.

The manorial accounts reveal a demesne economy recovering from a period of decline. Recovery probably peaked in the period 1310-1320, before contraction set in once more. Elton emerges as primarily a grain producing manor. The standard of living of the peasants, their tax, work and rent burdens are examined. The peasant land market and migration are also reviewed. Contacts with the world beyond the manor indicate an outward-looking community in which peasants travelled long distances in performing carrying services.

It is suggested that further research on harmony and conflict in medieval Elton and a comparison of communities in the contrasting *pays* of north and south Huntingdonshire would broaden the present study.

**Sylvia Margaret Pinches**

'Roman Catholic charities and voluntary societies in the Diocese of Birmingham, 1834-1945.'

The concept of charity is very broad. It has particular significance for Christian theology, and it also has strong cultural connotations and social implications. For these reasons, and in the light of current debates over welfare provision and the role of voluntarism, it seemed appropriate to examine the charitable activities of a particular religious denomination during the period of operation of the New Poor Law. The Roman Catholic community was a small but very self-aware section of the population. During the period under consideration it grew

considerably in numbers, being the most successful denomination in that respect, and at the same time underwent a significant transformation in their social profile. At the time of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829, they were still mostly English by birth, mainly rural, and led by a few gentry, and fewer aristocratic, families. During the hundred years following the Irish famine their numbers were swollen by Irish immigrants, who clustered in the capital and the industrial towns of the provinces, altering the geographical, social and ethnic composition of the community. The Diocese of Birmingham reflected these changes well, having many old rural Catholic families in the counties of Oxford, Stafford, Warwick and Worcester, and also attracting large numbers of Irish to settle in Birmingham, Coventry, Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton. By identifying Catholic charities and societies listed in *The Catholic Directory* and the *Diocesan Directories* for the period, and analysing the extant records of some of them, this dissertation has sought to examine the part that charities and voluntary societies played in relieving some of the misfortunes endured by many, and also in reinforcing the Catholic identity.

**Philippa Richardson**
'Market vills and the development of boroughs in medieval Suffolk.'

As a prosperous and populous medieval county, close to London, one might expect Suffolk to have been at the forefront of *burghal* development. There are, however, remarkably few boroughs. This study seeks to explain the phenomenon, by looking at a broad swathe of the county that includes portions of the three principal administrative areas of the liberty of St Edmunds, the Geldable and the liberty of St Etheldreda.

By examining topographical and morphological features in six specific vills, three that became boroughs and three that did not, it becomes apparent that there were no intrinsic strategic or commercial features that discouraged borough status. This was derived from a combination of site inspections, studying the first edition Ordnance Survey maps and the geology of the six vills.

The variation in land tenure, however, and the exercise of political control, particularly by the abbots of Bury St Edmunds, are seen to have had a marked effect on the development of borough status. The principal sources were the *Nomina Villarum* of 1316 and the *Rotuli Hundredorum* of 1274. Examination of Domesday Book; the incidence of occupational surnames in the Lay Subsidy of 1327 and the history of market development all indicated that vills under the control of the liberties would only become boroughs where there was a greater local political force. Vills in the Geldable, however, would not achieve that status unless there was a strong local will capable of overcoming local problems of multiple lordships.

The study concludes that the temporal power of the abbots has been under-emphasised and that proto-urban commercial activity in Suffolk, whilst not stifled, may well have been stunted.

**Helen Louise Scott**
'The changing fortunes of the Royal Arcade Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1830-1882.'

The city centre of Newcastle upon Tyne was dramatically changed in the early part of the nineteenth century by a large scale redevelopment instigated by Richard Grainger, a local entrepreneur. This dissertation considers the economic and social impact of this redevelopment, mainly by analysing data from local business directories for three areas of the city centre, one previously existing area, and two new developments. Local newspapers, maps and advertisements were also considered to assess the public's opinion on the scheme and the changes that occurred in the geography of the town's centre.

**David Sheppard**
'In search of the Forest of Arden.'

This dissertation combines evidence obtained from place-names with a study of the local natural environment to estimate the extent of the Anglo-Saxon and Domesday Forest of Arden, to illuminate some of the factors that decided the position and shape of this forest and to speculate about the changes that brought about its denudation. The study is centred on the Arden region of north-west Warwickshire, but extends more widely to provide contrasts.

The most important natural features of this Arden region are that it is bisected by the Severn-Trent watershed and floored with Coal Measures and Keuper Marl which are impervious rocks yielding little or no water. The soils of the Arden heartland are, on average, more fertile and workable than those of the traditionally agricultural Felden region, yet Arden was only lightly populated before the Middle Ages.

The approach developed by Gelling is used to distinguish the areas that were forest or woodland estates during the middle Anglo-Saxon period. The place-name elements *leah, worth, ingtun* and *tun*, are found to imply special characteristics in position, geology, and access to water and woodland. The elements *-in-Arden, hob* and *puck* and the place-name *Hockley* also appear to relate to the forest.

An attempt is made to reconstruct the Anglo-Saxon and Domesday outlines of the Forest of Arden, by using the place-name and environmental evidence.

It is shown that the late growth of population in the forest area is probably due to a shortage of water caused by its geology and watershed position. It is suggested that the prevalence of ponds and moated sites in the Forest of Arden may be a medieval response to the problem of ensuring a permanent supply of water in this dry area.

**Donald Slater**
'Summary justice in Northamptonshire - 18th and 19th centuries.'

This dissertation looks at the administration of the lowest rung of the judicial ladder in the county of Northamptonshire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The changes that were taking place in English society placed great strain on a judicial system that had remained unchanged since its introduction in the 14th century. Northamptonshire sat at the juncture of two clearly distinct, geographically and culturally disparate, regions. With the growing industry of the 'workshop of the world' to the north and the west of the country, and the still agriculturally dependent east and south, the county felt the tensions of both, but perhaps to a lesser degree than either. How effective was the system of summary justice in a changing social climate?

The dissertation examines the day to day matters that came before the justices around the county. It looks at their reaction to crime, poverty, illegitimacy and violence in a violent age. Magistrates' examination of paupers to remove them from parish to parish under the Settlement clause of the Poor Law are studied. The petty session minutes for the Kettering division between 1830 and 1832 are used extensively as are the Northamptonshire Quarter Sessions minutes and other available documents from the County Record Office.

The county's magistrates of the period were members of the noble houses that abounded in Northamptonshire. They, and the lesser gentry, regularly attended the quarter sessions for its social activity, as well as the county's administration. The mainstay of the system of justice at petty sessions were however, the clerical justices.

The study reveals a system of justice that, except on occasions when a magistrate's personal interests overcame his sense of justice, managed to avoid the excessively punitive penalties upon offenders that the laws of the times permitted. They were working within a framework of laws that were becoming increasingly hostile to the 'poorer sort' until the latter part of the nineteenth century. The evidence suggests that they did not need, or chose not to use, the most punitive legislation. However, when their own personal interests became involved, as at the West Haddon "Football Game", they were capable of great injustice.

There is need for further work to be done in the field of local summary justice of the period, both in Northamptonshire and surrounding counties, to resolve the question as to whether Northamptonshire's position athwart a national cultural watershed was of significance in the manner that eighteenth and nineteenth century maintained the Sovereign's peace.

**Susan Stewart**
'The status of women in Surrey c.1235-1348.'

Medieval women were subordinate to men politically, socially and economically and the development of law confirmed and emphasised their subordination. Recent research has thrown light on the nature of this subordination and placed it within the framework of patriarchal oppression. Women's visibility is measured in the context of the struggle against male oppression or perceived as opportunist intervention within it.

This study focuses on the activity of women in Surrey from 1235 to 1348 as revealed in legal and manorial records in order to evaluate the nature and extent of the disadvantages that women faced. It shows that despite their low status, women's activity as freeholders and unfree tenants was crucial in the land market. Their public interventions demonstrate knowledge of systems and skills in management which prove an ability to operate successfully within the limitations of patriarchal constraints. About the private positioning of women within power relations little can be surmised.

Questions are raised about the status of women *vis-à-vis* criminal law. The evidence presented suggests that the mid-fourteenth century women were less able to initiate criminal proceedings against perpetrators and more harshly treated when indicted for crime. These tentative conclusions require further research.

**Penelope Ann Stokes**
'The organisation of landscape and territory on the estates of Glastonbury Abbey: a case study of the manors of Ditcheat and Pennard.'

This dissertation examines aspects of the ways in which human communities organised territory and landscape between the post-Roman period and the eve of the Black Death. It focuses on two adjacent manors of the Glastonbury Abbey estates, and examines the organisation of resources at both the hundredal and the manorial level. The exceptional corpus of local Saxon charters, medieval court and account rolls, surveys and extents has been used, together with a range of post-medieval documentary sources. The documentary evidence has been synthesised with the archaeological evidence to produce an interpretation of landscape dynamics over a millennium from the early fifth century. Analysis of

the patterns of fields and tracks suggests that the framework of the landscape may be essentially prehistoric, as the line of the Roman Fosse Way seems to cut across a widespread underlying orientation of boundaries. The progression from Roman *territorium* to Saxon *regio* to medieval hundred has been postulated, with the progressive fission of the territory in the Saxon period causing the dysfunction of traditional seasonal pastoral regimes. Diminished intercommoning rights may have provided the agricultural imperative underlying the creation of fallow-field systems in the two manors examined in this study. Unusually, regular field systems were not here accompanied by the creation of fully nucleated villages, although some planned hamlets have been identified. The field systems were not manor-wide, and a girdle pattern of farmsteads surrounding a central ovoid arable area, part of which was called Oldfield, may be the oldest arrangement of settlement and field system in the study area - one of the farmsteads is now deserted and has yielded medieval and Roman pottery. Little expansion of the agricultural landscape took place between the late twelfth and the mid-fourteenth century, showing that arable cultivation in the study area had virtually reached its sustainable limit by 1189; this was reflected in the almost static tenement numbers of the two manors during two centuries of national demographic expansion.

**Philip Thornborow**
'Mortality crises in Northampton, 1571 to 1640.'

A crucial point in English demographic history was reached between 1586 and 1640, when a series of crises threatened to reverse population growth. The town of Northampton, which was believed to have been in decline for a longer period, was chosen for a case study of this disturbed time. Parish registers were used to quantify demographic events, and local and national administrative records, and contemporary accounts, used to attempt an explanation.

Previous writers had drawn attention to three plague epidemics from this period, without quantifying the element of plague mortality. These three episodes are confirmed as plague, though other causes played their part. Despite contemporary propaganda on the agricultural fertility of the county, demographic change in the county town appears to be linked to falls in harvest quality, though it is suggested that human agency may have played a part in grain shortages. A fourth significant crisis occurred in 1617, but further work is required to identify a prime cause. Four crises in seventy years make Northampton typical for its size.

Despite these periodic crises, and contrary to received wisdom, for much of this period the town recorded a natural increase. All the demographic trends indicate a profound change occurred in the early 1590s. The causes and wider significance of this change would, again, benefit from further study.

**Michael Thornton**
'Women peasants in Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire before the Black Death.'

Women peasants is a flexible description. It includes, at one end of the spectrum, a handful of taxpayers and, at the other, paupers, prohibited from entering their own vill and engaged in a life of begging and petty theft.

No estimate of the total number living in Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire has been attempted, but about 3,000 are identifiable from manor records, subsidy lists and other sources. The records reflect public business and the small proportion of the population appearing in them is further reduced in the case of women.

It is nevertheless clear that their role in the vill and manor was far from being confined to household management. Before marriage some worked as servants in the homes of relatives or others sufficiently prosperous to engage them. Marriage, for others, may have opened new horizons. There is evidence of wives establishing joint tenure, with their husbands, of property for their own lifetimes and on occasion securing inheritance rights in advance for their daughters. This avoided reliance on customary rights of inheritance which were often but not always endorsed in court. In many cases widowhood may have meant straitened circumstances which would have made re-marriage attractive, although it is clear some widows confidently exercised the rights and responsibilities of tenant and householder.

Economically wives and widows contributed most notably to their local economies by the brewing and selling of ale although involvement in other food retailing was slight. Excluded from civic office as they were, they nevertheless participated effectively, and arguably more so than men, in the hue and cry as a process of law enforcement. Household and children were often the normal foci of their lives but their role in wider society must not be understated.

**Anthony A. Upton**
'Sixteenth-century Foleshill: population, economy and religion in a Coventry suburban parish.'

This dissertation sets out to analyse some links which bound a suburban parish with Coventry in the sixteenth century. Essentially, it seeks to identify demographic, economic and religious trends in Foleshill, situated north-east of the city, and, by comparison wherever possible with other suburban parishes, analyses what role it played on the stage dominated by its powerful neighbour.

On population, the prime sources are the parish register (1565-1654), the 1522 muster roll, 1524 and 1525 lay subsidies, and the 1563 household census. Wills and inventories revealed parishioners' occupations, and evidence pertaining to timber and mining is also examined. The period covers the Reformation, and diocesan archives help trace scenes of religious activity in Foleshill during the sixteenth century.

The principal aim is to test the strength of Foleshill's links with Coventry. While the city declined, Foleshill's valuable timber and coal assets attracted landless labourers seeking employment, to the apparent benefit of enterprising locals. Churches in the Coventry suburbs were struggling against political uncertainty, inflation and epidemic disease, and their response is considered in the third chapter.

Research has shown that Coventry businessmen continued to hold an important stake in Foleshill's development during the sixteenth century, although the sale of former monastic property in the parish also attracted the attention of 'foreign' speculators. After the Reformation protestant activists, whose zeal, intellectual competence and control of key posts over-awed their opponents, ensured that puritan doctrines became strongly entrenched.

**Penelope Upton**

'Place-names of Warwickshire revisited.'

The chief aim of this dissertation is to revisit the place-names of Warwickshire. Two adjacent hundreds - Barlichway and Kineton - were selected for the study. The main sources used included relevant 1" and 2½" Ordnance Survey maps; inclosure award plans; early estate maps; several volumes of the *English Place-Name Society*; and Domesday Book. All place-names; roads; trackways; rivers; streams; church dedications; and information from Domesday Book within the two hundreds now form part of a computerised database. Fieldwork within the area of study was carried out during the research stage. Following the very lengthy but invaluable task of inputting all the data, it was possible to classify the information in a combination of permutations.

A broad chronological classification of all place-names was carried out followed by an analysis of frequency and distribution of each type of place-name element, in conjunction with map evidence. As far as possible, use was made of archaeological reports dating from the late 1960s, and of early charters.

The results were unexpected but partly because the place-names of only a small area were analysed. A countywide or even a regional study might significantly alter the picture. However, the low incidence of surviving Celtic place-names is in juxtaposition with the reasonably abundant archaeological evidence of Romano-British settlement, much of it being high status. This suggests a degree of renaming of settlements in the early Middle Ages. It is possible that *-tun* and *-leah* place-names were part of this process and that they were more prolific at an earlier date than A.D. 730, according to the available early charter evidence for Warwickshire.

**Geoffrey Wolfe**

'Keeping the peace: Warwickshire 1630-1700.'

Using surviving quarter session records, justices notebooks, extracts of fines and jury lists, this dissertation attempts to reconstruct the patterns of petty crime, the status of those accused and the nature and work of the officers involved in administering the system of keeping the peace in the county of Warwickshire in the seventeenth-century, and its response to offences and offenders.

When compared to other counties, the inhabitants of Warwickshire seem to have been relatively law-abiding, having lower levels of indictment for property crime, and offences against the peace. However, accusations of assault represented a large proportion of the offences against the peace and would seem to indicate a high level of inter-personal dispute. Nearly half of the recorded indictments were for regulatory offences - victimless crimes, sometimes not even considered by many to be crimes. Patterns of offence were found to relate more to national events and political pressure from the centre, rather than being influenced by external factors such as plague or harvest failure. What tendency to break the law there was, was very evenly spread through all levels of society, and not monopolised by the poorer sort.

Judicial discretion was regularly exercised to mitigate the harshness of the law, by adjusting penalties and fines in line with the circumstances of the offence and the status of those convicted, rather than following the formal letter of the law. The value of goods stolen was often manipulated by jurors to avoid convicting suspects for a capital offence. The county was well served by its justices, jurors and constables, despite their human failings, and participation in the working of the legal system went down well into the ranks of the propertied, but involved the poorer element of society only when acting as sureties for suspects bound over. This exclusion led to occasional defiance of the system, because of a belief that there was nothing to lose by so doing.

## M.PHIL. AND Ph.D. THESES IN PROGRESS

The following list of M.Phil. and Ph.D. theses in progress updates the one first published in the 1995 *Newsletter*. It continues to demonstrate the wide range of research undertaken under the auspices of the Department. Some of the titles are provisional and may change as the research develops.

**1) Registered since the 1995 listing**

**Celia Cordle**
'The Culture of the hop'
**Delia Garratt**
'Nineteenth-century religious society'
**Ian Hunt**
'Growth of rural industries in parishes of N.W. Leicestershire'
**Dorothy Husband**
'Fenland abbeys in the 12th century'
**Patricia Orme**
'Church monuments as reflections of culture and society in Medieval Warwickshire'
**Sibyl Phillips**
'Nineteenth-century evangelicalism'
**Sylvia Pinches** (British Academy Grant)
'History of charities and relations with statutory bodies and provision of relief'
**David Sheppard**
'Medieval and early modern landscapes of the Warwickshire Arden'
**Penny Stokes**
'The organisation of landscape and territory on the estate of Glastonbury Abbey'
**Michael Thornton**
'Deserted villages in Northamptonshire.'
**Penny Upton**
'Deserted settlements in Warwickshire'
**Tony Upton**
'Warwickshire parishes: their clergy and the Reformation
**Martin Wilson**
'Chilvers Coton: a landscape analysis'
**Geoff Wolfe**
'Church and society in Warwickshire 1350-1540'

**2) Previously listed**

**Anne Barker**
'Medieval settlement in Essex'
**Alasdair Crockett**
'Social geography of "secularisation" in England and Wales in 1851'
**Vernon Davis**
'Economics, exploitation and environment, N.W. Leicester, *c*.1870'
**Julie Dexter**
'Class organization of 19th-century dissent'
**Eileen Edwards**
'Social structure in late medieval Solihull'
**Terence Finnemore**
'The early history of South Staffordshire with especial reference to the evolution of boundaries'
**Dorothy Fox**
'The area around Whitby, N. Yorks. in medieval times'
**Len Garrison**
'Post-war immigration and settlement of West Indians in Nottingham'
**Jem Harrison**
'The composite manor of Brent: a study of a wetland-edge community in the Middle Ages'
**Edwin Haydon**
'Medieval history of select small towns in Devon'
**Trevor Hill**
'Trading and genealogical networks in Shropshire small towns, 1800-1860'
**Lynn Marston**
'Medieval Glastonbury'
**Philip Masters**
'Anglo-Saxon and Norman minsters and territories in Sussex'
**Kate Parkin**
'Community and neighbourhood in medieval society: a local study in Cambridgeshire.'
**Derryan Paul**'Rural communities and their churches, 1660-1830'
**Elizabeth Robinson**
'Profile of Rugby working women 1870-1950'
**Tony Rollings**
'Aspects of Anglo-Saxon history in the East Midlands'
**Derek Shorthouse**
'Local government and society in Gloucestershire. *c*. 1870-1920'
**Christopher Starr**
'Attaining, maintaining and transferring gentry status in fourteenth-century Essex'
**Christine Vialls**
'Poor law in Northamptonshire, 1662-1834'

## GIFTS TO THE MAP ROOM AND LIBRARY

Once again we warmly thank all those who have given to the Department's collections and express particular gratitude to the family of the late Jonathan Wilshere who have given copies of his publications to the Department in his memory. Those who have made gifts include M. Aldis and P. Inder, Anon., P. Austin, S. Ball, J.E.Bott, J. Bourne, E. Christmas, P.Edden, E. Edwards, R. Faith, G. Forster, H.S.A.Fox, R. Gillespie, R. Greenall, J. Haden, T. Hill, the family of W.G. Hoskins, R. and H. Keep, B.McGarva, N. Morgan, A. Newman, K. Parkin, C. Phythian-Adams, D. Postles, P. Richards, D. Short, D. Shorthouse, R. Stephens, M. Tranter, University Library, University Security Officer, T. and P. Upton, H.Usher, J. Winterburn, G. Wolfe, C. Wrigley.

**SEMINAR PROGRAMME 1997-98**

If you would like to come to any of the following seminars, you will be very welcome. They are held in the Seminar Room at Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road. *We regret that it is essential that you notify the Departmental Secretary (Mrs Pauline Whitmore on Leicester (0116) 252 2762) THE DAY BEFORE as there may be limits on the number of spaces available.* It is hoped that it will not be necessary to turn away visitors who have not telephoned.

All seminars take place at 2.15 to 4.00 p.m. (approx), followed by tea.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Mrs Teresa Hall**<br>(University of Leicester) | Thursday<br>16 October | 'Aspects of the minster church system in Dorset' |
| **Miss Miriam Gill**<br>(University of London, Courtauld Institute) | Thursday<br>6 November | 'Articulating sacred space: the evidence from late medieval wall painting' |
| **Dr Nat Alcock**<br>(Dept. of Chemistry, University of Warwick) | Thursday<br>27 November | 'Innovation and conservatism in seventeenth and eighteenth century Warwickshire houses.' |
| **Dr Chris Brooks**<br>(School of English and American Studies, University of Exeter) | Thursday<br>4 December | 'The prince and the parker: Tudor propaganda and the Evans chantry chapel in Coldridge, Devon' |
| **Dr David Eastwood**<br>(Dept. of History, University of Wales, Swansea) | Thursday<br>18 December | 'The changing contours of English local government: themes and variations' |
| **Professor Seny Hernández**<br>(Universidad Central de Venezuela) | Thursday<br>29 January | 'Local interests in modern English urban societies' |
| **Dr Richard Hoyle**<br>(Dept. of Historical and Critical Studies, University of Central Lancashire) | Thursday<br>5 February | 'Popular politics in the early sixteenth century: some leaps in the dark' |
| **Dr Philip Riden**<br>(V.C.H. Northamptonshire, Nene College of Higher Education) | Thursday<br>19 February | 'The end of a great estate: the Honor of Grafton in the twentieth century' |
| **Dr Audrey Meaney**<br>(Cambridge University) | Thursday<br>12 March | 'Some aspects of Anglo-Saxon paganism' |
| **Dr Todd Gray**<br>(Dept. of History, University of Exeter) | Thursday<br>19 March | 'The West Country and England's network of fisheries, 1500-1650' |

## EVENTS SPONSORED BY FRIENDS

### EIGHTH W.G. HOSKINS LECTURE

The eighth W.G. Hoskins lecture, 'The remaking of the English landscape: an essay', was delivered by Professor John Sheail who has written on many aspects of the history of landscape and habitats, and who is currently Deputy Head of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology's research station at Monks Wood in Huntingdon. Dr. Sheail acknowledged his debt to Hoskins, from his first reading as a sixth former, of *The Making of the English Landscape*, to a particularly memorable conversation with him and other scholars over dinner in 1967, although three years earlier Hoskins had attempted to dissuade him from tackling the 1524-5 lay subsidy as a Ph.D. thesis.

Dr. Sheail's lecture outlined the skills which ecologists have developed since the war in managing the natural environment. In part these are the product of a deeper understanding of past uses of the landscape, which has led to a simulation of historical management techniques.

Although H.G. Tansley and other naturalists pleaded for organised nature conservation during the 1940s, they recognised that past husbandry practices had contributed to contemporary species-rich grasslands and that if such habitats were allowed to return to their 'natural' state rare plants would be eliminated. The relatively rapid process of succession from cropped sward, to scrub, to woodland, following the virtual extinction of the rabbit population in 1954, made an understanding of the influence of past management practices a priority. It was, of course, impossible to restore grassland or wetland sites exactly to their previous state, but in the 1960s sheep and cattle were used as a conservation tool on a number of reserves.

By the early 1980s agricultural intensification had destroyed most lowland wet grassland, markedly reducing the diversity of wildlife species through grant-aided ploughing, fertilisation and drainage. Wetter conditions were restored to some sites by the cessation of pumping, but the opportunity was also taken to plant wild seed mixtures in community areas and on motorway verges. The agricultural industry also began to balance its concern for efficiency with the need for conservation. Much promotional literature, however, encouraged the unquestioning, and intensive, reintroduction of 'traditional' management practices which had themselves only failed to eliminate species through being ineffectively applied.

Professor Sheail argued that the 1990s offer wider opportunities for creative conservation, especially since environmental protection has become a more integral part of farming practice. He suggested that the aspirations of the 1940s, to balance conservation with other nature uses, might at last be realised. This optimistic note was questioned by Mike Thompson who pointed to the prairies of oil seed rape and the disappearance of lapwings. In essence, Professor Sheail replied that it is better to be hopeful than despairing, and that in an historical context there are now wider opportunities to implement practices which have been pioneered in recent decades.

Following a vote of thanks, proposed by Vernon Davis (for the fourth year in succession) the assembled Friends repaired to Marc Fitch House for the now famous book sale, organised with commendable efficiency by the family firm of Jayne Alderson and Co. Ltd, and a sumptuous tea which, according to Harold Fox, was 'the best north of Wimbledon'.

**William Bates**

**Editor's PS**

The Book Sale referred to by William was once again a huge success, raising over £430 for the Friends. This success was achieved through sale of a vast assortment of books, most with very little local history interest. PLEASE NOW MAKE A PLEDGE TO SORT OUT AT LEAST ONE BOOK FROM YOUR COLLECTION FOR DONATION TO NEXT YEAR'S SALE.

### FRIENDS SUMMER OUTING

On Saturday 21 June the Friends enjoyed a very pleasant wander around Warwickshire, thanks to the organisation of of Bob Parsons, Rosie Keep and Sylvia Pinches. The morning began in soft drizzle when everyone met at the Kingswood Canal Junction at Lapworth, but this did not dampen anyone's spirits and the day turned out fine, in all respects. Mr Andrew Stumpf led us around the restored canal basin, which links the Stratford-upon-Avon canal with the Grand Union, and gave us a talk on the history of the canal and its restoration. We then ate our picnics, though some friends walked briskly to the near-by Navigation pub. The next stop was Wooton Wawen church, familiar to Anglo-Saxonists. Here a local guide gave us a brief history, and then Miriam Gill explained the fascinating wall paintings to us. The final stop was at Charlecote, where friends were free to visit the house and park, owned by the National Trust, or to explore the village and historic watermill. The day ended with a splendid tea provided in the home of the Rev. Hugh and Mrs Rosie Keep.

**Sylvia Pinches.**

**JUBILEE YEAR DIARY DATES FOR FRIENDS**

**Annual General Meeting**

This is formal notice that the second AGM will be held on Saturday 15th November at 2.00 p.m. in Marc Fitch House. Following the formal business Harold Fox will give a talk entitled 'Devon fishing villages: origins' after which friends will be invited to sample a glass of wine. Please do your best to attend.

**Ninth W.G. Hoskins Lecture**

This will be held on 30th May 1998 when Dr Joan Thirsk will be the guest speaker.

**Summer Outing**

This will be on Saturday 20th June 1998 when ex-student Mrs Jenny Burt of the Northamptonshire Gardens Trust will conduct a tour of some of that county's gardens.

**Department Open Day and Public Lecture**

To mark the Department's 50th Jubilee it is hoped to arrange these events on a single day in the Autumn of 1998.

## TALKING TO FRIENDS

It is an enormous relief that despite his retirement as Head of Department, Charles is not leaving the Department, for March Fitch House would be bereft without his energetic figure and ringing laugh. We were delighted when he agreed to be interviewed for the *Newsletter*, and hope that the following account does justice to the versatility of his mind and the generosity of his nature.

**Friend:** Where did your interest in local history begin?

**C.P-A:** It all goes back to being the son of a canon of Carlisle Cathedral and therefore being brought up in an abbey close. It was an extraordinary experience; we lived next door to a medieval cathedral with the Dean and Chapter library nearby with all its calendars of charter rolls and record society publications and so on - I couldn't help but be somewhat brain-washed.

**Friend:** Did your father have historical interests?

**C.P-A:** My father was an archaeologist in the Middle East in the early part of the century, before he went into the First World War. Long after the war he became Assistant Director of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem before he was ordained. He was a very substantial scholar; he got a double first in Classical Mods and Greats. I regarded him as a rather heroic figure to put it mildly. Sadly he had a stroke when I was about 14 or 15 when, curiously enough, he was working on the historical geography of the HittiteEmpire. Some of my earliest memories are of him poring over *The Times Atlas of the World* working out the place-names of the Hittites. It makes one feel so puny by comparison!

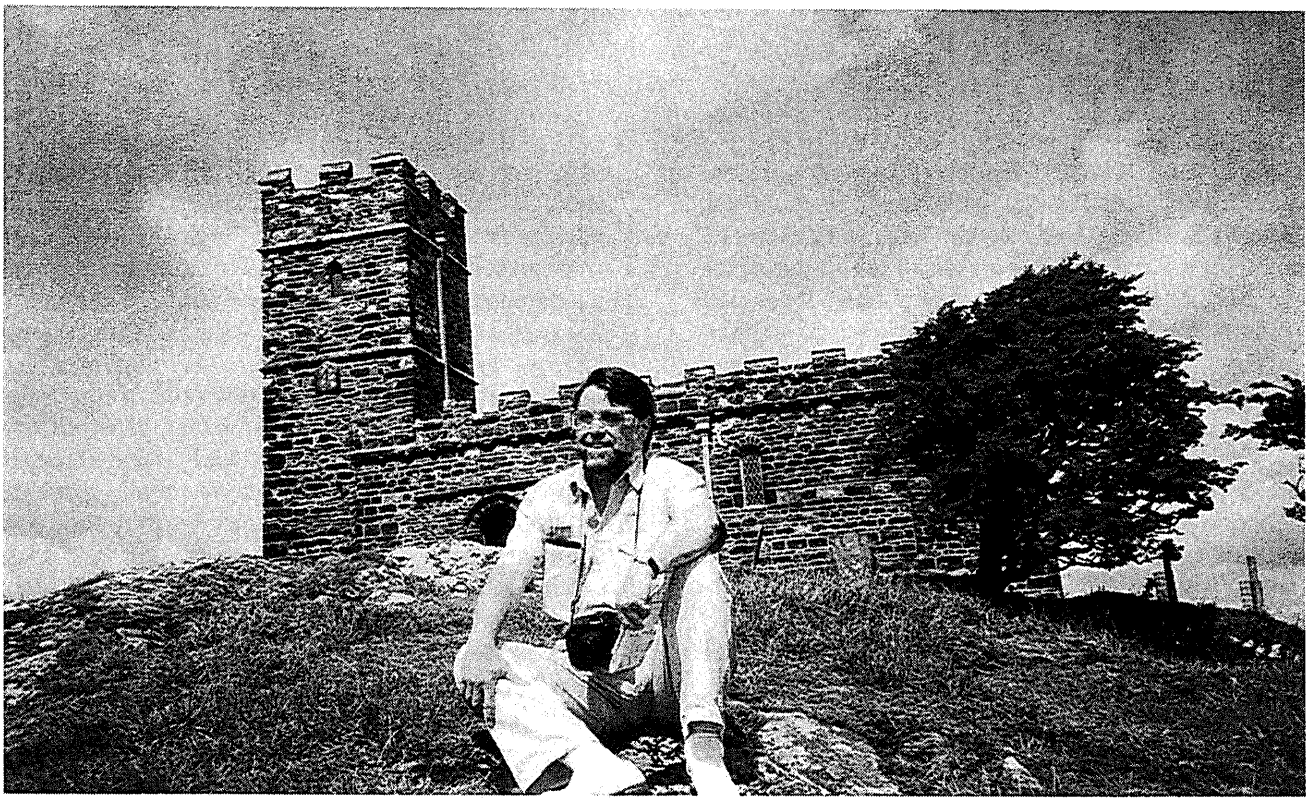
Obviously I became fascinated by buildings, especially churches, particularly Anglo-Saxon churches. I bicycled over most of England looking at churches as a schoolboy while I was at boarding school down in Wiltshire during the early 1950s. I did it also to get out of sport! I was terribly struck from a very early age by the contrasts between Cumberland, where I had been bought up where the building stone was rich red sandstone, and the silvery, slightly icy quality of the landscape in Wiltshire with its flint and delicate pink brickwork. I suppose this was a formative time because, as someone who liked painting, I was so struck by the visual differences between two such contrasted parts of England. I did a bit of archaeology there - I helped to strip turf from the West Kennet longbarrow! By about 1964 when I went back to Oxford, I had probably visited every cathedral in England, with the exception of Lichfield and Norwich, and some in Southern Scotland too. I had therefore also visited every county in England by virtue of being interested in churches.

**Friend:** What did you read at Oxford?

**C. P-A:** History - and very boring much of it was too, very conventional. It was after I left Oxford in 1961 and went to teach university scholarship candidates at Bedford School that I came under the influence of an absolutely brilliant schoolmaster called John Eyre. As a colleague, he developed my mind and it was there that I became interested in economic and social history because I was possibly going to write a school text book on enclosures. It was while I was beginning to get some material together for this that I came upon Hoskins in his essay on the Leicestershire farmer and I also discovered Beresford on lost villages. I had found a new world of history I hadn't come across at Oxford. Hoskins' *Provincial England* had just come out with those wonderful essays on Leicester, the Great Rebuilding, and provincial towns. I felt emboldened to go in for a state scholarship as a mature student of 27 (remember that I belonged to that generation which had had to do National Service), and fortunately had done well enough at Oxford to get backing. I resigned my teaching post without knowing whether I was going to get the scholarship. I was interviewed by Trevor Roper which was terrifying, but when he asked me who I would like for my supervisor, I said 'Hoskins'.

**Friend:** Who else was influencing you at that time?

**C. P-A:** I think one has to realise what a different historical world it was 35 years ago when a new kind of Early Modern political history was dominant at



Charles in one of his elements with Brentor church, Devon, in the background.

Oxford. It was the mixture of politics, religion and social history which was the work of people influenced by Tawney: people like Trevor Roper, Christopher Hill and Lawrence Stone. It was a very exciting time, but it was history very much from the posh end of society until William Hoskins, who suddenly showed what was going on underneath. One of the interesting things about that time was the way in which most highly educated people were involved with what was broadcast on BBC radio - not least on historical matters - particularly through reading *The Listener*. My own first publication was a letter to *The Listener*, criticising Peter Laslett's broadcast views on the nuclear family! He wrote a nice letter back to the young upstart, and in 1965 gave me an afternoon's tutorial at Cambridge on the analysis of early listings.

**Friend:** When did your connection with Leicester begin?

**C. P-A:** Hoskins was given the chair here in 1965 and I used to come over here for supervisions with others of his Oxford students, Paul Slack and David Palliser. It was then that I discovered the attractions of Leicester - the library local history collection where you could actually look at things on the shelves and browse, whereas in the Bodleian, one of the great libraries in the world, you had to call books up from the stack so you missed things.

**Friend:** What was your first appointment here?

**C. P-A:** Hoskins wanted to enlarge the Department to make it a department of six people and I started in July 1966 as a junior research fellow on a three-year contract. By this stage I had already begun work on Coventry with Hoskins' advice. I had gone to Oxford very much impressed by both Hoskins and Laslett and I discovered the new world that was opening up in terms of the history of the family. I also came across Glass and Eversley on population history, and I then discovered a census of medieval Coventry, which was the earliest census known in this country. At the same time I got very much involved in anthropological approaches to the study of ritual. That was the sort of basis on which I came up to do research at Leicester.

**Friend:** Where was the department located then?

**C. P-A:** The department was originally based with Geography in the Bennett Building, after which we moved to Princess Road. The first year of the M.A. course we had six members of staff and one student - who failed! Then soon we moved next door from here, to 7 Salisbury Road. We had a little map room for the historic maps downstairs, which I catalogued with Peter Eden, and a larger map room with two cabinets. We had a capital grant from the UGC to begin building up a collection. Now we have got 8 cabinets, so that is a measure of how much the collection has grown.

**Friend:** When and why did Hoskins return to the Department?

**C. P-A:** In 1964-5 Jack Simmons, the professor of History, a very far-seeing man, had been given instructions to discover a successor to Professor Herbert Finberg, so he went down to All Souls,

Oxford, where Hoskins spent every Tuesday night, for dinner. He asked Hoskins who should be recruited; Hoskins is reputed to have said 'look no further - I'll come back'. So he returned and saw the setting up of the MA as his first major step. I only discovered recently that he actually had in mind to expand English Local History into a fully fledged undergraduate department and bid to the university for 12 members of staff. Of course he didn't get anywhere. In fact he got so irritated at having to move the Department so often that a sort of civil war broke out between Hoskins and the Bursar. I have a vitriolic letter of his from that time. Eventually he 'retired' in despair - he could not stand it any more.

**Friend:** What was life in the Department like before he resigned?

**C. P-A:** The staff were all required to be in together only one day a week apart from those days on which you did your own little bit of teaching. Hoskins got on with writing. I suppose he was writing *The Age of Plunder* but the only thing I **saw** him doing was to write *The Shell Guide to Leicestershire* - I don't think that would go down very well with HEFCE these days!

Muriel Phillips carried the Department through until the days of Pauline - I just don't know how we would have survived without such wonderful secretaries. We have been so fortunate.

**Friend:** How were things after Hoskins?

**C. P-A:** In 1968 there was a huge shake-up in the Department. Alan Everitt became research professor (I am the only Head who has not been a research professor). I got Alan's lectureship and David Hey took my research fellowship, so there were big changes. It remained like that until the 1970s when everything started to go slightly wrong. Michael Laithwaite's research fellowship in Vernacular Architecture expired and when Peter Eden came up to retirement the University would not advertise a permanent job to replace him. Harold Fox eventually got the lectureship in Topography in 1976 on a three-year contract renewed in 1979 for another three years only. Then came the crisis years and with the cuts in the university system, we faced an appalling situation.

**Friend:** What were the problems?

**C. P-A:** By the time of the 1981-2 cuts the Department looked too expensive. Then Alan, who suffered terribly from a bad back, made a heroic decision - he bargained his post to make Harold's permanent. We were then left only with myself, Harold, and Richard McKinley (who only did a little teaching); the six members of staff had shrunk to three. In addition, the M.A. course had by then, become much more ambitious. Originally it had been so incredibly hard because of its breadth that the staff used jokingly to wonder if they would get through it themselves! We were pioneering the teaching of local history. Students took courses in methods and materials, urban and rural communities, topography, a special region, vernacular architecture, and everyone had to do **both** medieval **and** early modern palaeography. Later the course was modified (Vernacular Architecture had to be dropped) and systematised to reflect more accurately the huge expansion of published work. Harold and I ended up teaching virtually the whole course for a while. Fortunately as early as 1975 I had recognised that if Alan fell ill we would be in difficulty because he was the only person then competent to teach a special region. I thought that would be good for me, so I volunteered to get up Cumberland. I think that was my best training as a local historian, having to get up an entire special region from settlement to the present - and one I would recommend to anyone. So I ended up doing the field course, but eventually Harold did Devon and so, until recently, we alternated. *Land of the Cumbrians* stemmed directly from this experience.

**Friend:** Were things so difficult for long?

**C. P-A:** The crisis period was so depressing and for a long time we felt that the whole Department might be going under. The one glimmer of optimism was that after two fruitless applications to the 'New Blood' competition, I put in a third application and we got the post on Regional Popular Culture, which turned out to be Keith Snell, and things began to improve from then!

**Friend:** How did Marc Fitch's association with the Department come about?

**C. P-A:** The connection with Marc Fitch goes right back to 1965. He was an antiquarian interested in family history (among other things). He and others clicked with Hoskins, because of his work on Leicestershire yeoman families which used the surname evidence. Anthony Wagner who was Garter King of Arms and an adviser to the Marc Fitch Fund together with Francis Steer and others, got together and created the Marc Fitch Fellowship and the unique English Surnames Survey. The Marc Fitch Fund saved the Department; that fellowship is to go through until David Postles retires - into the new century. The level of benefaction is just sensational.

Marc was the best friend the Department has ever had. Coincidentally with the department's 'crisis'

year, he had to vacate the Fund's headquarters at Woodstock where he had amassed a considerable library which he didn't know where to put. He came up with the possibility of the Department taking on the library, but it hadn't occurred to him that we (then) occupied only two lobes of the 18th floor of the Attenborough Tower! Fully aware of the Department's difficulties, not all of which may be revealed here, Marc offered to put up enough money to buy a house if the University would donate a property next door so that the two could be knocked together. That idea fell through, so instead in 1988 the Fitch Fund gave matching funding for the refurbishment of this house (3 and 5 Salisbury Road) to allow the library to be accommodated, which now occupies half the ground floor. That made the Department's future a little more secure, though with the present funding round, life is looking a little more tense again. While we are to have a new professor, his or her job will be much to do with raising income. I suspect that that will open a new chapter.

**Friend:** What was it about Hoskins' approach that influenced you so strongly?

**C.P-A:** If we go back to that climate of the 60s when so little had been done, I think that what Hoskins did then was to demonstrate the importance of using the microscope; of getting down to the local level, where new themes of potential national importance could be discovered. It was his interest in community rather than landscape that most struck me though it was never an idealistic or naïve view of what community was about. Hoskins was also interested in what went wrong in communities. It was while I was a postgraduate student at Oxford that he came up with all his work on harvest crises let alone epidemics. By the time he was back in Leicester, Hoskins was beginning to think of the study of local history as the study of local eco-systems where everything was in relation to an environment (which could be harsh). I was also greatly impressed by Hoskins' essay on the Elizabethan merchants of Exeter which had a wonderful sense of period about it. He had a great genius for seizing on intimate personal details taken from probate inventories and the like. I felt that this was a way forward.

**Friend:** What were the other influences?

**C.P-A:** I was equally struck by the more systematic possibilities that Laslett and the Cambridge Group were coming up with in their approach to the study of the household and population. I was also very influenced by Goubert's book on *Beauvais et le Beauvaisis* looking demographically at a region in France. All that led on in its turn to an interest in sociology. In my postgraduate days I came across a number of books that very much influenced me, by 'pragmatic' sociologists; for example Wilmott and Young, *Family and Kinship in East London* and two books by Williams, *The Sociology of an English Village* on Gosforth and *A West Country Village*. These three books plus G.C. Homans, *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century*, which was a medieval book written by a sociologist, contained very interesting things on family structure and the husbandman's year.

**Friend:** Where did that take you?

**C.P-A:** This led me to look at Coventry, to begin with in the 1590s (never published), using Easter Books. I was looking at a street neighbourhood in the same way that Wilmott and Young had done. I was able to map the movements of kin and their residential proximity to each other in a small area; it was a piece of fascinating social topography.

Another influence was an article written by Keith Thomas in *Past and Present* in 1963 called 'History and Anthropology'. I then became absorbed in anthropology through discovering the anthropology library at Oxford. I spent hours studying earlier British anthropologists (it was only later that I read Levi Strauss) and I suddenly began to see how you could look at a small scale society as an anthropologist might, and think about the way an historian could 'visit' another society. The historian is disadvantaged because of having to use documents instead of asking questions. It showed how all sorts of things could be done, not least how ritual could be used as an expression of what people did. Margaret Spufford drew on the idea of man as a sentient being, not just economic man. Several people were feeling the same but my work took me into different classes of documents. I felt you could get some idea of what people did by looking at the rhythms of the year and the rhythms of the day; there is an immediacy about that.

**Friend:** Were there other historians who affected your thoughts?

**C.P-A:** I came to Leicester in 1966 having been interested by Hoskins initially, but having in some ways grown beyond him. Another eye-opener was *The Agrarian History of England and Wales* Volume IV - which came out in 1967 - and particularly the chapters by Joan Thirsk and Alan Everitt; these have lived with me since because of the ways in which they rooted not only rural economies but also rural societies in the land. They looked at the farming regions, the labourers and the markets and suddenly

another whole new perspective opened up. I was also mightily impressed by Alan's own book on *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion* because of what it suggested about family networks; this drew again on the anthropological connections. These later, specifically 'Leicester' influences did not bear fruit until I had got Coventry out of the way in 1979 and I started thinking about other things. I then thought about the relationship between society and landscape rather than just thinking about landscape *per se*. Alan's later work was clearly significant here.

**Friend:** What do you regard as your own contributions to the study of local history?

**C.P-A:** I think there may be four developments which I have been involved at least in helping to foster. The first is the need to see society as a process. William Hoskins and others looked at society in a static way because they used documents like subsidy rolls which tend to divide society up as it was at that point, in layers. Class of course lay in the background of what was being done at the time because of the Marxian approach to history which heavily influenced even liberal historians. I think class is important but you have to look at local society not just as a layer cake: you have to see society as movement, people moving up and down through society and through their life cycles.

Secondly, I felt that we ought to try and widen from economic and social history into an involvement with cultural history and so to see local societies in the round. That is where my interest in folk lore and the study of rituals came in, trying to link cultural and societal history together.

Thirdly, I thought we ought to be finding all sorts of different ways of tying societies and cultures to broadly definable spatial contexts. I became aware that while the idea of *pays* was most stimulating it didn't take us the whole way because no *pays* is actually homogeneous in this country. There are too many exceptions, especially at the edges where one *pays* fades into another. This probably gives us the clue to what is the glue for English society. Especially important is the position of towns in relation to that.

Fourthly, and what I really hope will be regarded as my contribution to the subject. I realised in the mid-eighties - perhaps just in time - that local history didn't then seem to have an **academic** raison d'être. Everyone - not merely local historians - was simply using local history as a laboratory by taking local subjects to test national themes; there was no real sense of a specifically English Local Historical purpose. I always had the feeling that we did have an overall raison d'être of our own, but to begin with I couldn't see it, or rather couldn't logically articulate it. What I did know was that we couldn't justify our existence through either stock-piling community studies or community categorisation. It was not really until I worked on *Rethinking English Local History* that I could come to some sort of conclusion as to what that remit might be in an overtly **national** context. I would like to feel that that - and inconclusive as it is - has been a kind of contribution because it (and related publications), has revived interest outside in what we do here conceptually.

It is gratifying to realise that MAs in local history which are currently being set up elsewhere incorporate a discussion of the 'Leicester' approach in their syllabuses: for example in the universities of Essex and Exeter, also in the Republic of Ireland at Maynooth and soon at the University of Limerick. In each case we are being compared with the *Annales* school in France. I think that is a great testimony to the way in which local history is at last being taken seriously as a proper academic discipline, and one in which scholars are even beginning to communicate at international levels.

**Friend:** You will remain in the Department for some years, but what are your plans for retirement?

**C. P-A:** I want to make up for the serious lack of an overall book which people can use to find out about long-term developments that are local and provincial. The thing which I would like to do is a sort of homage to Hoskins, a book perhaps called *The Making of the English Provinces* - rather ambitiously from the Romans up to the close of the twentieth century.

**Friend:** What has given you the most pleasure in your work in the Department?

**C. P-A:** I would like to make the point that I have been enormously privileged anyway to have worked in the Department and fortunate to have found a job to do in my life that fitted my own interests. Most recently I have felt extraordinarily lucky to have worked in the very special environment of Marc Fitch House which owes so much to to the unceasing labour of Christine, our cleaner, and the unobtrusive ways in which Pauline does her difficult job. You only have to look elsewhere to see how important such considerations are. The huge intellectual reward has been to work with such interesting colleagues; I have had the great privilege of working with internationally known scholars throughout my academic career, both in and through the Department. The other great aspect has been the immense pleasure that I have derived from seeing such wonderful students every single year. The sense of motivation and enthusiasm which every M.A. generation brings to the study of

local history is a joy to behold. It is extraordinary how people survive the hard work and still come up smiling. Some of them, like the indefatigable Margery Tranter - who, incidentally, has given me more personal support than anyone will ever know - have even contributed years of their lives to helping the Department on a voluntary basis.

Of course the greatest pleasure comes from seeing Ph.D. people going through. I have now had about 25 research students all of whom have been extremely stimulating and a number have been quite outstanding and influential. I took great pleasure that three of them combined with me to produce *Societies, Cultures and Kinship*, which, for all the faults of my introduction, is a very interesting collection of essays and is one of the few serious local history books which has gone into paperback. You can imagine my delight too when Graham Jones was recently awarded his Leverhulme Fellowship for the next two years because of his pioneering work on the atlas of medieval cults of saints. I really have had some fascinating people to supervise. It is marvellous how the work has gone on ever more creatively, and how therefore, set against the small number of staff, the torch is still being carried forward.

**Friend:** Thank you.

**Rosie Keep**

## A SUMMER OF RESEARCH IN CATALONIA

Graham Jones faced an avalanche of unsought offers of research assistance when he mentioned he would be spending two months of the summer on an investigation of Catalan saints' cults. The purpose of the project was to discover whether there were spatial, temporal and/or thematic distribution patterns of cults in Catalonia to compare with those found in a number of regions of England. Graham begins a two-year research fellowship in the department on October 1, funded by the Leverhulme Trust with a matching contribution from the Aurelius Charitable Trust. This is to launch a national electronic atlas of saints' cults, beginning with the pre-Reformation diocese of Lincoln, which covered a large swathe of England from the Humber to the Thames.

Through the good offices of Professor Rafael Aracil Martí, dean of the faculty of geography and history at the University of Barcelona, Graham was able to use the facilities of that university in collaboration with Dr Josefina Roma, professor of social anthropology. She in turn introduced him to the director of the Catalan National Archives, Dr Josep Maria Sans Trave, who arranged for Graham to spend the second part of his visit working at the regional archive in Montblanc, a picturesque, walled, medieval town 40 miles inland from Tarragona. The archive occupies a fourteenth-century hospital with open central courtyard, complete with stone-built well and vines trailing overhead from the galleries. The delight of such a working environment was complemented by the attractions of a landscape dotted with unspoiled hamlets set in olive groves, vineyards and cornfields. Then there were visits to two working monasteries, the Benedictine house at Montserrat, home of the shrine of the Black Madonna, and the more austere Cistercian house of Poblet, a Unesco World Heritage Site and a mausoleum of the royalty of Aragon-Catalonia before that kingdom was absorbed into Spain.

In terms of material, the project yielded a database of two-and-a-half thousand records, five hundred of them representing a corpus of devotional records for the churches, sanctuaries, hermitages and other religious sites of the Conca de Barberà, the comarca or county of which Montblanc is the capital. Graham chose this region for a case study because from the ninth to the twelfth century it stood on the frontier between Christian and Muslim kingdoms, between Mozarabic (formerly Visigothic) Christianity and the Roman church as mediated through the polities of the Languedoc, and between three rival sets of nobility; and because it also stands between the relatively intimate *pays* of the Catalan litoral and the vaster regions of the Iberian interior.

Graham also compiled an inventory of more than 200 saints venerated in Catalonia, using medieval and early modern sources - a necessary task for comparative purposes because of the often complex variations between the Latin, French and Castilian names of saints and those by which the same saints are, or have been, known in the dialects of the Catalan language. Further comparisons were made possible by compiling and analysing databases of parochial and other church dedications of eleventh- and twelfth-century churches in the Garrotxe, a comarca closer to the French border, and those mentioned in a recently published collection of one hundred episcopal consecration records from the diocese of Urgell. Lots of mapping was done, too, and many miles covered by foot in search of churches and local spectacle - August particularly is a month of religious processions and festivities.

Did comparable patterns emerge? Of course; but significant differences also. As Charles predicted to Graham, Catalonia is the sort of Continental region that offers the chance to work in a cultural laboratory, to see at first hand something of what medieval English religious devotion was like and how it might

have developed in the absence in England of the Reformation. It is also possible to see how cults were introduced and diffused, and how the body of venerated saints changed through time, as well as across regions while long-established cults survived nevertheless, sometimes in scarcely-recognisable form.

In spite of, and perhaps in part because of, the destruction of churches during the Spanish Civil War, Catalonia takes pride in its religious history and heritage. The standard of local historical work, both research and writing, is of a quality that could be profitably imitated in England. Much archival material exists for the medieval period and is increasingly being accessed. Important scholarship has developed around the anthropology of religion. Time, effort and money is being spent on ecclesiastical and art historical conservation. It was flattering, therefore, that Dr Roma told Graham of a 'hunger' in Catalonian and Aragonese universities 'for the Leicester approach'.

Graham has been invited back next year and says it is unlikely he will turn down the invitation. He also enjoyed the sunshine...

## W.G. HOSKINS' EARLY VAUGHAN COLLEGE LECTURES

The Open Day (see elsewhere in the *Newsletter*) produced one big bonus for the Department. Mr Roy Wadd of Knighton saw a reference to the day in the *Leicester Mercury* and this led him to the Department to deposit his notebooks containing very detailed notes on classes given by W.G. Hoskins, which he attended at Vaughan College in 1946-47. The classes were: 'Churches of Leicestershire - church architecture'; 'Domestic architecture of Leicestershire'; 'The antiquities of Leicestershire'; and 'Old Leicestershire - life and people'. Some readers will know that the Department already owns some of the notes which Hoskins used when giving these lectures. We now have an even more invaluable record: what he actually *said* (many lecturers make scant reference to their notes). The following transcript contains extracts from Mr Wadd's notes of a class given on April 23rd 1947.

'Bertrand Russell recently, on the Brains Trust, made a silly statement. The question was posed as to which period of history one would prefer to live in. Russell said he would prefer today, for life in the past must have been boring; no intelligent person would want to live in the 17th century. Mrs Arnot Robertson supported Russell in his argument. In fact the opposite is true. One of the outstanding characteristics of modern life is mass boredom, and the reason is the destruction of the old social life. There are 3 symptoms of modern maladjustment:- 1 *Recurrence* of Wars. In the middle of last century the great Swiss historian, Burkhardt, foresaw that modern society would destroy itself by wars. Purely economic causes e.g. oil politics or uranium politics do not fully explain the modern taste for mass destruction. A deeper cause is the disintegration of people's minds.'

Mr Wadd's beautifully written notes then go on to enlarge on Hoskins' critique of 'Waste' and 'General ugliness' as other symptoms of contemporary maladjustment in which he inveighed against the thoughtless despoliation of natural resources instancing Corby as one product of a 'Robber Economy' which had developed since the Industrial Revolution. He also suggested that Leicester had '... as high a proportion of ugly houses as any town in England, and Hinckley [was] even worse. One reason being that its expansion coincided with the nadir of taste *c.*1860-1890.' Clearly in Hoskins' view little had changed for he went on to say that 'Nine tenths of English people have no taste at all, and yet once the majority had good taste.' His utter dislike for so much of the modern world was perhaps most strongly evinced in a passage where he opined that 'The peak of boredom is probably reached in the London middle-class suburbs', where - and here we have a direct quotation - 'the nearest approach to hell on earth' was reached and where leisured housewives especially, turn from bridge to the cinema and from cinema to golf in an attempt to escape from boredom, and the men are as bad.'

Quite apart from such polemic the notebooks which Mr Wadd has so generously given to the Department, demonstrate Hoskins' immense love for, and knowledge of, his adopted county. Mr Wadd's meticulous notes also demonstrate how vividly he was able to communicate his enthusiasm to his audience.

## LETTERS FROM FRIENDS AND FORMER STUDENTS

**From Dr Ron Cox**

I was fascinated by the article 'Talking to Friends: Margaret Spufford' (*Newsletter* 1996) because her introduction to the Department so closely mirrors my own experience though, of course, my subsequent academic achievements never matched hers.

My contacts in the Department were, chronologically, in reverse order to those she describes. Following War Service and a non-graduate teacher training course at Westminster College (where I had been much influenced by Dr James Oxley, the authority on the history of Barking), I had become a schoolmaster in a Croydon Secondary Modern. After 13 years, mainly as a Head of Department, it had become painfully obvious that I would never advance further because Governing Bodies were interested only in graduates for senior posts. In desperation, I

moved sideways from a downtown school to one that was highly regarded; but the Governors insisted, as a condition of my appointment, that I should follow a London University History Diploma course. Meanwhile, to keep the wolf from the door, I had become a part-time WEA Tutor in Local History (their only non-graduate lecturer in any academic subject anywhere in the London district).

During the second year of my Diploma course I was tutored by Joan Thirsk and when she saw some of my essays she suggested that I ought to read for a Master's at Leicester. I pointed out that I couldn't as I had no first degree. But she drew my attention to the small print in the Regulations, suggested that I had sufficient evidence of original research to be able to make a case; and passed my name on to Herbert Finberg.

He summoned me to his home at Chiswick, filled me with China tea, made some sharp comments about a sloppy footnote that I had failed to edit properly in one of my papers and, after a severe grilling, advised me to make a formal application. I did so and on completion went on to a doctorate, completing the latter when I was 46.

Ironically, I capitalised on this by leaving teaching and entering educational administration. But lecturing in Local History (no longer forced on me by poor teaching pay) has ever since - and still remains ten
years after retirement from work - my main hobby. From it, I have derived immense satisfaction and, so my son tells me, it was my part-time study at Leicester that made him see the good sense of acquiring a Doctorate - though in a totally different field - on a full-time basis.

Joan Thirsk knows already that I regard her as my academic fairy godmother; Herbert Finberg had the breadth of vision to accept a non-graduate; my subsequent tutor, Alan Everitt, taught me to think clearly and write coherently. No wonder I jumped at the opportunity, later, of becoming a Friend of the Department.

**Extracts from two letters received in the Department from John Atchison - Senior Lecturer, Department of History in the University of New England, New South Wales, Australia, and Honorary Visiting Fellow in the Department 1996-97 - upon his return to Australia**

1) '...Margaret and I have for ever left a part of ourselves in the delightful Leicestershire landscape and with the Hoskins tradition in Salisbury Road. The time at English Local History was, in all senses, one of the greatest in our lives. We owe you all so much for making every aspect of our stay and experience so fulfilling, eventful and rewarding. Everyone, in so many big but also minute ways, added to and enriched the experience. Thank you all!'

2) 'I am writing to express my thanks, and that of my home Department of History at the University of New England, for the enriching and fruitful time I spent ... with the Department of English Local History.

... After more than a decade of experience we have grown to the point where we wish to develop our course with a greater emphasis on field research and with a more distinctive emphasis on theory and on landscape. It was for this reason that I chose Leicester as a location for sabbatical leave ... It was timely for us to have in-depth experience and time with the Department recognised internationally, together with the French Annales School, as the philosophical leaders of the discipline.

...Now that I am back at home base ... I can judge the Leicester achievement with more perspective. It is a very substantial and deep achievement from which we and other national traditions can benefit.

The theorising about the nature of local history which has been engaged upon by Professor Charles Phythian-Adams is highly original, complex and unique. The course offered by him and Dr Keith Snell about regional societies and cultures offer a range of impulses for us in Australia to hypothesise on in relation to our own past. Dr Harold Fox offers a course on landscape history which, as I see it, builds hugely on the already established work of the famous Leicester School of Local History. It is this course in particular which motivates my present efforts and which, also, facilitates cooperation across this campus. The work of these three eminent scholars also motivates me to persist with the long haul I and others here are involved in to establish a national survey of Australian place-names. Relevant to this is the highly productive work of Dr David Postles as Marc Fitch Fellow in English Surnames.

I was struck also by the extent to which Marc Fitch House is applying Geographical Information Systems and and other information technologies to historical research ...

What struck me most constantly at Marc Fitch House was the quiet but determined sense of purpose which drives the whole enterprise. The welcoming, friendly, but efficient and effective day to day engagement of students, volunteers and staff at all levels from Head of Department to maintenance staff, especially cleaning, creates an atmosphere with the type of conversation which should characterise the University in its best manifestation ...

University of Leicester, and the Department of English Local History in particular, has an assured,

convinced and grateful ambassador in this country which is conscious of the need to to deepen its appreciation of the past as it navigates its way into a very different geo-political future.'

**Three former M.A. students have furnished us with the following accounts of their subsequent research career experiences.**

**From Christopher Bennet**

Following the end of the M.A. in 1994, I spent 18 happy months as a Research Assistant in the History Department of the University of Wolverhampton. Since November 1996, I have been employed as a Research Assistant on the Historical Geographical Information System (GIS) programme under the direction of Dr. Humphrey Southall, Department of Geography, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London. Our GIS covers the period from the late 1830s, through the various changes in local administration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, until the Local Government Act of 1972. The system has two major components: accurate boundary maps showing the changing administrative area of Britain; and a major database of social, economic and electoral statistics from throughout the period.

As the one member of the team with a purely historical background (my colleagues all have Geography or GIS qualifications) my main role of mapping every parish in the country is very appropriate to someone with training in local history. This is easier than it sounds but sadly does not oblige me to go 'beating the bounds' all over England! Instead, we use digitised versions of twentieth-century Ordnance Survey administrative maps and combine this with material added from the census and from earlier maps held in the Public Record Office. Far more detail about our work, aims, collaborators and funding can be found by those of a 'surfing' disposition at our Web site. The address is:

**http://www.qmw.ac.uk/-gbhgis/**

Of course, I would not be here if it wasn't for my time at Leicester which I look back on with great affection. However, I am thankful that my work does not require too much palaeography. I am at Kew reasonably often and so any Friend who wishes to do so is welcome to say 'hello' and see what we are up to. I'm usually to be found on Floor 2 beneath a pile of old Ordnance Survey maps!

**From Janette Martin**

Before I begin to describe life in Berkeley, California, let me introduce myself. I am Janette Martin (formerly Brown; I married last September). I studied full-time for my M.A. degree at Marc Fitch House between 1993-4 and took part in a memorable trip to Cumbria in the spring of 1994. After leaving Leicester I worked as a research officer on a penal history project at Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London (a popular resort for local historians as Chris Bennet took a post there a week after I left).

On the 6th January 1997, my husband and I left to spend at least two years living, working, sunbathing and observing American culture. The initial plan was to take a Ph.D. at University of California, Berkeley, on comparative US and British history, with an emphasis on the development of the blasphemy and obscenity laws within the respective legal systems. However, despite the offer of a place, funding was not forthcoming and my plans had to be postponed. The upshot is I now work for EDR Sanborn, a company that, however strange this will seem, makes healthy profits from the commercial exploitation of historical data. It does this by selling 'prior historical use' reports of property sites across America to real estate and insurance companies wary of buying dodgy properties which could leave them liable to litigation. Reports are constructed from a variety of sources: fire insurance maps, topographical maps, flood insurance maps, city directories and aerial photographs. I work mainly on the photographs with the occasional city directory thrown in to keep me busy. It just goes to show that there is money to be made in history - in California at least.

The most striking aspect of America is the sheer scale of everything, from roads to cars, cookers, fridges, milk cartons to restaurant servings. The historian is also struck by the modernity of everything, especially in San Francisco, where anything that predates the 1906 quake is deemed incredibly old. The lack of rain, and even seasons, is another factor that makes living in the Bay area very distinctive. Whilst it never gets extremely hot it's very mild all year around and flowers were blooming even when we arrived in January. We live about 9 miles away from San Francisco in a very old (1920s) apartment block situated on Telegraph Avenue in the most notorious, or vibrant (depending on your perspective) street in Berkeley. Telegraph has an interesting and provocative past, being the scene of numerous free speech and civil rights protest during the '60s. Indeed the whole movement started on UC Berkeley campus. The police have charged this street on numerous occasions armed with bayonets and tear gas, whilst helicopters circled above as riots were disrupted. The Black Panthers rallied their supporters on these sidewalks, whilst the nearby aptly named 'Peoples Park' was defended in a violent battle from university development plans.

The radicalism lingers today with the street being home to depressingly large numbers of homeless, from

young punk kids to seasoned street people whose mental illness and sheer wretchedness are only too apparent. The sidewalks are full of stalls selling T-shirts, jewellery, bracelets fashioned from hemp fibre, pipes, Tarot card readers and generally a 'legalise cannabis' stall or two. The state has rather an ambiguous stance to this drug; under Federal government it remains illegal but the state legislature permits its use for medicinal purposes which, as you can imagine creates a myriad of legal difficulties. California and Berkeley in particular is certainly an interesting place to spend time and if any of you plan to visit the West Coast of America in the next year or so, please look us up. A bag of cheese and onion Walkers crisps would not go amiss too!

**From Jonathan Pitt**

Greetings from the capital of Wessex. I had not quite finished my M.A. in English Local History in 1994 when I was doubly lucky. Not only was a Ph.D. studentship available in Winchester under the supervision of Barbara Yorke, at just the right time, but also the proposed subject of research, the identification of Anglo-Saxon minsters and reconstruction of their *parochiae*, was one which I had found fascinating ever since first hearing of the theory in my undergraduate days. Further, my M.A. studies at Leicester had provided a good preparation for such research, and improved my chances of getting the studentship. King Alfred's College, though small, has a good reputation for history and archaeology and is a good base for work on early medieval Wessex. Reconstruction of minster *parochiae* is perhaps unusual in its methodology, relying as it does so often upon mere hints in later sources, an approach which fortunately can be justified for matters ecclesiastical. It is intended that my research will be part of a larger scheme concerned with the reconstruction of boundaries in Wessex, and another research student is soon to commence work on royal estates in Hampshire and Dorset.

Although based in Winchester I work mainly on material concerned with Wiltshire, and I have found that, many of the more important sources being held in the British Library, it has been necessary to make a fair number of trips to London. Fortunately Chris Bennett, of infamous memory, works in London, so finding inexpensive accommodation has not proved problematic. Conferences have also taken me around the country, and most recently I was able to give a paper at the Leeds International Medieval Congress. Current residents of Marc Fitch House could contribute much to this annual conference, but were strangely absent.

My work has proceeded against the background of considerable debate over the validity of important parts of the 'minster model', debate which continued at Leeds, and I certainly feel that the sources I have used make it clear that the ecclesiastical organisation of the Anglo-Saxon period could be exceedingly complex, but that of course makes it more interesting. I still visit Leicester quite frequently, so if you see a strange bespectacled person with a beard lurking in the library then, if not Charles or Mike, it's likely to be me, and now that I am approaching the end of my three years in Winchester you may like to let me know of any suitable employment offer!

## UNIVERSITY LIBRARY - LOCAL HISTORY PROJECT

The June/July 1997 issue of the University Bulletin carried an account of the progress made on the complete cataloguing and conservation of the Library's English Local History collection. Supported by a grant from the Higher Education Funding Council, the cataloguing team had reached the milestone of the 10,000th catalogue record which had fallen in the county sequence of Northumberland, the actual 10,000th item being *The Roman Wall: a Description of the Mural Barrier of the North of England*, by Rev J. Collingwood Bruce, 3rd edition (1867). The project still then had to cover the rest of the alphabetical sequence of English counties, the general local history books, and the English Local History books in the Special Collections store.

The catalogue records are being included in the Library's on-line catalogue, which is available widely within the University and also accessible both nationally and internationally via JANET. Additional to our own Marc Fitch Library, the easy access to this collection is of enormous value to all local historians in an area of research in which the University excels.

## SPECIAL OFFERS

**Paul Watkins Publishing**

Paul Watkins Publishing again kindly offers a minimum discount of 10% to Friends. Please write for his very attractively produced recent catalogue to 18 Adelaide Street, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 2EN. This publisher produces a good selection of history including reprints (e.g. Hill's *Medieval Lincoln*), original works (e.g. *We Didn't Know Aught*, women's oral history and *A Lincolnshire Calendar both* by Maureen Sutton and *Eleanor of Castile* edited by David Parsons), works of reference (e.g. *A Reader's Guide to the Place-names of the United Kingdom*, a complete bibliography of the subject), also the proceedings of the Harlaxton Medieval Symposia. Five important recent titles are *Stamford in the Thirteenth Century* by David Roffe, *Gothic to Renaissance* by Phillip Lindley, *Coventry's First Cathedral* edited by

George Demidowicz, *The Black Death in England* edited by Mark Ormrod and Phillip Lindley and *Oswald* edited by Clare Stancliffe and Eric Cambridge. Just published is *Names, Places and People: An Onomastic Miscellany in Memory of John McNeal Dodgson*. His catalogue also announces as 'forthcoming 1997' *A Dictionary of House Names* by the Department's ex-student Joyce Miles.

**The Needwood Bookshop**

Please visit the Needwood Bookshop at 55 New Street, Burton-on-Trent where ex-student Elaine Brown and her husband have a good selection of secondhand and out of print books, including history, topography and archaeology. Friends who declare themselves will be allowed a discount of 10%.

**Departmental Occasional Papers**

The following Occasional Papers are still available. All are at £4 (post free) except Finberg which is at £2. Please write to Harold Fox at the Department (sending no money in the first instance).
Finberg, *The Local Historian and his Theme*
Thirsk, *Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century*
Hart, *Early Charters of Essex* (revised edn)
Allison and others, *Deserted Villages of Oxfordshire*
Hart, *Hidation of Northamptonshire*
Hart, *Hidation of Cambridgeshire*
Merrill, *Cheshire Grand Jury*
Naughton, *Gentry of Bedfordshire*
Moylan, *Form and Reform of County Government, Kent*
Schumer, *Evolution of Wychwood*

**The Transformation of a Peasant Economy**

Friends are being offered John Goodacre's recent full-length monograph at the very keen price of £33 if collected from the Department or £35 if sent by post. All orders to Dr J. Goodacre, The White House, Ashby Parva, Lutterworth, Leics LE17 5HY.

**Seasonal Settlement**

Friends qualify for a discount for *Seasonal Settlement: Papers Presented to a Meeting of the Medieval Settlement Research Group*. Contents: 'Introduction: transhumance and seasonal settlement' (H.S.A. Fox); 'Transhumance in medieval Cornwall' (Peter Herring); 'Seasonal settlements in medieval Gloucestershire: sheepcotes' (Christoper Dyer); 'Medieval shielings on the Isle of Man: fact or fiction?' (Gillian Quine); '*Aergi* names as indications of transhumance: problems of the evidence' (Mary Higham); 'Cellar settlements along the South Devon coast' (H.S.A. Fox). Please order a copy by sending a cheque for £3.50 (made payable to 'University of Leicester') to Ken Smith at the Department.

**Back-numbers of the Newsletter**

Some of these are still available at a little below cost price (£1.50). Why not try to complete your set by writing to Ken Smith at the Department?

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

**Reservations for Seminars:** Mrs Pauline Whitmore, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR. Tel: 0116 2552762.
**Contributions to Newsletters and Books for the Booksale:** marked 'Newsletter' or 'Booksale', to Marc Fitch House.

## THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE

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**Programme Secretary:** Bob Parsons, 10, Burton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leics, LE13 1DJ.
**Staff Representative:** Professor Charles Phythian-Adams, Marc Fitch House.
**Committee Members:** Sylvia Pinches, 46, Rugby Road, Milverton, Leamington Spa, Warks, CV32 6DG.
Vernon Davis, 12, The Close, Anstey, Leicester, LE7 7EN.
**Student Representatives:** Jayne Alderson and John Rowley, Marc Fitch House.

## EDITORIAL TEAM

Mike Thompson (Editor); Lydia Pye (inputting and proofs); Vernon Davis (design); Margery Tranter, Ken Smith, Harold Fox (proofs); Anne Mitson (distribution).

# THE AMATEUR HISTORIAN'S SONG (with apologies to W. S. Gilbert)

I am the very model of an amateur historian,*
Painstaking and methodical, my data-base thesaurian;
Of regnal years and calendars, Julian and Gregorian,
I can recall the details with aplomb truly Victorian.

I've wrestled with the problems of historical geography,
I'm wary of the pitfalls of comparative demography,
I'm conversant with the features of parochial topography
And all the finer points of medieval palaeography.

Chorus And all the finer points of medieval palaeography,
And all the finer points of medieval palaeography,
Taradiddle, taradiddle, taradiddle, taradiddle,
Taradiddle, diddle, diddle, dee.

I enthuse about all buildings whether humble or spectacular,
Rococo and palladian, the classic and vernacular;
My pronouncements on these matters are acknowledged as oracular,
From megaliths and peles to Castle Howard and Castle Dracula.

My perambulations of deserted sites have been incessant,
I've studied rural handicrafts, extinct and obsolescent;
My response to oral evidence is always effervescent
As I interview the aged, even if they're convalescent.

Chorus As he interviews the aged, even if they're convalescent,
As he interviews the aged, even if they're convalescent,
etc. etc.....

Burgage plots and tofts and crofts compel investigation,
On open fields and furlongs I'm a mine of information;
Of every church within ten miles I know the dedication,
While to come across a holy well is cause for celebration.

My scholarly ambition soars beyond the antiquarian,
I'm fascinated by sub-cultures, urban and agrarian,
I'll trace the kinship ties of every Shropshire Unitarian
And publish learned monographs when I'm a centenarian.

Chorus He'll publish learned monographs when he's a centenarian,
He'll publish learned monographs when he's a centenarian,
etc. etc.....

* 'local' does not scan, 'amateur' does and historically pre-dates the former as a description of the local historian.

**R.G. Newey** 1979 (amended 1991)

**Editor's note**: Bob Newey, a Friend, completed his M.A. on social and demographic aspects of East Hendred, Berkshire in the early nineteenth century, in 1979. He is shortly to retire from his post as Development Officer for the Paget Gorman Society, a registered charity concerned with the special needs of children with speech and language problems. He would clearly have made a superb librettist.

Some of the class of 1996-7 outside Marc Fitch House on Degree Day, July 10th, 1997.