Friends of the Department of English Local History

NEWSLETTER

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The Church of St John the Evangelist at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire (photo. K. Snell)

'Here, the intersection of the timeless moment
In England and nowhere. Never and always.'

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EDITORIAL

The last twelve months have been characterised by continuing uncertainty for the department. At this time last year we believed that we would soon see a new Professor of English Local History in post, but although offers have been made following a round of interviews in January, we still await an appointment. The problem has been compounded by Harold's success in obtaining a prestigious British Academy Readership which will take him out of the department for two years commencing in January 2001 (deferred because of the situation described). While staff of the department remain confident in the future, given support from the Vice-Chancellor (who has done much to sing the praises of English Local History), it now seems unlikely that a new Chair will be with us before 2001.

Meanwhile, as you will see from the report below, arrangements have been proceeding for a re-jigging of accomodation as we are now joined in Marc Fitch House by The Centre for Urban History. ELH is itself to be redesignated as The Centre for English Local History and while the two centres will remain as discrete entities, they will operate within the Department of Economic and Social History - a change which entails a switch from the Faculty of Arts to that of Social Science. Marc Fitch House will be known as the Marc Fitch Historical Institute, under a committee of management and a Chairman chosen from the two centres in rotation. This new alignment is welcomed by the department which sees real gains to be had from a closer association with Urban History.

Regardless of these concerns and changes the Friends have enjoyed another good year as the Newsletter reports of various events will testify. However, Friends are advised that under our constitution no one may hold the same office for more than five consecutive years. This means that the terms of office of John Goodacre (treasurer), Derek Shorthouse (secretary), and myself (Newsletter editor), will necessarily end together in November 2001. Early consideration therefore needs to be given to the succession with a view to a smooth transition and to this end you are asked to make a special effort to attend this year's AGM which will be held after the Thursday afternoon seminar on November 23rd.

THE DEPARTMENT

CHANGES TO BE MADE IN 2001-2001

The new Vice-Chancellor at Leicester wishes to rationalize planning, especially financial planning, within the University by setting up a system in which all departments report direct to him and his central committees. This more centralized and rational system (replacing a devolved arrangement) will only work if the number of departments, now very great, is reduced. Accordingly, the Department of English Local History has suggested that it becomes a Centre for English Local History (with a Director) under the protective umbrella of the Department of Economic and Social History. The Centre will retain its role as, primarily, a research unit, with (as we have always had) some contribution to undergraduate teaching; staff numbers, as at July 2000, will remain ring-fenced. This change will have many advantages. First, the administrative workload of English Local History will be diminished. Second, finances may become easier, because there will be a change of faculty, to the Faculty of Social Sciences, which has historically always been richer than the Faculty of Arts. Third, we look forward to collaboration with congenial colleagues in the Department of Economic and Social History; many of them are close to us intellectually and we have traditionally joined very successfully with them in RAE submissions.

One other important change will take place in 2000-2001. The background is as follows. The University has a large deficit of over 3 million pounds and the Vice-Chancellor is therefore withdrawing from as much leased property as possible, including the lease of the house now occupied by the Centre for Urban History (which is a centre within the Department of Economic and Social History). Marc Fitch House, the home of English Local History, is currently under-used: for example, several rooms are occupied on about half a day per week. The Department has reacted positively, therefore, to the suggestion that Urban History shares Marc Fitch House. It will be a tight fit, if not a squeeze, but it has many advantages. Urban History will bring with it the Dyos Library, an extensive (8,000 volumes?) collection of books relating to their subject. This will be added to the Marc

Fitch Fund Library and will add considerably to the resources of Marc Fitch House. The Centre for Urban History is internationally known and has academic colleagues with interests very close to our own. It has recently been awarded a very large grant (of half a million pounds) from the Lottery Heritage Fund, for an oral history project (a method which is taught here: our students could well find posts in this project). We hope that there will be collaboration very soon between the MA degrees in English Local History and Urban History. In short, the resources - both intellectual and physical - of Marc Fitch House will be greatly enhanced; the house will become known as the Marc Fitch Historical Institute. I know, from the conversations I used to have with Marc when he came here, that he would have approved of all this new activity.

SEMINAR PROGRAMME 1999–2000

Dr Steven Basset (Department of History, University of Birmingham) drew a capacity audience for the first seminar of the term. His account of 'How the West was won: the Anglo-Saxon takeover of the West Midlands' was not so much an account of military conquest, as of a process akin to one of winning friends and influencing people. Describing how a well-favoured countryside, fully exploited by the fourth century AD, had become thoroughly English by the late seventh century, Dr Bassett drew on the topographical and archaeological evidence. He suggested, somewhat controversially, that a loosely rectilinear pattern dating from Roman, or earlier Iron Age, times could still be perceived in a landscape that in its developed state would have paralleled that of a much later period. Although the indigenous British were 'archaeologically invisible', a state of affairs that led to questions as to what happened to them, he advanced a considerable body of evidence to justify his belief that they remained the preponderant people living alongside relatively few, but increasingly dominant, politically and culturally, Anglo-Saxon incomers.

In spite of an increasing degree of anglicisation, cultural influence was exerted in both directions as British (Welsh) bishops and monks remained under an English regime into the seventh century. They were active in what Dr Bassett saw as a west midland region remaining a fully integrated part of the British west through the sixth and into the seventh century. Accepting that the archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon grave goods dating from this period was problematical, he suggested that this could be seen as indicative of acculturation, especially as both British and Anglo-Saxon style burials were found side by side, for example, at Wasperton and Stretton-on-Fosse. In any case by the early seventh century Anglo-Saxon grave goods, which made no progress west of the Avon valley, had virtually disappeared.

Although the West Midlands remained an essentially British/Welsh region far into the seventh century, by 680 the Mercian kings were dominant, the Hwicce had an Anglo-Saxon bishop and the Old English language was in the ascendant. Dr Bassett viewed this Anglo-Saxon triumph as one of acculturation, accelerated after the death of the pagan Penda in 655 and the subsequent Mercian conversion to Christianity, which made it easier for native Britons to accept English rule and the Augustinian church.

In conclusion Dr Bassett considered that although there may have been some elements of military conquest in the advance of Englishness there were far more British who became English, than Anglo-Saxons who moved into the West Midlands.

Dr Roey Sweet (Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester), had to contend with a pneumatic drill for part of her discourse on 'Reform and renewal in urban government before 1835', and did so with aplomb. Sceptical of those who swallow whole the Whig orthodoxy of unregenerate and corrupt oligarchies holding sway in town government before the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, Dr Sweet went on to speculate on the kind of reforms that might have been made had they not been imposed from above. Taking Oxford as her principal exemplar she detailed examples of 'vitality and potential' for self improvement displayed by its unreformed corporation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Acknowledging that only a small inner group of the hundred or so members of the Common Council (elected by approximately 1,000 freemen of the city) were the real power brokers, she nevertheless gave them credit for an urban

renascence that began in the 1770s after a period of financial mismanagement. Dr Sweet indicated that the Corporation's effectiveness was often superior to that of the somewhat more democratically appointed officers of town improvement commissions (some of whose most conscientious members were from the Corporation); she also found little evidence of corruption amongst the senior members of the ruling clique, in which bankers played a prominent part. The generally good relationship that existed between town and gown was seen as indicative of good management of a kind that the University found to be more accomodating than that of the paving, lighting and market commissioners with whom it had frequent quarrels.

In conclusion Dr Sweet expressed the view that had the 1835 Act not been passed (although the raising of revenue through rates would have been a problem), self-generated reforms, particularly in relation to greater involvement of the whole electoral body, would have continued, as members of the Corporation would have been increasingly vulnerable to challenge had evolutionary progress not been made. She also indicated that in Oxford at least, no great improvement followed the Act, as spending decreased and politics became more divisive.

Dr Dennis Mills (Open University) gave a fascinating account of the ramification of 'The Sibthorps of Canwick Hall, Lincoln, and their estates in four counties, *c.* 1716–1940'. From being yeomen farmers *c.* 1500 (and probably before that a peasant family from the village of Sibthorpe in Nottinghamshire), the Sibthorps, perhaps somewhat less than systematically, and largely through the process of marriage with members of manorial and merchant families, acquired 'greater gentry' status by the early eighteenth century. Their estates, mainly in Lincolnshire, but also in Nottinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire and Devon, totalled some 11,000 acres at the peak of their fortunes in the early nineteenth century. At this time they rebuilt Canwick Hall which remained the family centre, although other houses, more or less great, were also bought or inherited between 1757, when they acquired a small manor house on their Devonshire estate of Instow, and 1914 when they purchased the last of several properties in Canwick. They affected the morphology and social life of this village considerably, for instance, by the demolition of cottage dwellings and the eradication of the only inn. In a 'tabloid history' Dr Mills provided vignettes of successive heads of the family who, from the early eighteenth century onwards, included several MPs for the city of Lincoln, wealthy London merchants, lawyers, two Oxford professors of botany (father and son; the first only gave one lecture, but the second produced *Flora Graeca*), and several military men including the reactionary MP, Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo-Sibthorp who fought a duel in 1824.

Drawing upon the recollections of his father, who had worked for the family, Dr Mills suggested that the latter day Sibthorps who oversaw the decline of the estate, by selling land and property (in spite of the aberrational extension of Canwick Hall in 1913), had been the heirs of a family which had been 'remarkably lucky over a long period, possibly mean, and probably incompetent'. In spite of this they were remembered by some as being considerate and even generous in the treatment of their servants.

Dr Mills, who grew up in Canwick and still lives close by, was supported by his wife who had shared in the research and had much more to tell in a well illustrated account which drew a number of questions about the social relations, estate management and religious affiliations of the Sibthorp dynasty, from an appreciative audience.

Dr Brian Short (School of Cultural and Community Studies, University of Sussex). In introducing Dr Short, who was making a welcome return to the department, Charles Phythian-Adams in his customary detailing of the speaker's *oeuvre* pointed out that the day's title, 'A Domesday of English farming - The National Farm Survey 1941–43' was that of his latest book. Dr Short explained that the title was apt because The National Farm Survey gives a complete insight into what was happening in the countryside at a particular point in time in the same way as its illustrious precursor. The period covered by the survey was the only time since 1886 that full details were completed in the 4th June returns.

Based on experience gained during

the 1914–18 war, the Ministry of Agriculture was able to set up a national system which, in 1941, required every farm of more than five acres to provide complete details of size, nature of crops produced, type of tenure, plant and equipment used, and management. Additional sections covered every aspect of farm life including total power consumption, infestations, pests, etc. The management section was completed by members of the local District Committee who graded the quality of management from A to C. Given the social attitudes of the time, those categorised as under-performing, whether from incompetence or force of circumstances, such as old age, felt stigmatised.

The survey enabled government to understand the nature of what was happening in the countryside and was a necessary preliminary to finding ways to increase total production from the land during the war. With the benefit of more than fifty years' hindsight, we are now able to look at some of the social implications arising from this time of total dedication to a national cause.

Thanking Dr Short for his interesting and informative talk Professor Phythian-Adams noted that this, the last seminar of the century, was the only one in his experience that had dealt with a subject solely referenced in that century.

Dr Jo Story (Department of History, University of Leicester), gave a fascinating account of early cross-channel diplomacy and power politics in 'Charlemagne and the Anglo-Saxons'. Using a succession of illuminating images she noted the eighth-century change in the Frankian style of kingship from that of Germanic warlord to Carolingian king emperor. During the eighth century the Franks lived up to their aggressive image by obtaining booty abroad to support their nobility at home, but in the pre-Viking age Britain escaped their depredations because of the Channel and the lack of naval capability. In spite of this Dr Story clearly saw that, in spite of the scant documentary record, Charlemagne exerted significant influence over his Anglo-Saxon neighbours, not only in terms of their own concepts of kingship, but also in respect of the dynamic relationships between the island kingdoms, their recalcitrant subjects, and the church in Rome. She illustrated her thesis by discussing three artefacts: the black marble epitaph to Pope Hadrian III (772–795) now high in the portico of St Peters; a richly produced manuscript of Northumbrian origin dating from *circa* 840, the *Vitae Liberensis*; and a late eighth-century drawing of King David slaying a clearly Saxon Goliath and being anointed by Samuel. In the case of the first of these she expounded upon the extreme rarity of such finely crafted black marble of this period; the possibility that it had been made in Francia and that Alcuin, the Northumbrian scholar at Charlemagne's court, was the author of the poetic elegy it carries. All of this, and in particular the use of black marble, she saw as being redolent of imperial pretensions – pretensions that were emphasised by Charlemagne's reluctance to provide Offa (who he saw as a lesser king) with 'the black stone' that he craved of him. In the *Vitae Liberensis* she pointed to two names – Karlus, i.e. Charlemagne himself, and Magenfrith, a Frankish name borne by Charlemagne's chancellor – and connected these with Charlemagne's sharing out of a treasure hoard won from the Huns, to the church and his *fideles* or faithful men. Dr Story believed that the recipients included the bishoprics of Canterbury, York and, probably, Lichfield, as well as Offa and the king of Northumbria, and strongly suggested that Charlemagne saw himself as having imperial responsibility in these places. The significance of the drawings of King David lay in the act of anointing which became part of the 'Carolingian repertoire' of kingship and perhaps led to the adoption of the practice by the Anglo-Saxons.

Dr Story went on to describe the various groups of Anglo-Saxons who sought, and found, refuge at Charlemagne's court. The disgruntled and dispossessed from the Mercian, Northumbrian and Kentish kingdoms (and probably Wessex too) all found shelter at Aachen and this suggested that amongst other motives (some of which at least displayed noble virtues worthy of an emperor) Charlemagne wished to limit the power of Mercia and the pretensions of Offa, its king.

Pat Orme (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester). Well known to many of her audience, in 'Piety, penitence and power: a glance at Warwickshire church monuments from 1450 – 1656', apart from much complex genealogy, Pat gave us a

privileged insight into her current research. Taking Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656) as her main source she explained that she was in the process of investigating the 197 churches and 498 monuments that were covered in this work. These included almost every conceivable form of memorial, from brasses to bells, as well as the tombs and wall monuments upon which she concentrated. Further insights into the nature of those immortalised (of both 'ancient' lineage and the *nouveau riches arrivistes*) had been obtained, wherever possible, by looking at their wills. Before discussing monuments from her core period she could not help but refer to the tombs of the earls of Warwick, Thomas Beauchamp (d. 1369) buried in front of the high altar of St Mary's at Warwick and his son Thomas (d. 1401) and buried close by. But above all, she could not resist detailed reference to the tomb of Richard Beauchamp (d. 1439) in the chapel (built after his death between 1443 and 1464) which he planned to illustrate the magnificence of his life and lineage and the way in which he would be seen to be waiting for immortality. These memorials were seen to be redolent of a pre-Reformation style, the shift from which was summarised as a move from a prospect of eternity with surrounding angels and exhortations of the '*orate pro anima*' type, to a retrospective view of an individual, eulogised, life surrounded by secular *putti*. Heraldry illustrative of genealogy and, to some extent indications of a grieving family, were found throughout the period. Pat went on to describe the later memorials in the Beauchamp chapel and particularly that of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester (d. 1588) who had also specified, perhaps somewhat disingenuously, the way in which he should be memorialised while probably harbouring the hope that his queen might yet see him laid in even more splendid surroundings.

From Warwick, and amongst other churches, Pat took us to Charlecote and three tombs of the Lucy family which, in the space of 40 years, illustrated much of the change in fashion that occured over the 200 years punctuated by the Reformation. The Lucy tombs, of three successive Thomases of that ilk, nicely illustrated this range. Thomas I (d. 1600) is represented, with his wife, in an alabaster tomb chest which at first sight appears to be in a medieval style with kneeling children. Thomas II (d. 1605), spent more time at Highclere than Charlecote and his tomb, although said to be by a different craftsman, shows a marked resemblance to a table tomb there; it also illustrates the increasing influence of secular iconography with its classical columns and obelisks and is made remarkable by the enormous statue of his wife kneeling in grief by his recumbent effigy. Thomas III (d. 1640) and his wife are depicted in white and black marble in an uncompromisingly post-Reformation style; she is recumbent but he, behind and and above her, reclines in a relaxed and confident, outward-looking pose, while two panels show the classical tomes from his library and his Barbary roan horse. The individuality of the man and his life are further made plain by the accompanying and lengthy eulogy. Pat concluded her discourse by showing a selection of images of the various memorials she had described. All in all there was much of detailed interest in this seminar which inspired a number of questions about the changes in style and fashion that she had perceived.

Dr Michael Zell (School of Humanities, University of Greenwich) commenced a fascinating account of an early seventeenth-century entrepreneur by changing the advertised title of his paper to 'Setting the poor to work: Walter Morrell and his project to plant new work in Hatfield, Hertfordshire'. Morrell, originally of Devonshire stock, but a refugee in Hatfield from the plague of 1603 in London, was the originator of a scheme designed to address ongoing concerns about the cost of maintaining the poor in early Stuart England. Appalled at the Poor Rate in his adopted county, Morrell first addressed his proposals to the king in 1605, and eventually secured the patronage of Lord Chancellor Salisbury for a pilot scheme starting in 1608. In essence this was an arrangement whereby, instead of exporting plain white cloth to continental manufacturers, twenty young unemployed people would be trained to make up a variety of 'new draperies' - fine sayes, worsted stockings and perpetuanas - from the same quantity of basic woollen material that was currently exported and sold at a much lower price than the manufactured articles would, in theory, fetch. The beneficial social and economic

effects of such an arrangement would be to remove those so employed (at 3d per day something less than the agricultural wage) from the indigent poor, while adding significant value to the basic product. Although Salisbury died before the pilot scheme was completed his heir continued the support, even though, by 1611, difficulties were apparent, in that selected workers were slower to learn their appointed trade than had been expected. Such slow progress no doubt encouraged those - a majority of the gentry and yeoman classes - who opposed the proposals and declined their support. Some likened the scheme to those of the alchemists seeking to transform base metal into gold.

In spite of such scepticism, Morrell persisted with his petitioning and was successful insofar as the king again urged his officials to consider his proposals, and in 1615 the Chancellor referred them to officers of the Customs to whom Morrell addressed a detailed scheme for application throughout the kingdom. In 1616 the Privy Council approved an arrangement and required the Attorney General to draw up the requisite charter. This was duly granted, but by 1618 there was concern that this was not being implemented. This was largely due to the opposition of those who argued that the county's farmers had need of the flexible pool of labour represented by women and children, and for this reason were not prepared to invest in the enterprise by buying shares. Pressure from the Privy Council did bring some progress, although the Deputy Lord Lieutenant advanced reasons why the gentry felt unable to support the scheme and suggested instead a less ambitious arrangement to be centred on eight towns. However, this proposal also foundered and although Morrell's ideas continued to find favour at higher levels of government, with King James's death in 1625, in spite of county corporations for such manufactures being authorised by letters patent in that year, there is no evidence (so far) that these were anything but stillborn. Morrell, indefatigable as ever, petioned the crown again in 1631, pleading that in spite of royal support there had been little progress, but this failed to revive interest in his scheme. In 1632 a new House of Correction was built in Hertfordshire and further appeals for aid in support of the poor were being made.

Dr Zell suggested that the moral of Morrell's struggle for support and recognition was that no matter how weighty the backing received from the Court or national government, little could be achieved in the face of opposition from provincial polities. Morrell clearly had many influential contacts and yet researches so far have revealed little about the man himself, even the date of his death is obscure and it is not kown whether he died in 1635 or 1638.

In 'Patronage, piety and power in the medieval parish church: reading the imagery of Stanford on Avon, Northamptonshire', **Professor Richard Marks** (Research Department, Victoria and Albert Museum) gave a richly illustrated account of the remarkably complete, and newly restored, fourteenth-century stained glass of this handsome church. After a general introduction to the structure and furnishings he took us, window by window, through the sacramental, sacerdotal, heraldic and didactic imagery of the glass, and related this to the bases of power, parameters of belief and social structure, that it could indicate. Clearly Stanford is special in that its glass has survived (at the end of the seminar Lady Braye gave an account of why this is so), but Professor Marks, while advancing reasons for the 'explosion' of coloured glass in the early fourteenth century (replacing the grisaille of the earlier period), was less clear as to whether this was typical of other well-endowed and connected parish churches. Instancing the 1215 Lateran Council as influential in a movement to bring the saints in comprehensible form to the laity, as models and patterns, he went on to give potent reasons why the Stanford glass may have been exceptional. Firstly, Stanford itself was in the long-term possession of Selby Abbey and in the early fourteenth-century was still held in demesne. As such it was an important staging post for the monks journeying between Selby and business in London, Oxford and Northampton. Secondly, its rectors of this period were particularly well-connected (including at least one kinsman of the Abbot of Selby) and representative of the great and the good. One of these - John de Winwick - was a known devotee of St Anne and John the Baptist, both of whom are represented in the

glass.

The chancel glass, and that at the east end of the aisles, is mainly devoted to sacramental and sacerdotal images including those of St Peter and the other apostles and evangelists, the lactating Virgin in the east window, and scenes of the crucifixion at the end of the aisle. The secular interest in the upper parts of windows is to be found in the heraldry, relating to some of the most powerful families in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, their association with the saints evoking associations of power with sanctity as part of the natural order, and also being solicitous of prayer for their eternal souls. The glass of the nave consists principally of iconic single images of bishops, abbots and figures of saints, including that model of medieval motherhood - St Anne teaching the Virgin to read. Also in the nave are other moralising subjects - women tempted by devils to gossip in church, and - a fragment only - of the fable of the fox preaching false doctrine to the geese. In the north window there are juxtaposed scenes exemplifying the redemptive power of the Crucifixion at the Last Judgement. Notable amongst all this richly coloured glass were the small beasts and hybrid creatures, beautifully wrought, which are perhaps indicative of a fusion between the older world of pagan belief and Christianity or, more simply, of the unity of natural and supernatural worlds in a system of belief which it is now difficult to comprehend.

Dr Marks went on to speculate about the original audience for all this imagery in a village where there was no resident lord. He instanced the ecclesiastical hierarchy of clerks and monks who would have identified with the resonances of power and authority portrayed. Then the larger group - the local peasantry - who, in addition to being reminded of their moral and social obligations, would perhaps have been conditioned thereby to see a natural association between celestial powers and temporal authority, part of a natural order, to the higher ranks of which they could not aspire. Just how all this magnificence and didacticism was received by the ordinary people we cannot tell, but Dr Marks suggested that tensions and polarities may be more imagined than real and that individual responses would have varied widely.

Time was too short, unfortunately, for Dr Marks to move on to describe the sixteenth-century glass, inserted when the Cave family possessed what had reduced from a reasonably large and thriving village of the fourteenth century to a much shrunken community. Perhaps he might be persuaded to return for the sequel!

Alan Fox (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester) was the second research student from the department to contribute to this term's seminar programme. In 'A boundary between cultural provinces? The border area between Leicestershire and Kesteven in the eighteenth century', he gave an admirably structured exposition of his search for a social, economic and cultural divide along a short section of the county boundary which closely, but not exactly, follows the watershed between the putative cultural provinces defined by the Trent and Witham drainage basins. He gave a preliminary account of the area and his focus group of fourteen parishes lying on either side of the border between the market towns of Melton Mowbray and Grantham, and went on to describe the sources he had used in order to discern evidence (or lack of evidence) of links between the two areas. Parish registers, bishops' transcripts, marriage licences, probate records, monumental inscriptions and Poor Law documents had all been used to compile a still-growing database of some 30,000 records which was a major tool of his research. The topography of the area was described as including a variety of quasi *pays* surrounding that of the Lincolnshire limestone heathland, which was at the heart of his focus group around the low Jurassic escarpment of the watershed. These ranged from the boulder clays intersected by the Wreake valley on the Leicestershire side of the border and the headwaters of the Witham in Lincolnshire; the Vale of Belvoir; and areas of marlstone which had led to some variation in the choice of building materials. The importance of roads in the history of the area was emphasised. These included the ancient routes of the Jurassic Way, Sewstern Lane and the Saltway, as well as the Great North Road and other turnpikes of later periods. The Viking domination of the whole area under the 'five boroughs' was touched

upon, as was the abbey at Croxton Kerrial in the fourteenth century when it was a major wool producer in a then predominantly pastoral area.

Unfortunately, time was too short for certain aspects of the research to be described, but much of interest was illustrated through maps and charts illustrating the demography of the area; the distribution of 'open' and 'close' villages; land use; marriage horizons by way of 'desire lines'; carriers' routes (showing *inter alia* that Grantham market exercised a stronger cross-border pull than Melton Mowbray's); and the progression of enclosure. Alan's work on family reconstitution was the principal element that he had to leave out from his discourse, except to say that painstaking work on the village of Saltby had so far revealed little that was germane to his research.

Conclusions, drawn from the work so far, were indicative of some border influence on societal and economic patterns and of a cultural barrier which existed to some degree. This was most clearly indicated by the 'isopleth' chart, which showed a rapid decline of Leicestershire influence on marriage partners as the boundary was approached from the west. Also theoretical studies of the 'population potential' suggested that there should have been more cross-border marriages than did in fact occur. Bond persons, who stood surety in connection with marriage licences, and probate administrators were strongly resident in the same county as the marriage partners and deceased persons respectively. Alan's delivery was nicely punctuated by his dry humour and he drew a laugh from his audience when he speculated upon what the travellers (owners of several intimidating dogs) encamped on Sewstern Lane, would have made of his quest for a cultural frontier.

A number of questions ensued which involved discussion of the nature of cultural provinces; the attraction of the centre, for example Leicester, as opposed to the barrier of the border; and the difficulty of attempts to prove a negative.

Dr Geoff Brandwood, well known to many members of the Department by virtue of his many publications on church and other architecture (including *The Buildings of England* series in association with Nikolaus Pevsner), gave the last seminar of the season in '"A Church as it should be" – the rise and triumph of ecclesiology in early Victorian Leicestershire'. Doubts about which of two possible meanings of ecclesiology were to be the main burden of his talk were soon dispelled as he immediately displayed images of the interior of St Denys' church at Ibstock before and after restoration in the 1880s, by his 'hero', the Leicester architect Joseph Goddard. The change from an untidy, homely, if somewhat uncared for, church in 1840 to a recreated Gothic interior was remarkable, and Dr Brandwood went on to instance the typical alterations that the Victorian restorers wrought; the removal of wall plaster; resiting of the pulpit from a central to off-centre position; the replacement of latter-day fenestration by medieval forms; the removal of box pews and other reseating; and, often, the dismantling of western galleries. He referred to the paradox of the richest and most technically advanced country of the day, harking back to building styles of the Middle Ages and related the movement to two main influences. First, that of A.W. Pugin and his polemical book *Contrasts* which contrasted 'pagan' and degenerate architecture and industrial townscapes with a Christian and Catholic vision of the Middle Ages. Second, the Cambridge based Camden Society and its journal *The Ecclesiologist* which, like Pugin, was concerned to see that Christian worship should take place in settings inspired by the perceived heroic heritage of a noble, and free, Gothic past. This was a persistent feeling which manifested itself in, for instance, seventeenth-century Oxbridge college building, the Temple of Liberty at Stowe (1741) and the advent of the Gothic novel such as *The Castle of Otranto* (1764).

Although Dr Brandwood pointed out that Leicestershire churches were relatively late to
succumb to the change in fashion, and were never in the forefront of the ecclesiological movement, being less susceptible to high-church Anglo-Catholic influences, he was nevertheless able to give his audience many illuminating examples from the county. Using the pre-ecclesiological interior of Kings Norton church (as opposed to its very early neo-Gothic exterior) with its box pews, three-decker central pulpit and western

gallery as an example of what was, he showed us the churches of Gilmorton (before and after again); Norton juxta Twycross, perhaps the earliest Leicestershire example; Anstey, remodelled by a skilful local builder who also acted as architect; Wymeswold where the major restoration was carried out by Pugin himself; Smeeton Westerby which, with its separate articulation of parts, gained the approval of *The Ecclesiologist* - a distinction not easily obtained from an organ that named and shamed some architects; and Little Dalby, very correctly medieval with a particularly fine arch-braced roof. He also touched upon completely new churches of the period, almost invariably built in the Gothic style, such as St John the Divine in Leicester, and one - Ashwell in Rutland - where the architect, William Butterfield, showed originality in breaking away from mere medieval 'copyism'. He concluded his talk with another 'before and after' case at Great Bowden, where a late restoration took place in 1887.

The subsequent question and answer session was indicative of the considerable interest aroused by this seminar which marked a fitting end to another successful seminar season.

DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS 1999

Staff

H.S.A. Fox

'Medieval farming and rural settlement', in R. Kain and W. Ravenhill, eds, *Historical Atlas of South-West England* (1999), pp. 273-80 and 551-2.

'Medieval rural industry', *ibid.*, 322-9 and 553-5.

'Medieval urban development', *ibid.*, 400-7, 557-42.

'The "Leicester School" in the South-West' (with summaries of papers, by C. Thornton, T. Hall and H. Fox, given under that title at the Leeds International Medieval Congress, 1998), *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report*, 13 (1998).

G.R. Jones

'Authority, challenge and identity in three Gloucestershire saints', in D. Mowbray, R. Purdie, and I.P. Wei, eds, *Authority and Community in the Middle Ages* (1999), pp. 117-37.

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'Lamps, lights and lay folk: "popular" devotion before the Black Death', *Journal of Medieval History* 25 (1999), pp. 97-114.

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Reviews of J. Hudson, ed., *The History of English Law: Centenary Essays on "Pollock and Maitland"* (1996); A. Musson, *Public Order and Law Enforcement: The Local Administration of Justice 1294-1350* (1996); J. Hudson, *The Formation of English Common Law: Law and Society in England from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta* (1996); all in *Continuity and Change* 14 (1999), pp. 285-8.

ed. (with O.J. Padel, C. Hough, J. Freeman, K. Muhr and V. Smart), *Nomina* 22 (1999), 192 pp.

K.D.M. Snell

'The Sunday-School movement in England and Wales: child labour, denominational control and working-class culture', *Past and Present*, 164 (1999), pp. 122-68.

Review of W.M. Jacob, *Lay People and Religion in the Early Eighteenth Century* (1996), in *The Local Historian*, 29:2 (May 1999), pp. 116-7.

Review of J.D. Martin, ed., *The Account Book of Clement Taylor of Finsthwaite, 1712-1753* (1997), in *Economic History Review*, 52:3 (1999), p. 575.

ed. (with L. Bellamy and T. Williamson) *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 10:1, 10:2 (1999), 125 & 140 pp.

M.G. Thompson

ed., *Friends of the Department of English Local History Newsletter* (1999), 31 pp.

DEPARTMENTAL PAPERS

H.S.A. Fox

'Settlements, fields and farming - some unanswered questions', Keynote address at University of Oxford Department for Continuing Education in conjunction with the Medieval Settlement Research Group (November, 1999).

'Villages and fields - some additional questions', Cambridge Antiquarian Society (March, 2000).

'David Hall and the open fields of Northamptonshire', Conference organised by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire entitled 'Through wet and dry: a celebration of 40 years of fieldwork for (sic) David Hall'.

G.R. Jones

'Was there a cult of St Boniface in England?', Annual Meeting of the Friends of All Saints, Brixworth.

C. Phythian-Adams

'The endowment of the North-East: a matter of frontiers', North-East England Historical Institute Conference, Gateshead (October, 1999).

'Provincial pasts and their periodization: the Early Modern dilemma', The Anne Mitson Memorial Lecture, University of Loughborough (May, 2000).

'Locating English pasts (1000-1600): the contextual travails of a provincial historian', Medieval Seminar, All Souls College, Oxford (May, 2000)

M.G. Thompson

'Prescription and practice in medieval dairying', Somerville College, Oxford (November, 1999).

RECENTLY COMPLETED THESES

Elizabeth Robinson-Pyne

'Rugby working women: choices and experiences 1920-1950'

This thesis is a study of working women in the town of Rugby, Warwickshire. It aims to 'track' the experiences of young females embarking on their first job and their subsequent lives via the oral testimony of Rugby inhabitants.

The oral evidence used has provided a unique resource. Over one hundred interviews were conducted in which the women concerned discussed their background, childhood and schooldays, starting work, employment experiences, finding a husband and their lives after marriage. Their testimony is used to create a 'cameo' of national experience during the period and poses questions as to how young Rugby girls were affected by national events.

First, the thesis concentrates on the question of 'choice' for girls upon leaving school against opportunities offered in the town, and how a number of factors influenced their decisions when seeking employment for the first time; for example, parental influence, financial considerations and the prospects for further education and training.

Second, the future lives of the girls are explored by focusing on the ramifications of their choices and how important it was for them to have made the 'correct' decision. For example, different employers are discussed in relation to promotion, the skills training they provided, the differential earnings potential of factory and clerical work, and the possibility of finding a suitable marriage partner.

Lastly, the female 'powerbase' is discussed in relation to the home and workplace. The thesis suggests that married women found themselves in an ambiguous position of having moral authority and power in the home, whilst being unable to match this in the workplace.

Christopher Starr

'The Essex gentry 1381-1450'

The subject of this thesis is the gentry of Essex during the years 1381-1450, with particular reference to their lifestyle.

The thesis may be divided into seven sections. The first puts the gentry into context; it discusses the history, geology, geography, economy and population of the county and the effect that landscapes or *pays* may have had on gentry societies. The following terms are devised to describe the county's topography: Essex Highlands, Lowlands, Heathlands and Marshlands. The second section deals with the origins and development of the Essex gentry and employs the following terms to describe them: principal (regional), greater (county) and lesser (parish) gentry.

Section three considers the county community controversy and analyses the work of scholars who have worked in this field: it also describes the complex organisation of gentry communities within county society as a whole. The fourth

section is a case study that observes the career of Clement Spice and his entry into gentry society by means of a successful career as a lawyer.

Section five focuses on the home and religious life of the gentry with particular reference to Richard Baynard of Messing and the chantry tomb of Sir John Hawkwood of Sible Hedingham. The sixth section considers the wealth of the Essex gentry through an analysis of the subsidy of 1412; it also discusses the acquisition of wealth with reference to the Tyrell family of Heron Hall, East Horndon between *c.*1250 and *c.*1450. The conclusion attempts to describe the particularity of the Essex gentry and to focus on members of the gentry as individuals.

MA DISSERTATIONS FOR 1999–2000

Elizabeth Allan

'A Cambridgeshire parish – Bassingbourn 1487–1557: observations on the context and practice of piety'

This is a study of the bases of the context and practice of piety in a rural parish with some semi-urban attributes, in a marginal location. The evidence is derived from a near-complete set of churchwardens' accounts from the period 1497–1538, and from 51 wills dated between 1494–1557. Having established the context, a composite community calendar for the whole period is formulated, citing specifically only those items from the sources which have calendrical implications. What the wills suggest about individual piety is then considered, as is the community's support of pious practice recorded by the churchwardens.

Before 1520, a richly endowed material environment supported a rich cyclical pattern of socio-religious observances, influenced both by characteristics of a wider area and the status of Bassingbourn within it. This is reflected in detail by the churchwardens' accounts. The lesser detail of the records for the period of change attendant upon the Reformation, and in particular the reliance on wills alone after 1538, inhibits assessment of the overall impact of change. However, the wills throughout the period suggest a variety of ideology in their response, despite the evident need to appear to acknowledge the prevailing doctrine.

As it stands the work perhaps serves to raise questions. It answers few. A comparative evaluation of other local 'community signatures', as well as more work on sources relevant to this place, would enable further characterization of the structures of piety here.

Paula J. Adcock

'Economic and social developments in south-east Leicestershire in the late Middle Ages – the formation of a region around a developing town (Market Harborough)'

This study aims to discover and interpret the social and economic relationships existing and developing between settlements in south-east Leicestershire in the later Middle Ages. Using court rolls from three rural settlements, wills, poll tax returns and lay subsidies from the region, it attempts to determine the links that existed around the town of Market Harborough, how important these connections were to the peasant inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and how they used the framework these relationships created. There was a developing trade network that connected settlements across the region and these commercial activities, visible in the court presentments and wills, together with the taxable wealth evident from the poll taxes and lay subsidies, indicate a thriving exchange economy operating below the surface in the rural environment of the area, through both informal and formal chartered market trading associations.

The social relationships highlighted by the court rolls and wills reveal a functioning community, where business and leisure activities were not always amicable, but with seemingly little distinction between the free and unfree tenants who formed the base of the feudal hierarchy. The role of women in this society was also important; their involvement in social relations reveals their equality in their communities, both socially and economically, even if that equality was not quite mirrored by their legal standing.

The peasants were trading simple commodities in a commercial context on a local scale from which a regional network can be seen to have developed. The presence or absence of a formal market site in a particular settlement has little apparent

impact on the commercial enterprises of the inhabitants, but the exchange links evident within the society provide a context for the social relations which were present and which can reasonably be assumed to have existed across the region, despite a lack of documentary evidence.

Matthew Badcock
'Landownership, rents and tenures on Dartmoor, 1840 – 1910'

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw considerable changes in the structures and institutions of landownership. These took place against a backdrop of agricultural depression and an erosion of the traditional position of the aristocracy. Using the tithe surveys of the 1840s and the material produced by the Valuation Office survey of landownership of *c.*1910, the break-up of a great estate, the decline of the owner-occupier and the development of 'open' and 'closed' villages are considered within the bounds of three Dartmoor border parishes for the intervening period. These sources are supplemented by the rentals of the Courtenay estate in an analysis of rent arrears and land prices during the decades of depression. It is concluded that the consolidation of ownership in the hands of a number of small, local landowners came about as the result of a squeezing of smallholders. This was accompanied by a tenurial revolution in which freeholds for a term of a year or less replaced long leaseholds, allowing the landowner greater freedom to renegotiate rents according to economic conditions. Although many proprietors were burdened with significant rent arrears during the later nineteenth century, there is evidence to suggest that most continued to invest and improve their estates, primarily to preserve the traditional culture of deference. Purchases of land by *nouveaux riches* businessmen are also noted, and it is argued that their primary motivation for doing so was not economic but rather to benefit from the prestige attached to landownership.

Katherine Burrell
'Identity and integration: a study of the Polish community in Leicester'

Research into the Polish community in Leicester was chosen as a means of illustrating the experiences and development of a minority group in an urban environment. Although Leicester is famed for its ethnic diversity and the Asian communities in the city have attracted much interest, analysis of smaller European groups has often been neglected; this study aimed to prove, therefore, that attention to this type of immigrant community can also raise controversial contemporary and historical issues regarding national identity and integration.

In order to build an accurate portrayal of the community a range of diferent sources was consulted; quantitative evidence was found in the County Census Reports for Leicestershire, the *Leicester Mercury* archives library was accessed for the use of relevant newspaper articles, and oral history interviews were held with those belonging to the community, enabling the study to take a more in-depth and personalised viewpoint.

The research revealed that ethnic Poles use the institutions of their community to preserve their national identity, and encourage the younger generations to do the same. Despite the obvious strength of the group it was discovered that within the circle there is a growing level of discord and disillusionment, and that the second and third generations are gradually moving away from the centre of the community. The group's integration into the wider sphere of its host society was also addressed. Although it is clear that at the moment the Poles seem to be peacefully accomodated in Leicester, maintaining a distinctive status while mixing easily with the rest of the city, it was concluded that not only was their initial settlement less amicable, but that due to age structure and the weakening commitment of the group, its long term future as an organised community does not look promising.

Christine Carpenter
'Rural transformation: cause and effect in the landscape evolution of Churchill and Blakedown since 1850'

Churchill and Blakedown were once described as 'companion' settlements, located between Kidderminster and the West Midlands conurbation, close to the northern periphery of Worcestershire. Their fate mirrored that of so many rural settlements in

the years that followed the Second World War as the decline in agricultural employment led to depopulation by traditional workers. The landscape acquired an increasingly suburban countenance as land and erstwhile cottages were commandeered for new development and modernisation enabled people employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors, unconnected with the land, to move in.

Using a variety of maps, census data, planning documents, written sources and fieldwork, this dissertation questions whether the switch to dormitory status was ever so monolithic or clear-cut. The manufacture of edge tools in Churchill and its neighbouring hamlet, Stakenbridge, provided almost as many mid nineteenth-century households with employment as did farming. When the railway arrived to serve Blakedown in 1852, it prompted the establishment of short-lived glassworks and then a successful export-dependent iron-working industry. Both industrial enterprises were driven by the energy potential of a number of pools, dammed many centuries before, and thrived at a time when rural metalworking is generally considered to have ceased or to have been in serious decline.

The reluctance of a handful of Victorian landowners to sell land for development meant that comparatively few houses were actually built in Blakedown; Churchill retained its rural countenance until well after one of these businesses had ceased to operate. Only in the years following the First World War, after some of the key players had changed, did serious development take place, of a kind that catered for affluent industrialists from the Black Country. Post-1945 suburbanisation merely amplified a trend that had begun many years before.

Jon-Paul Carr
'The working world: Irchester in Northamptonshire, 1841-1891'

This dissertation is a study of a land-locked parish in the heart of England between the census years of 1841 and 1891. The parish of Irchester has within its boundaries a long-renowned Roman town on the site of the deserted medieval hamlet of Chester-on-the-Water. Also in the parish is the estate hamlet of Knuston, Little Irchester, a small hamlet which developed during the study period due to the establishment of a railway line through the parish, and Ditchford, a very small hamlet which is partly in a neighbouring parish.

The study focuses on employment trends and the impact that agriculture, iron ore extraction, footwear manufacture, transport links and the dawning of the new industrial age generally, had on these communities. The areas of study are placed within the landscape context of the parish and its surrounding area. The nearby market and industrial town of Wellingborough, the industrial town of Rushden, and in some cases the wider world are brought into the discussion.

In addition to the census returns, other primary sources including trade directories, estate maps, newspapers and school log books, were also studied to establish how the various classes, the common working man, the landed gentry and businessmen, were affected by the 'World of Work'. Children employed in agriculture, farmers and estate owners, railway workers, miners of iron ore, and shoemakers all featured in the development of this semi-rural/semi urban parish.

Audrey Godfrey
'Industry and class: a study of two Leicestershire villages 1850-1900'

It is generally accepted that the second half of the nineteenth century saw a population explosion, and that this was accompanied by a massive movement from country to town. However, this latter phenomenon was not true of the country village population of Enderby, and its companion village of Narborough, which also retained its numbers although its economy and culture underwent a major change.

The two villages lie on the River Soar and the Fosse Way passes through both parishes. Enderby was built upon an outcrop of granite and Narborough enjoys fine views over the valley; these attributes were exploited by both villages over the second half of the nineteenth century. In the 1851 census around half the working population were engaged in the frame-work knitting industry, and the reports to the Enquiry into the condition of these workers of 1845 tells of the hardships they suffered. The 1881 census reveals fundamental

changes in the nature of the village industries and their organisation. Greater trade brought greater traffic on the roads and so the demand for roadstone from Enderby's quarries multiplied. The boot and shoe industry and associated elastic web manufacture brought greater prosperity to both communities. From the beginning of the century Narborough was attracting successful entrepreneurs and professional men to build desirable residences in a setting of rural England. The railways came to carry people and freight. Village poverty was relieved by a more sensitive application of the New Poor Law in the countryside, and by some philanthropic assistance. This was a Nonconformist stronghold, encouraging evangelism at home and abroad. In the social hierarchy skilled workers were beginning to constitute a working class elite, and there were more 'captains of industry' in the growing middle class in 1900 than in 1850s. By the later date Enderby had become an industrial village whilst Narborough was increasingly a detached, early suburb of Leicester.

John Haden
'Church wall paintings'

This study propounds the view that it is through the visual culture of ecclesiastical mural art that we can know about the shifting patterns of religious practice. It argues that this can be illustrated by the simplistic rendering of fundamental Christian belief, the imagined illustrations of medieval times, and examples from the later Gothic revival.

The dissertation is concerned with the changing role of church wall paintings, pointing out that in the seventh century Bede's approach to such was one of didactic justification. His writing is held to be of interest because it hints as to how wall paintings were to be regarded in a contemplative manner as an aid to a greater understanding of the Divine. The research drew upon the work of Professor Tristram's *English Wall Paintings of the Twelfth Century* in which he describes the symbolism of wall paintings in different parts of the church, and how these were intended to be viewed by medieval congregations.

The study also considers the possible use of church wall paintings as backdrops forming scenery for miracle plays or liturgical dramas. The way that images, including wall paintings, were perceived during the Reformation period is considered, as are the causes and effects of the nineteenth-century Anglican revival and the reintroduction of wall painting in the newly-built churches inspired by the Oxford Movement and Cambridge-led ecclesiologists.

Nicholas Harden
'Living stones, living water: a study of the siting of churches in southern Warwickshire'

This dissertation aims to place the siting of churches in a landscape context, and to examine the influences that acted upon decisions to site a church in a particular location. Twenty-five churches were examined in an area of southern Warwickshire covering the middle Avon, Stour and Dene valleys. The study considered the impact of four important areas, topography (including water, relief, altitude and geology), administration of land and territory, roads and early settlement, on the siting of the churches. Fieldwork was undertaken and maps, geological plans, Sites and Monuments Records, and evidence appearing in secondary sources, were used.

Analysis of results revealed the importance of water, settlement, and manorial and central places on siting. Water emerged as a primary influence with riverside sites predominating over smaller streams, and the rivers Avon and Stour producing higher levels of frequency than the Dene. The juxtaposition of church and settlement was revealed, there being no instances of churches not, at least at one time, in close proximity to the settlement. A large majority of the churches were also associated with manorial centres. Influences of early settlement (Roman or Migration Period), early cemeteries or pagan sites were not demonstrated. A small number of larger churches appeared to be associated with river crossings; elsewhere churches were placed at a distance from through routes.

The development of the local church within the area surveyed can be seen to be associated with the manorialisation and growth of nucleated settlements in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The needs and aspirations of local lords of the manor and village populations can be seen as far

more influential on siting than historical considerations or continuity from earlier periods.

Lee Humber
'The health and safety of women workers in munitions factories during the First World War'

This study is based upon data obtained from a variety of national and local government reports which set the social and industrial context for women workers during the First World War. It focusses particularly on the lot of factory women in the Lea Valley (Enfield) district of north-east London but also includes relevant data relating to men and boys in the munitions industry.

The introduction describes the legislative and political background of the nineteenth-century Factory Acts and the establishment of the Factory Inspectorate. A number of examples are then given of the industrial diseases and accidents that continued to commonly occur in spite of these measures. The impetus given by the war to an enhanced role for the Inspectorate, the growing importance of trade unions and the Labour Party, and the growth of regulatory machinery, are each discussed. Detailed descriptions are given of hazards peculiar to the munitions industry.

The dissertation goes on to consider the wider social and moral issues perceived to be attendant upon the employment of women and gives a commentary upon comparative statistical data (as between men and women workers) provided in a series of tables. The study concludes that 'in terms of the health and safety afforded to the millions of new and experienced workers ... [in] ... the munitions plants over the period it is plain that despite the well meaning reports, provision and protection were woefully inadequate'.

Barry Johnson
'The General Strike in the Mansfield area 1926'

This dissertation follows the recent discovery of the minute books of the Mansfield Trades and Labour Council together with other associated documents. One of these is the day book or log of the Central Strike Committee which was formed during the General Strike of 1926. Using these documents together with the local newspapers, papers in the TUC archives, the PRO, local record offices and some personal recollections, an attempt is made to assess the impact of the strike on these North Nottinghamshire mining communities as it happened and, in the medium to longer term. Throughout it is borne in mind that the strike was but one element in continuing disputation in the mining industry between the two world wars. The balance of forces between the government agencies and the strikers are examined, as are their relative, and developing, strengths and weaknesses.

Since the nine days of the general strike were but part of a much longer dispute, consideration is given to some of the continuities and to fitting the shorter event into its context. The social, economic and political trauma of an event of this nature impacts directly on to people and the effects on some of the individuals involved are also examined.

Robert Lee
'"Midnight crimes and guilty consciences". Rural war in Norfolk 1815-1875: the search for a radical agenda'

This study opens with a working-class execution and closes with an expression of ruling-class complacency; its aim is to explore the background of rural unrest that lies between. Its particular concern is to look for signs of political radicalism amongst those who engaged in riot and incendiarism in the nineteenth-century countryside, and to see whether any threads of continuity can be traced that led into the later manifestations of Primitive Methodism and agricultural trade unionism. To do this a relatively narrow study area of 57 parishes just north of Norwich was selected for close scrutiny. Within the study area are 'open' and 'close' parishes; communities with and without Nonconformist congregations; villages which had active trade union branches; and, above all, some parishes which experienced unrest and some that did not. These are studied comparatively. Much documentary evidence is also considered, including private correspondence; newspaper reports, editorials and letters; court records; evidence to parliamentary committees; estate accounts; census returns; and Poor Law data, all of which yield clues to the social conditions that prevailed in both troubled

and untroubled parishes.

The *direct* proof found of links between unrest and political radicalism is slight, although enough evidence was gathered along the way to suggest that another type of study, perhaps genealogical in character, could yet succeed here. Powerful indicators are found, however, towards the presence of what might be termed a 'radical spirit' in certain communities, manifesting itself in a predisposition for those communities to become involved in rural unrest and religious nonconformity and trade union activism. With particular reference to local centres of economic and paternalistic power, the model of 'conformist' and 'nonconformist' parishes is suggested, a model which may help to explain the development of radical tendencies in communities of this kind.

Marilyn Lindley
'Land use and occupations in Ballidon and Brassington, Derbyshire, during the nineteenth century'

This dissertation is predominantly a landscape study of Ballidon and Brassington, two villages situated on the southern tip of the limestone White Peak in Derbyshire.

Ballidon suffered settlement shrinkage during the medieval period, and was fundamentally a close village, dependent upon agriculture. Brassington was a larger thriving lead-mining village, divided between two manors, possessing a wide range of services and trades. Buildings, constructed of local materials, reflected the economic structure in both villages, as well as the influence of lordship. Both villages possessed similar natural resources. A combination of landscape fieldwork and the use of a number of primary sources, are employed to illustrate how the land of the parishes has been utilised both agriculturally and industrially. Typically, changing field patterns and the advent of outlying farms were a response to economic demands, this being more obvious in Brassington, and mineral resources, principally lead, were not exploited equally, making only a minor contribution to Ballidon's economy.

Communication and trade routes are studied, particularly trackways between villages. These suggest that Ballidon's lack of amenities was made good by Parwich rather than Brassington, which itself appeared fairly self-sufficient. These trackways utilized the landscape rather than intruding upon it, as the Cromford and High Peak Railway eventually did. The effect of this line on the landscape and as a stimulant to trade, industry and employment are considered.

Finally, analysis of population census returns for both villages is used to demonstrate their occupational structures, and also to give an indication of decline in both agriculture and the Derbyshire lead industry. The conclusion is that Ballidon, dependent upon agriculture altered very little until the end of the century, whereas Brassington, although seemingly better disposed to respond to fluctuating economic forces, had begun a decline that continued into the twentieth century.

Richard Merriman
'The use of Swithland slate gravestones and their engravers'

This dissertation attempts to discover the extent and use of Swithland slate in gravestone form from its first appearance in the second half of the seventeenth century to its demise in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Further, it estimates the early growth in the number of engravers and slates used, and seeks to examine the reasons for the eventual end of the industry. In order to do this the slate gravestones of 71 parish churches in north Leicestershire and south Nottinghamshire, which have part or all of their parish within a seven mile radius of the Leicestershire village of Wymeswold, have been analysed. Wymeswold was chosen as it was the home of William Charles, probably the finest engraver of Swithland slate and the individual who set the standards by which others would be judged. His work is examined in detail; possibly the first time that an individual engraver has been the subject of such scrutiny. In addition the prodigious output of his apprentice and son-in-law, John Winfield and his heirs, is also considered.

The research has enabled an examination of the trading patterns of engravers and establishment of their spheres of influence. In addition it has provided a new way of discovering the

extent of the influence of the region's three largest cities, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, over their combined population.

Jane Murray
'New Forest marlpits and the right of common of marl'

This dissertation offers a regional study of the marlpits in the New Forest where, because of its peculiar legal status as a royal forest, marling, as a right of common, was carried out from time immemorial to improve its poor, thin acid soils.

A brief overview, derived mainly from secondary sources, of the history of marling is provided. The digging and spreading of marl or chalk was an ancient and widespread practice known in Roman and medieval times and played an important role in the improved farming of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The practice was then abandoned and replaced by cheap, easily transportable lime, and the new artificial fertilisers. Some of the techniques, social history and folklore associated with marling are also considered.

An account of the right of common of marl in the agricultural economy of the New Forest is then given. This concentrates on the nineteenth century, and considers the ideas of contemporary writers when it was believed that the New Forest would be disafforested. Numerous parliamentary select committees, and a Royal Commission, also considered this matter and the evidence put before them has been extensively studied. In the event, disafforestation did not occur and both the Forest and its commoners received the protection of the New Forest Act of 1877. Ironically, as the right of common of marl was enshrined with statutory protection, the practice of marling lapsed in the face of other agricultural improvements and, to double the irony, simply because the New Forest continued to survive.

The exercise of the right of common of marl is now just a memory and most of the marlpits are barely recognisable as they have become overgrown with trees and shrubs, or have been flooded, in the decades since they were abandoned. A number of marlpits have been catalogued in the dissertation, through their location on old maps and by some fieldwork, and some of their general features and characteristics have been identified. It is hoped that this will help to restore them as valuable landscape features of the Forest.

Catherine Robinson
'The smock: a garment of distinction'

This dissertation brings together a combination of secondary sources and the practical examination of seventeen smocks, in order to trace the rise and demise of the smock as a popular working garment, and to discuss the factors that made it unique.

The paper is written in three sections. The first two argue that the smock is unique because, as a male garment, it was not only extremely practical with, for example, features such as gathered material facilitating movement, and reversible 'round smocks' extending the life of the smock, but was also made to be pleasing to the eye. The addition of creative embroidery on the panels on either side of the smocking, on collars and cuffs, and most prominently on the front and back of the garment, is presented as evidence of this. Although decorative, this stitching was itself essentially practical as it protected the material, at specific stress-points, from wear and tear.

The third section of the paper advances the view that these factors, which gave the smock such a strong identity with the countryside, eventually brought about its demise. This fall from favour occurred during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as the smock was pitched against, and lost out to, more anonymous machine-made urban fashions of the emerging working class.

Rosie Roden
'The role of the public house in the development of social and cultural tradition amongst the urban poor in industrial Manchester, 1830–1900'

Manchester was a city whose population grew from 180,000 to 500,000 over sixty years from 1831 to 1891, with a large majority of this population being made up of the urban poor. The growth of the public house is linked with this growth, the common assumption being that the urban poor could find no outlet for expressing their cultural energy other than to descend into drunkenness. However, this study outlines the complex nature of the relationship

between the city's poor and its public houses, in that although the population continued to rise, the number of public houses did not. Questions, therefore, arise as to what changes occurred to this urban population to lead them away from an initial insobriety towards the development of a distinct culture, and as to what role the public house played in this development.

Using data from the Manchester directories and contemporary accounts, plus anecdotal evidence from the turn of the century, this study aims to outline the varied uses of the public house apart from the consumption of alcohol. These uses include the public house as a meeting place; as an informal labour exchange; and as the centre of the developing political radicalism of the urban poor. The study also discusses the opposition to the public house by the middle classes and the more complex reasons behind this opposition, other than the widely accepted view that intemperance was morally wrong.

The study concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century, the urban poor of Manchester had developed a culture and society, which in some ways still centred around the public house, but in other ways had evolved beyond the confines of the vaults.

Beryl Tracey
'"Discord among the Ratepayers": the story of the installation of a piped water supply and drainage system in the district of Market Harborough, Leicestershire'

The provision of a 'wholesome' public water supply was for long ages the concern and responsibility of the local administrators of a community until the latter half of the twentieth century. The water available has always depended on the underlying geology and terrain. This has led to different solutions in different places and at different times, from simple wells to obtain groundwater, to huge dammed upland catchments and ingenious systems for pumping river water. The capital costs of providing a communal water supply determined the developments in waterworks engineering. The crisis in water supply and drainage, which occurred in the nineteenth century, was brought about by overcrowding in towns and the consequent gross pollution of both ground and surface waters. Government legislation attempted to facilitate solutions to these problems within the local government framework. Records kept by local parish vestries and Poor Law unions omit many aspects of their activities in this field, but central government departments have records of their correspondence with them in which the attitudes of these elected bodies are revealed to be complex and divided. The reluctant relinquishing of most decision-making to the rising bodies of professional Public Health engineers and Public Analysts did not occur without considerable conflict.

In this study of a small community and its 40-year battle to achieve a clean water supply and 'proper drains', these conflicts are not only shown to have engendered considerable bitterness, but also a great deal of determination and persistence of the desire for improvement.

STAFF DISTINCTIONS

Congratulations to **Harold Fox** on the award of a two-year British Academy Research Readership. This was one of only fourteen awarded out of a field of 127 applicants in 1999. The award was originally meant to be taken up in October 2000, but because of the delay in appointing a new head of department, the start is now deferred until January 2001. Harold intends to use the readership to address a number of key issues relating to medieval settlement and society in Devon (500-1500) which should be of interest and use to a wide range of medieval and landscape historians and also to the general public. The results will be embodied in a monograph which will address the two-way relationship between places and the people living in them.

Our congratulations also go to **Charles Phythian-Adams** in respect of the grant of Leverhulme Trust funding to support fieldwork undertaken towards the preparation of a major work - the first-ever systematic history of provincial England between 410 and 2000, which has been contracted with the Oxford University Press.

STAFF CHANGES

C. Phythian-Adams
Following the end of his teaching contract Charles has been appointed as a University Fellow for a two-year term from September

2000 and we are therefore delighted that we shall continue to benefit from his presence in Marc Fitch House.

G.R. Jones

Consequent upon Harold's forthcoming British Academy Readership (reported above), Graham will be making a welcome return to the department as a lecturer for a two-year term commencing in January 2001.

P. Lane

Penny Lane joined the department in August as a Research Associate. She brings with her a significant award from the British Cotton Growing Association for research into the demographic, economic and social impact of the cotton factory system on its workforce in midland and northern England from *c.*1770 to 1830. The major outcome of this project will be a monograph provisionally entitled: 'Women's Work, Welfare and the Cotton Industry during the Industrial Revolution'.

K. Smith and **M.G. Thompson** have both been re-appointed as Honorary Visiting Fellows for further terms of two years from September 2000.

VISITORS TO THE DEPARTMENT

On December 10th 1999 the department was delighted to welcome Dr Michael Clanchy (University of London) to a buffet lunch, following which he gave a talk entitled 'Who was literate in the fifteenth century?'. He began with a discussion of what was meant by 'literate', and gave everyone a hand-out he had prepared with quotations and definitions from a wide variety of historians together with a series of seven questions one could ask about what the evidence is for literacy, how widespread it was and what the regional variations were. Then he told us that that was not really what he was going to discuss in the course of his seminar!

His work had led him to consider the way in which literacy (however defined) was transmitted in the Middle Ages. He had become increasingly interested in the role of mothers teaching their children and had been commissioned by Reaktion Books to write a book on the subject. Whilst admitting that the evidence is somewhat scant, he contended that during the later Middle Ages visual images of reading, and learning to read, became increasingly feminised, suggesting that women were more literate and played a greater part in the transmission of literacy. He showed many slides of paintings of St Anne teaching the Virgin, and of the Virgin and Child with books, emphasising that these images became more popular during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. He also showed sculptural images of *Grammatica*, all female, some fierce and didactic, but others more gentle, such as one encouraging two boys with their alphabet books. He used these as tentative evidence of increased maternal involvement with the teaching of children at home. Especially interesting were Scandinavian images of the Virgin taking the Christ Child to school, in which she was shown as an ordinary woman carrying his lunch basket. It was suggested that this detail must relate to reality and was not just an iconographic tradition.

It was an interesting paper, with illustrations from a wide range of sources, but the thesis did not convince everyone. There followed a very lively discussion, with Dr Clanchy admittting, with good grace, that he was perhaps stretching the evidence a little far.

Sylvia Pinches

The third visit to Leicester in recent years of Professor Paul Hyams (Cornell University) again drew a learned audience to hear his paper on 'Homage, submission, peace-making and lordship'. Introduced by his host, Dave Postles, to whom he later made an act of obeisance in illustration of his thesis, he went on to question the generally accepted meaning of acts of homage and, thereby, the very nature of twelfth and thirteenth-century feudalism.

He drew largely upon an agreement made in the latter half of the twelfth century between Laurence the clerk of Stanstead Abbots, and a named knight plus forty unnamed knights, all of whom Professor Hyams perceived to have paid homage to Laurence. He argued that this was not the conventional act of homage because there was no mention of land grants or subsequent lordship. It was rather an example of *homagium de pace conservanda*, and as such pointed towards the role of homage in the ending of feud between individuals who, in some respects, might be seen as equals rather than as lord and vassal.

This view did not go entirely unchallenged by an audience keenly interested in his thesis and stimulated by

his use of analogy and imagery. During the questions that followed his presentation he conceded that we could not escape from the generally held concepts of feudalism if only because of historical perceptions (influenced by medieval jurists) and the historiography of the subject.
Mike Thompson

GIFTS TO THE MAP ROOM AND LIBRARY
As always our grateful thanks go to all those who have given books or other material to the department's library and map-room collections in the last twelve months. They include: M. Brown,
J. Clarke, D. Ferns, J. Ferry, G. Forster,
A. Fox & J. Luke, H. Fox, Friends of ELH, K. Hawker, T. Hill, I. Lemco, J. Lovell, E. Pegg, S. Phillips, D. Postles, L. Pye, the family of Tony Rollings, A. Rowe, P.G. Scott, P. Stokes, C. Swainson, A. and D. Thompson, J. Tomkins, M. Tranter, G. Wolfe.

DEVON FIELD TRIP
Unlike recent visits to Devon this field course was favoured with largely good weather. Following the usual formula we were introduced to both coasts, the interior in the form of Dartmoor, and all
points in between. For most of the participants this was completely new ground and quite an eye-opener it turned out to be. Of necessity the course is quite intensive so there was an element of 'this is Tiverton, it must be Thursday' coupled with a feeling at the end of the week of being not quite sure whether it was Taunton, Tavistock or Tiverton where one found the re-used Norman doorway (it is St Peter, Tiverton, by the way).

The outstanding features and memories, for this writer, are the magnificent church towers in the Perpedicular style, the church on the hill at Brentor, the upward and downward looking faces on the font at Hartland and the airiness of, and views across, Dartmoor.

It was a splendid week, assisted by the weather together with Harold's excellent guide notes, and heightened by the fact that we were able collectively to watch him in his television programme - and very smart he looked too!
Frank Galbraith

[Editor's note: Harold was too shy to record his appearance in 'Breaking the seal: land records', shown on BBC2 on 27th March this year, under 'Departmental Papers'; it lasted for about 20 seconds, but, as the students said, 'A star is born'].

The class of 2000 on the Devon Field Trip

WILLIAM RUDDICK SCHOLARSHIP

We are delighted to report the success of Alan Fox as one of the first two recipients of this newly created scholarship. Awarded to honour the memory of Bill Ruddick, a University of Leicester graduate and later Chairman of Convocation, who died in 1994. The scholarship will be one of two to be awarded each year to postgraduate research students, one from the Department of English and one from the Faculty of Arts. Alan gained his MA in 1997 and is currently researching for his PhD, which concerns a putative divide between cultural provinces either side of the Trent-Witham watershed on the border between Leicestershire and Lincolnshire (see the account of his Thursday seminar paper). He intends to spend the £500 award on computer materials, especially on software to improve his cartographic presentations.

JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE

The John Nichols Prize for 1999 has been awarded to Maria Osowiecki for her essay ' Government and local society in Kent, *c.* 1437-1450, originally submitted for her MPhil at the University of Cambridge.

The prize of £100 is available each year 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 for submissions is 31st December. MA course participants may, if they receive a distinction for their dissertation, simply send a note indicating their wish to enter to Dave Postles, from whom other potential applicants may obtain further particulars.

APPEAL FOR OCCASIONAL PAPERS

The department wishes to make up a full second set of Occasional Papers for the Marc Fitch Library and is missing the following titles:

The Free Grammar School of Leicester; The Early Court Rolls of the Borough of Ipswich; The New lands of Elloe: a study of Early Reclamation in Lincolnshire; The Leicestershire Survey (c. A.D. 1130); Roman and Saxon Withington: a Study in Continuity; The County Committee of Kent in the Civil War; Canvey Island: the History of a Marshland Community; The Westward Expansion of Wessex; Blackburnshire: a Study in Early Lancashire History; Change in the Provinces: the Seventeenth Century; The Pattern of Rural Dissent: the Nineteenth Century; Re-thinking English Local History; Church and Chapel in the North Midlands: Religious Observance in the Nineteenth Century.

Friends who have copies, and are prepared to let them go, should contact Harold Fox or Ken Smith.

OBITUARIES

The Very Reverend Randolph Wise, 1925-1999

A brief notice of the death of Randolph Wise, Dean Emeritus of Peterborough, appeared in the last Newsletter. He died on the 8th September last year and it was not then possible to do justice to this remarkable and unassuming man. Few who knew him during the course of his MA studies between 1994 and 1996 would have guessed at the richness of his life and experience as detailed in a very full *Times* obituary of 20th September 1999. The following, culled from that tribute, gives some idea of that richness.

'An expert and formidable boxer, an enthusiastic lifelong sculler' and Commander of a minesweeper in the Indian Ocean during the war, Randolph Wise trained for the Ministry at Queen's College, Oxford and was ordained at Southwark (where he sang in the cathedral choir) in 1951. His first appointment was to the curacy at Walworth where he later became the vicar. A Freeman of the City of London, 'the claims for racial equality and social integration' drew him towards an industrial chaplaincy and eventually to become the Rector of Notting Hill. In 1981 he became Dean of Peterborough where he remained until 1992. After his retirement he remained hard at work and, in addition to his MA in the department, was chairman of Oakham School governors, served on an Anglia TV charity and acted as the unpaid Vicar of Oakham for a year.

Such was the quiet man we thought we knew!

John Shipley Clarke, 1933 - 2000

John Clarke was another gentle and unassuming MA student, completing his thesis on the turnpike roads of Shropshire in 1997. Already suffering from ill-health at that time, he died after a long illness in January this year.

Educated at Stockport Grammar School and Trinity College, Oxford, John was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry and spent the whole of his working life as a schoolmaster - first at the Royal Grammar School in Lancaster, and from 1961 to 1993 at Alleyn's School in London, where he was Head of Science and Housemaster. He was a former schoolmaster fellow of Corpus Christi, Cambridge and had published a number of chemistry text books.

He will be remembered not only for his infectious enthusiasm for local history (especially that of Shropshire), but also for the generosity of his nature and his enjoyment of the ambience of Marc Fitch House.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to his wife, Elizabeth and the rest of his family.

Professor Jack Simmons OBE, 1915 - 2000

Once again shortly before we go to press the department is saddened by news of the death of a remarkable man.

It was Jack Simmons, perhaps above all others, who was responsible for the creation of the departments of English Local History and Museum Studies. Charles Phythian-Adams, in his introduction to the *Departmental Bibliography*, wrote of the 'historian of vision' joining with his fellow Devonian Hoskins in 'a glittering team of historians and others ... under the Cornish leadership of A.L. Rowse, to broadcast in 1947 or 1948 on the "West in English History". He also remarked upon the 'remarkable conjunction of circumstances ... that found Jack Simmons appointed to the first Chair of History at a University College which was headed by Principal Attenborough and distinguished by a scholar as such fast-growing reputation as Hoskins'.

Professor Simmons became acting Vice-Chancellor (and later Pro-Vice Chancellor and Public Orator) of the University of Leicester after it received its charter in 1957. Amongst many other interests and achievements his concern for the visual environment; his tireless support of, and contributions to, the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*; and his two volumes on the history of Leicester, are especially remembered in the department. In the words of the obituary notice in *The Times*, 'He was to make a great contribution to the academic, managerial, social and cultural life of ... Leicester University, and to the city and county'. The obituary also paid tribute to his wide-ranging interests, and particularly his contribution to transport history and the saving of the 'Victorian splendours of St Pancras'. In spite of increasing blindness he was working on a new book on railway history within a fortnight of his death on September 3rd.

SEMINAR PROGRAMME 2000–01

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 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.

	TERM I (2000)	
Dr Paul Cullen (School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences, University of Sussex)	Thursday 19 October	'The place-names of Kent'
Dr Rob Lidyard (University of Wales, Department of History and Welsh History)	Thursday 9 November	'Castle Rising in Norfolk: a landscape of lordship'
Dr Margaret Yates (Department of Medieval History, University of Birmingham)	Thursday 23 November	'"Medieval or Modern?": the experience of a Berkshire community 1400–1600'
Mrs Penny Upton (Department of English Local History, University Leicester)	Thursday 30 November	'A fishy tale: the depopulation of Bishops Itchington, Warwickshire, in the sixteenth of century'
	TERM II (2001)	
Dr Will Coster (Institute for the Study War and Society, De Montfort University at Bedford)	Thursday 25 January	'Gossips and Godmothers: for the women's networks of spiritual kinship in early modern England'
Dr S. Wade-Martins (Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia)	Thursday 1 February	'Beauty, utility and profit: model farms and agricultural Studies, improvement in the 18th and 19th centuries'
Dr Sarah Tarlow (Archaeological Studies, University of Leicester)	Thursday 22 February	'Metaphors of death: commemorative practice in Orkney and beyond'
Dr David Matless (Department of Geography, University of Nottingham)	Thursday 22 March	'Digging a strange pool: Marietta Pallis and the landscape history of the Norfolk Broads'

EVENTS SPONSORED BY FRIENDS

BRIXWORTH STUDY DAY

This event devoted to 'Aspects of Brixworth through the ages' was organised jointly with the Friends of All Saints Church, Brixworth, took place on 1st April. It proved a huge success with some sixty people attending, including a number of potential new Friends. After reception, coffee and a succinct introduction by Sylvia Pinches who, together with Dr David Parsons, had made most of the customarily efficient arrangements for the day, we were treated to a wealth of absorbing Brixworth history spanning the time from mesolithic flint manufacture to twentieth-century ironstone working.

Few places, surely, can provide such remarkable evidence of continuous settlement, and David Hall, for whom Brixworth is just one of the numerous (80% of total) Northamptonshire parishes whose open fields he has studied in detail, gave us a well illustrated account of its prehistoric, Saxon, and later medieval landscape.

Our own Graham Jones (currently a Research Fellow at Aberystwyth, but also an Honorary Visiting Fellow in the department here) followed with what he called 'a working hypothesis' central to which was the putative place of St Boniface as the patronal saint of Brixworth's Saxon church. Drawing on shreds of documentary evidence and supplementing these with that of place-names; other, sparse, examples of the cult of Boniface; and the prevalence of diagnostic dedications to Saints Peter and Paul (or St Peter alone); he came closer to postulating that Brixworth was, perhaps, an early royal centre (for hunting and entertaining) than that the church was ever dedicated to 'the greatest living Englishman'.

Geoffrey Starmer then brought us closer to our own time with a graphic, blow by blow, account of the origins and development of the ironstone workings in Brixworth from the nineteenth century until 1947, when the last load of ore was carried from the village. He was first to introduce us to the Reverend Charles Frederick Watkins (d. 1874) who was to play such a significant role in Brixworth: as an advocate of a railway line through the village; the entrepreneurial exploiter of the ore that lay close to the surface, hard by the church; and, as we later learned, the remarkable and sensitive restorer of All Saints. Mr Starmer told how, in spite of much lobbying from the 1830s onwards, it was not until 1859 that a railway eventually came to the village, and then only in the shape of two passenger trains daily in each direction. This frequency was, however, increased in 1880 with the growing importance of coal and iron freight. He went on to tell of the involvement of other colourful iron ore magnates and, most evocatively by means of old photographs, of the men of the village and surrounding areas, steadily increasing in number towards the end of the nineteenth century, who engaged in the extremely arduous, and hazardous, occupation of quarrying the ironstone.

After a tasty and sustaining lunch, we made our individual ways to rendezvous at the star attraction of the day – All Saints Church – where the party split into two groups both, in turn, to be intrigued by what Dr Diana Sutherland had to tell about the external structure of the church and equally by Dr David Parson's account of its likely origins, history and interior architecture. Taking an area of just two or three square yards of the wall by the south side of the tower, Dr Sutherland was able to identify to us some eight or nine different types of stone (in addition to Roman brick) the majority of which came originally from the Charnwood Forest area of Leicestershire. Intensive study over several years, during which every stone in the exterior fabric was drawn and its origin identified, have led to the conclusion that because the mixture of type closely matches that of Leicester's Jewry Wall, the material was almost certainly hauled from the decayed Roman town for re-use. The lower Saxon levels of the nave, choir and tower (up to 4 metres) are typically composed of a similar mixture, but a second stage of building above this level makes increasing use of more local Northamptonshire Sand and Blisworth limestone, with some tufa. Dr Sutherland had much more to tell us about the church and its restoration by the aforesaid Reverend Watkins, and also took us to see the site of iron workings (now occupied by allotment gardens) where the ore bearing seams are exposed beneath the overburden of lighter stone (used for building), and breccia. David Parsons has

been the leader of the team involved in the intensive study of All Saints over many years and gave us all the benefit of the latest thinking about the origins and development of the church from its days as a high status monastery/minster to later, much more humble, parish church.

Although thinking it likely that an early, perhaps wooden, structure preceded the earliest Saxon stone fabric seen today, he made it clear that the present building (once much larger with porticuses on either side of the nave) dates partly from the late eighth or early ninth centuries.

Dr Diana Sutherland explaining the origins of Brixworth's fabric to her fascinated audience

A second phase, of major alteration and the building of the prominent stair turret, was undertaken in the eleventh century. In spite of his unrivalled knowledge of the church (and of churches and church architecture throughout Europe) David was ready to make it clear that much about the structural development (and function) of All Saints is still unresolved, and he was ready to listen to ideas put forward by his audience. Friends were given the opportunity of looking around the church and were particularly interested in the Verdun chapel, dating from *c.*1300, where the reliquary, thought by some to contain a bone or two of St Boniface, was found during nineteenth-century alterations. Graham was so absorbed in this area with its saintly connections that he forewent the chance to climb the tufa-vaulted stair turret in order to look more closely at the eleventh-century triple arch in the west nave wall.

Not surprisingly with so much of interest to see and hear, both parties were now running slightly behind schedule (and some were certainly feeling the cold). It was therefore good to be refreshed in the neighbouring Brixworth Centre with tea, cakes and scones, prepared like our lunch by the Friends of Brixworth who did so much to make the day a success. Tea was followed by the last paper of the day, given by Elizabeth Hurren, on the operation and management of the 'notorious' Brixworth Poor Law Union between 1870 and 1900. Elizabeth unfolded a tale of working class struggle against the reactionary forces of the landed aristocracy, the arch-villains

being the Spencers of Althorp and their agents in the magistracy. The means and stratagems by which the Spencers and their allies attempted to meet Government targets for reductions in the number of recipients of outdoor relief (from one in 12 of the population to one in 127 - and by 1894 even fewer) were harshly administered during the agricultural depression of the 1870 and beyond. They included obligatory support of parents by often very poor children; relief linked to what amounted to forced labour on the Althorp estate; and a specious and extortionate 'welfare to work' arrangement. One sensed that those listening to the account of the long struggle to unseat one Pell, the reactionary chairman of the Union, almost gave a cheer when they heard how this was at last accomplished in 1896. Their hard-won victory was due to the joint forces of enlightened middle-class members of the Liberal party and a large grass-roots movement inspired by such as Tom Paine, Keir Hardie, Joseph Arch and other nonconformist lay preachers.

And so this most enjoyable day ended, as it had begun, with another page of Brixworth's long history turned for the interest and engagement of an appreciative audience. Finally everyone joined with Sylvia (herself the main architect of the day) in warmly applauding the speakers and those Friends of both groups who had made it all possible.

Mike Thompson

ELEVENTH HOSKINS LECTURE

On Saturday 17 June summer arrived fleetingly and happily coincided with the annual Hoskins Lecture. This was given by Oliver Rackham, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge on the subject of 'Woodland history in Hoskins' day and now'. It would in fact have been a perfect day on which to seek out and investigate ancient woodlands. However some hundred Friends and guests were gathered in the New Building's lecture theatre as Keith Snell introduced our distinguished speaker.

Dr Rackham explained that his interest in trees, woodland and the medieval period was inspired by the pioneering work of W.G. Hoskins and his book *The Making of the English Landscape* with its mix of documentary and fieldwork evidence. Hoskins was of the opinion that, by the twelfth century, England was not heavily wooded and that this was due to progressive clearance through Roman and Anglo-Saxon times, but it is now known that even earlier clearances had been effected in the prehistoric period.

Trees are not part of the scenery of ecological history but, Dr Rackham suggested, are '... actors in a play, each with its own lines to speak'. The particular biological properties of each species needed to be considered. Woodland industries such as hurdle making and charcoal burning to provide fuel for local iron smelting, helped to preserve woodland and to prevent farmers from grubbing it out. Developments since Hoskins show that there was re-afforestation as well as clearance and that some supposedly 'ancient' woodland is post-medieval. Oak was a pioneer in the formation of new woodland and many such woods are to be found on older ridge and furrow.

In Exeter and Totnes there is evidence of much underwood (i.e. coppice or pollard timber) in urban building and this indicates that it was fashion, rather than the ready availability of the material, that dictated its use. In Gamlingay (Cambridgeshire) 300 small oak trees used in the stucture of one house, are evidence that supply was able to keep up with demand. Other constructional uses of woodland products are evidenced by the cordage made from Lime bark (bast) found in buildings at Lavenham (Suffolk), and scaffolding poles, used in the building of Ely Cathedral, which also bear witness to a thriving early trade in Pine from Norway and the Baltic.

Dr Rackham stressed the importance of combining archaeological with documentary evidence and suggested that whereas the former could only evoke an imagined landscape, the archaeology of woodlands could provide living proof of the former scene, for example the ancient pollarded oaks of Staverton Park (Suffolk) or those of Grimsthorpe Park (Lincolnshire) which date from the seventeenth century. Much older was the evidence of the Walton Heath track in the Somerset Levels, which dates to 2,300 BC and was made using stone tools, thus providing evidence for woodland history from the neolithic period.

At this point Dr Rackham paused to consider Hoskins' advice 'know ... thy native country', and to speculate as to whether he

had ever gone 'over the threshold thereof'. Had he have done so, it was suggested, he would surely have drawn parallels with North America where forests, hedged by field walls by early colonists, could have been analogous to those of Anglo-Saxon England. There was much to be learned from such comparisons and studying alternative ways of doing things and some principles are ubiquitous, for instance, applying to woodland whether in Texas, England or Crete.

Moving to the present situation, Dr Rackham touched upon the use of experiment in woodland management. This involved the practise of woodmanship and the observation of results. He went on to say that although woodland history is an academic subject, there was difficulty in getting papers published in academic journals, and yet some published work was not very good. Conventional writing on the subject has been largely the province of travel and literary authors, or consists of the historical comparison of statistical data - for example - comparisons of timber sales at different times. There has been little or no collaborative work and there is, therefore, no holistic approach to the subject. In the past, studies were undertaken to confirm theories such as Darwinian evolution, but Dr Rackham argued that research should be valued for its own sake and not solely to validate, or disprove, theory.

In conclusion, Dr Rackham assured his audience that he had 'come, not to bury Hoskins, but to praise him', and wondered what he would have made of the greatest threat to modern woodland - the proliferation of deer now grazing the woodland floor and pollard ground.

Questions followed, and there was some general discussion on place-names and their relevance to an understanding of the disposition of ancient woodland. Asked when the last 'wildwood' disappeared, Dr Rackham replied that this was probably before the last period of glaciation.

After the applause of an appreciative audience had died away, Sylvia Pinches gave a vote of thanks to Dr Rackham for his stimulating talk. On returning to Marc Fitch House, members were treated to a delightful tea, co-ordinated as ever by Chris Draycott. This year the book sale raised some £370 - a very healthy improvement on last year's figure - for which thanks to all those Friends who gave away such saleable volumes.

Ann Workman

FRIENDS SUMMER OUTING

Scorning the modernity of the Dome, on 8th July the Friends celebrated the second millennium of the Common era with a visit to the towns of Bewdley and Stourport in the Severn Valley. Once we had assured ourselves that Sylvia Pinches and Shane Downer had undertaken the organization of our comforts for the day with the customary efficiency, we were able to take a relaxed approach to their appreciation of the one-time prosperity of these river ports. This historic prosperity was demonstrated by some fine buildings, impressive public works, and well-preserved artefacts in the Bewdley Museum. Members of the local history societies of the two towns enthusiastically entertained us to both refreshments and explanations, both before and during our tours. They may even have protected us from the 'wicked witch of the West' who, seemingly, rushed out to attack one group of Friends from the window of an historic building in which she had apparently made her home.

From an historical perspective, a comparison of the two towns was illuminating. Before the canal junction and terminus of Stourport superseded it, Bewdley had risen to prosperity from a combination of royal patronage and beneficial river-port location. This was in spite of it having to survive frequent flooding from the Severn. Its location helped it to tranship materials as diverse as wood and charcoal from the local Wyre Forest, tin and china clay from the West Country, metal products from the Black Country and earthenware from the Potteries. Both its functional role as a centre for river transport, and the nature of the raw materials passing through, influenced the development of its early modern industries - including pewter and brassware, clay-pipes and rope-making.

Eventually Bewdley overcame the disadvantage of periodic flooding, to some extent, by building an embankment as well as a fine river bridge. However, these were not sufficient to prevent the town from losing its pre-eminence to Stourport

following the onset of the canal era and the construction of the latter town's excellent canal facilities. Nor was flooding entirely eradicated and the Friends were able to inspect some relics of flood damage to the bridge.

It was evident that Stourport had been constructed in a grand manner. To a great extent such far-sightedness had been rewarded - at least while the canal age lasted. Even before completion of those facilities industry was attracted to the town, but the ultimate in this development of industrial diversity had to be the establishment of its riverside vinegar factory - advantageously sited for the coastal trade with fish and chip shops as far afield as Blackpool, Skegness and Great Yarmouth.

Quite naturally, a hotel in Stourport was the appropriate place for a welcome cup of tea before we left these two fine riverside towns, for some of us at least to return to the comparative drabness of Leicester.

On behalf of the Friends this opportunity is taken to thank Sylvia and Shane for organizing the outing. We must also acknowledge our debt for the hospitality provided by the Bewdley and Stourport Local History Societies, without whose help we might have seen much less than we did.

Ian Hunt

DIARY DATES

Formal notice is hereby given that the **Friends Annual General Meeting** for 2000 will be held after the Thursday afternoon seminar on 23rd November (see Seminar Programme above) at 4.15 p.m. Please do your best to attend.

Saturday Seminar Day - Marc Fitch House

On Saturday 11th November, 2000 five invited speakers: Professor Alan Rogers, Denis Stuart, Jenny Burt, William Bates and David Fox, will present papers on subjects ranging from the stone crosses of the North Yorkshire Moors to Staffordshire Quakers. The cost of the day will be £12 to include coffee, tea and a buffet lunch. A mini booksale will also be held. Places will be limited to 30 and it will be a case of first come ... so complete and return the enclosed booking form early to avoid disappointment.

Twelfth Hoskins Lecture

This will be held on Saturday 2nd of June 2001, when Dr John Blair of Queen's College, Oxford, will talk on 'The church in the early English landscape: old problems, new approaches'.

Annual Summer Outing

Will take place on Saturday 7th July to places yet to be arranged.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Some 50 Friends - out of a total of more than 200 - completed the questionnaire sent out with last year's Newsletter. This was designed to elicit what members wanted in terms of an annual programme of events, and, as was to be expected, it resulted in a mixed response. Generally there was an option for the *status quo*, and the following analysis gives some idea of members' views and wishes which will continue to inform your committee's decisions.

Answers to the following principal questions asked were split as follows:

Annual Outing

Would you prefer, as now, i.e. a coach outing from Leicester to place(s) of general historical interest typically within 50-70 miles of Leicester?

Yes 24 **No** 8

At what time of year would you like to see this event?

Most people gave alternatives classified as follows:

Spring 13, **Early Summer** 19, **Autumn** 10

Day Schools/Seminars

Do you think such may be popular

i) as per the Ipstones day held in August which 5 Friends and 12 others attended?

Yes 14, **No** 11

ii) in Marc Fitch House

a) with invited speaker(s)?

Yes 34, **No** 3

b) with 6 or 7 short papers presented by Friends (including research students)?

Yes 27, **No** 4

At what time of year would you like to see such events?

Spring 11, Early Summer 3, Autumn 13, Winter 7

Annual Hoskins Lecture
This will continue but given the falling-off in attendance at, and support for, tea/booksale, should these ancillary events be abandoned?

Booksale Yes 6, No 28
Tea Yes 8, No 25

In answer to the request to suggest a guest speaker the following responses were obtained:
Oliver Rackham, Margaret Gelling, Barrie Cox, Anne Saunders, Scott Ashley, David Neave, Stephen Rippon, Della Hooke, Brian Roberts, Tom Williamson, Peter or Margaret Spufford, Randall Bingley, David Fleming, Janet Tierney, John Blair, Charles Phythian-Adams, A MacFarlane, R.R. Davies, G.A. Martin, Ros Faith. Friends amongst this number beware for years to come!

Other Events
Most events have traditionally taken place in the summer months, but there has been some indication that a better spread could be arranged - therefore would you be interested in:
i) a Friends' lunch between, say, November and February?
Yes 14, No 15
ii) a lunch with a speaker in the same period?
Yes 31, No 13
iii) a Christmas party?
Yes 6, No 24
iv) other (please specify event/timing)
One response - Weekend seminars

Newsletter
In answer to the request for suggestions for improvement/future content, such comments as were made were generally complimentary, however, someone thought it rather parochial and several asked for more news of careers, research activities of former students/Friends/staff, along the lines of 'Where are they/what are they doing now'. One or two wanted more departmental news, e.g. names/structure/courses; more illustrations were suggested by one respondent, along with the advice that odd-numbered pages should be on the right, and that 2000 is the final year of the 20th century and not 1999 as reported.

TALKING TO FRIENDS: ROS FAITH

Ros Faith is a long-time Friend whose affiliation with the department goes back to the late 1950s; in 1962 she was awarded her doctorate for a thesis entitled 'The peasant land-market in Berkshire during the later Middle Ages'. In this conversation she tells of her inspiration and continuing enthusiasm for research into early societies.

Dr Rosamond Faith

Friend: Can we start with your great aunt, Frances Arnold-Forster, and what got you interested in the subject - her interests are so topical at the moment at Leicester - was she the person that got you interested?

RF: Oh no, she died a long time before I was born, I never met her although she was a name around my childhood because we had her book, *Studies in Church Dedications.* Nobody in my family paid the least attention to her. I got interested in her when they were trying to collect more women for *The New Dictionary of National Biography.* I suggested that my great aunt Frances was included, though I didn't know much about

her then. I still don't know much about her, but I went to Ireland and looked at her journals (they are not particularly revealing, they are rather edited) and met Irish cousins. Frances was the adopted daughter of W.E. Forster and Jane who was Thomas Arnold's eldest daughter. Her sister married an Irish politician and there was lots of correspondence, I looked at that and got quite interested in her as a person, but I got more interested in her as a lone independent scholar - I rather identified with her in a way. She was the youngest child of four and the youngest daughter, as I am. She was interesting as a woman scholar and because her work is a really impressive piece of scholarship. It might be superseded now, it is a hundred years old, but it was a terrific undertaking and it is done in a most systematic and scholarly way. So I admired her and I wanted to put her on the record, but I can't pretend she was a life-long inspiration to me because I have only just discovered her. It's been a particular pleasure that Graham Jones has shown such an interest in her; we hope to publish a little study of her as a 'Friends' pamphlet.

Friend: Where did your interests come from then?

RF: I was always interested in the relationships between different classes of people and here I have to explain a bit about the very peculiar world I was born into, because although I am only 65, it seems terrifically remote now. My parents on both sides were from families which used to be called 'country gentry', so there were big country houses with estates and servants and all of that. My mother's grandfather had been a very enterprising Victorian railway engineer and had designed the first railway from Paris to Rouen and had made a packet. He came back to England (he was a Devon man actually called Buddicombe) and bought a big estate in Wales and although he became landed gentry he was a typical Victorian entrepreneur. He bought this huge estate which had a big house with a big home farm and a very large amount of mostly mountain sheep farmland and a grouse moor. I have learnt since that it is a very very ancient multiple estate. We used to spend most of our summer holidays there, both before and after the war, and I was always very interested in the relationships between our family, who were the posh family, and the servants who worked in the house; I spent a lot of time with them.

I was also interested in relationships between the inner part of the estate and the tenant farmers, who were Welsh hill farmers whose farms had obviously belonged to their families for centuries and centuries, if not millennia, and yet for some reason they were our tenants. I remember seeing the estate maps in the estate office as if that was 'our land', but as soon as I went to visit these people you could see that it was their farm. Well, I can't pretend that I worked all that out at the time, but I knew that there were all sorts of interesting differences between people, and between us English and the Welsh. The Welsh children were so different from us, the Welsh boys wore hob-nailed boots which their fathers used to mend for them with a hammer and nails and we wore Clarks' sandals. We larked about on ponies and they knew how to work. I wasn't indignant about it class-wise, but children pick up these differences between people a lot. It was a wonderful place to be - it was paradise really.

During the first three years of the war we went to America. In 1943 we came back and I was boarded out on one of the farms. That was my ideal of a childhood place because I had a lot of freedom. During that time I got to know about that way of life a bit more from the other side, what it was like being on a Welsh hill farm. I can't pretend I was writing all this down or anything, I just knew this was a really interesting place to be. Funnily enough when I was in America I was boarded out on a family who lived in a big American house in up-state New York. That was rather similar - it belonged to that plutocracy who had built their houses in imitation of colonial or British mansions. I lived in an enormous house again with servants and a green baize door. Also you could see that there was a wall around the estate and beyond that there was a completely different landscape. The other side of the wall was modern America with buses and things, so it was a very peculiar background but it made me very conscious of the different layers in society, much of which has gone now.

Friend: Did you begin to crystallise your ideas about all this at Oxford?

RF: Well, I went to a very good school, called Beltane (founded on the feast of Beltane), by two Fabian socialists before the war who had progressive ideas about how to educate children - a mixed boarding school. It was progressive in the way that they thought children should have more freedom and more responsibility to make their own choices about what they were learning and so on. Just after the war, teachers were recruited immediately after graduating and we were taught by some very good teachers. I had a very good history teacher called Louis Marks who had done his DPhil at Oxford and had been exempted from National Service. He was a terrific teacher, a very committed Marxist, but I don't think he was doctrinaire, not a kind of Stalinist. He got me interested in history, and he made me try for Oxford. Our school wasn't very pushy at getting students to try for university and it was lucky for me that I had someone behind me. He thought it was a good idea for me to try for St Hildas'; mainly so that I would be taught by the great medievalist Beryl Smalley. So I got in although I had very few qualifications, I never took the equivalent of 'A' levels and had only a handful of 'O' levels, but you could get in on an essay in the entrance paper. I think by then I knew I wanted to be some kind of an historian of the peasantry. When I was at Beltane I can remember thinking that one day I would like to write the history of a field. I hadn't discovered archaeology then, not until much later, although we had a mad geography teacher who took us camping at the weekends and visiting chambered tombs and so on. We visited Hetty Peggler's Tump and camped out on the side of Cheddar Gorge. I think I knew I wanted to study rural people. I was more interested in the seventeenth century at first than I was in the Middle Ages. At that time seventeenth century history was absolutely buzzing, Christopher Hill was at the height of his powers and there was lots of controversy about the English Revolution and that seemed to be a good setting in which to get a good route into agrarian history. I actually got into it however through a special subject study at Oxford which was called 'The manorial economy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries' which had been started by R.V. Lennard and was, in my day (1953-6) taught by Trevor Aston. It was just the course for me and Trevor Aston was a wonderful teacher - a very good task-master. He was very demanding about reading documents properly; I still feel him looking over my shoulder if I am tempted to guess at a word ending. I did 'the manorial economy' as a special subject by which time I was really bitten by the idea of research. Trevor must have known Finberg at Leicester where they were looking for research students. Trevor put me up to apply and they took me.

Friend: What was it like then - who was in the department?

RF: That is exactly the kind of question it is absolutely no good asking me.

Friend: Did you spend a lot of time in the department?

RF: No and that is why I am so hopeless about it. Finberg and I were at odds from the start; it may have been that he didn't want to take me, I don't know. I was not at all the kind of student that Finberg wanted. I think he had very strong ideas about what local history was and I will explain why I didn't fit into that. I think he wanted students who would be at Leicester, working locally on local things - reasonably so. First of all I had decided to work on the peasant land market, to look through all the court rolls I could, to see what was happening and to record as much as I could about individual peasants. Up to then the way of going at this material was what had been done brilliantly by George Homans, which was to pick up different topics from the manorial court rolls, which contain lots of little stories about individuals but also things that are interesting sociologically. Homans had written a wonderful and very influential book called *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century*. He had done it by picking out individual examples of what he wanted to illustrate and he had done it amazingly well. It is even more amazing when you consider that he was an American sociologist with no English history.

I thought it would be interesting to look at individual peasants and follow their histories through the court rolls as far as

possible to get a 'life history' of some sort. It crystallised into looking at the peasant land market. It was the wrong kind of local history for Finberg; what he wanted was people looking at a place for its own sake and I was looking at places for the sake of their documents, I didn't really mind where they were. I chose Berkshire because there were lots of good court rolls for Berkshire and surveys as well, so in a sense it was using the materials of local history but without writing local history in the sense that Finberg and Hoskins wanted it. Although Finberg, wasn't in the least unfair to me, he was out of sympathy with what I was doing. Anyway I didn't go to Leicester much because all my materials were in the Public Record Office and I saw Finberg in London. By that time I was married and living in London as well. It was a shame I had such a difficult relationship with him, because when I was writing my book I drew a lot on his work and there were things in it I think he would have liked, and he might have thought 'I am glad somebody has done that'. In the end I think he would have been quite pleased at the direction my work took, but of course he died long before I published anything on the subject, so that is rather a sorrow.

The other thing was that I really didn't live up to Finberg's idea of the ideal student at all, one thing was that I kept having babies. I had two while doing my PhD; that wasn't at all what Finberg thought I should be doing and I kept applying for extensions. I was a part-time student too, which again I don't think was what he wanted. For the sake of the department he was quite right, it would have been much better to get full-time students and get a lot of work out right away. I didn't actually get my thesis out until 1962. I think if Finberg and I had been more in sympathy, my thesis might have been published earlier, for example in the Occasional Papers series. I am very grateful to Paul Harvey for publishing it in *The Peasant Land Market in Medieval England.*

Friend: The way in which you managed your time was actually ahead of your time.

RF: Now it is much more common and universities realise that women do have babies but that doesn't mean they don't do good work. One of the advantages of Finberg not being particularly keen on what I was doing was that he didn't interfere with it at all and I just got on and did it the way I wanted. That is what has always suited me best, to do the work in my own way and time. I am very lucky that by and large I have had a life that has enabled me to do that .

Friend: What did you do when you had finished your PhD?

RF: One of the things which had been interesting in it was what it had shown about inheritance. Sometime around that date the Agricultural History Society was founded, which I joined and got to know Joan Thirsk a bit. I had started looking at the material I had on inheritance and I wrote it up into an article on peasant inheritance customs for the *Agricultural History Review* which they published in 1966. Joan was quite keen that several people should undertake a national survey of inheritance customs, because one of the interesting things was that in some places partible inheritance carried on while in others it didn't and places varied, she thought a national survey would be useful. I think it would, but I don't think anyone should spend a life-time accumulating it. Once that article was done I was pretty overwhelmed by domestic life. I had two children by then and we were trying for another which took us a long time to achieve and I was not looking for an academic career at all. To be honest I don't think I could have managed it. I didn't really do much, though I did go to seminars at the Institute of Historical Research and quarrelled with Postan. Through that I met Robin du Boulay and Caroline Barron who asked me to teach for a year at Bedford (1967-8) which was terrific. I loved it, I taught general European medieval history and true to form I had another baby. Soon after that, as luck would have it I had number four. I then had four children. My husband was a journalist who was away a lot, so we couldn't box and cox. I bumbled along being domestic, then in the mid 70s we moved to Oxfordshire from London. I had always wanted to live in the country where my interests were. I remember in London once looking longingly at the cover of one of Hoskins' books with a picture of some people walking down a hollow way talking. I

thought 'wow it looks fun!'. It was so unlike the London life we were living, which was quite smart London media set - far away from walking down wet Devon lanes in anoraks. I now spend a lot of time walking down lanes in anoraks talking to people. It is one of the nicest things I do.

Anyway we moved to the Oxfordshire in 1976, by then the kids were older, the first two were pretty well grown up and I got a job first of all in the University archives working for my old tutor, Trevor Aston, who was then Keeper of the University archives. He then took me on as a research assistant on the History of the University which had just begun and of which he was the general editor. I helped with two chapters on that, one co-authoring with Trevor and one co-authoring with Ralph Evans. Those were both quite solid pieces of estate history - they are wonderful archives. So that was a good new apprenticeship. It was well worth doing and it got me acquainted with college archives which I have used since. Then it came round to the anniversary of the Great Rebellion of 1381 and I wanted to write something about that. I came across a peasant rising of 1377 which, very strangely, I had already come across when I was doing my thesis years before. I had written about a Berkshire manor on which there had evidently been a general strike in 1377 and everybody downed tools and nobody came to do the harvest. It was called 'the Great *rumor*'. At the time I didn't know what it was and when I went back in the early 1980s, investigating the peasant rebellion, I looked into it some more. I was led by the saintly people at the PRO to the relevant documents which I wrote up into an article called 'The Great Rumour of 1377' (this is actually a mistake in translation, I don't think 'rumor' means 'rumour', I think it means 'trouble'). That was published in a commemorative volume on 1381 and it is the thing I have written which has had the most wide readership, I think, because it is read by people who are doing English literature, not just historians. It has quite recently got me into a very interesting seminar at Oxford which combines history and literature people. I would never have got into that world if it hadn't been for that article. About the same time I gave a talk at a Ruskin College History Workshop, about peasant ideology. One of the things about the rising of 1377 was this intensely held belief that there were 'better times in the past and we have lost our free status since then' - it is an absolutely classic theme in English history. I think if you don't understand that you will never understand England at all. I think it is a very important part of English life because that is the way in which English people could be really radical, when they were feeling that they were having ancient liberties taken away from them. Even here in Finstock, which is an intensely conservative place, there was a right of way which we used to have into Wychwood Forest which had been blocked up by the landlord. The people of the village got fed up and protested, together with the Ramblers, until one old chap said 'bugger it' and walked in and now we have a footpath. That was because the people knew it was their *right*.

Friend: How have you managed to juggle so many aspects of your life?

RF: Well, I don't think I have managed to juggle things the way so many women have done because all my work has been part-time and I have not been tied into any institutions where it has been a question of letting people down if I didn't turn up, so I have been lucky really.

Friend: Has that been an advantage do you think? For example one of the notable features of your book *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* is its huge bibliography - have you had more time for reading for example?

RF: Is it a big bibliography? I think if that book has a big bibliography its not because I have had lots of time and am an assiduous reader. It's because the book is built up from two separate sources of knowledge (if that doesn't sound too pompous). The reason I was able to write it is because of my own history. I started off studying the English economy and the manor after the Conquest and then I got interested in what had happened before the Conquest, when I started looking at Anglo-Saxon social structures and agrarian development and so on. So it is really two lumps of knowledge which come from two different stages in my life. If that book has any merit it is because

it is able to make that link and that has been one of my advantages - that I have been able to make that shift between periods. Most people can't say 'it might be fun to look over the fence and see what happened before my period' because the pressures of their work wont allow it. I have been able to be an amateur in the old sense of the word and just follow up what has interested me. So in answer to your question - yes, it has been an advantage in fact never to have had a proper job in the sense that I have been able to follow up what really fascinated me. There are disadvantages in that my knowledge is very unsystematic. Over the last six or seven years I have been teaching quite a lot which has made me a lot more rounded in what I have read, but I have always started off on a subject with an amateur interest in it. That is the way I have been able to do it, and I think I have been very lucky.

Friend: You must be hugely disciplined to work the way you do without the pressures of having to publish and so on.

RF: Well, I am disciplined in the sense that I have a strict working routine, but I am not mentally particularly disciplined if that is what you mean. I have never stopped working really since I started research full time.

Friend: So in a sense you must be quite driven by it.

RF: Yes absolutely, fanatically driven by it. It is partly because if you have children and then after a bit they are off your hands it is like taking the cork off the champagne bottle, there is such a pressure built up. Even now that my youngest child is 31 I can still feel a kind of freedom - I can do what I like! Not that I don't miss young children, but I value that freedom enormously. I used to work when my kids were around and they knew it was a rival in a way - I have got some quite scribbled-on history books where angry children have said in effect, 'this is what is taking Mum away'. They are wonderful now that they are grown up and it has been marvellous being able to talk to them about it. My elder daughter has worked on a farm and talking to her I have picked up on some of the attitudes farm workers have towards the boss. My two sons are both Marxists and very historically aware and it has been interesting talking to them about where it all fits in.

Friend: You told me earlier that Birmingham was one of your spiritual homes, why is that?

RF: Primarily because of Rodney Hilton, whom I love and admire. But also, although I love Oxford and teach a lot now in various colleges and it is very stimulating, especially at the moment in Anglo-Saxon studies, there is nobody there who has the kind of approach to history you get at both Birmingham and Leicester where the approach is basically quite materialistic in the sense that you really need to know about work and the environment to understand a period and a place. I think that is fair to say that Hoskins' whole approach was material - starting with the material world, and I think that is true at Birmingham still. I used to go the Birmingham Friday night medieval seminars. I like the whole nature of the discourse at Birmingham which is a deliberately un-pompous and down to earth. Oxford does fancy itself, it can get very highfalutin. One of the things I am currently very interested in, which goes through all my work, is the way in which social structure and landscape interact. I have got interested in the last few years in the debate about the 'feudal revolution' - was society really deeply transformed from about the year 1000? I still have very old fashioned ideas about feudalism - that it is an actual phenomenon that did change society a lot. Together with Mark Whittow, who is a Byzantist, we have been getting up and running a series of seminars on the 'feudal revolution'. I am trying to get more people working in landscape history, and so on, involved. Mark and I hope to do a book on the landscape of feudalism in Europe, showing how the landscape changed. In English history I am working with Debby Banham, a Cambridge archaeologist, on a book to be called *Anglo-Saxon Farms and Farmers* which is going to be very 'bottom up' pre-Conquest agrarian history. We are coming from different directions which is good. Debby's main field of interest is diet and she knows a lot about food production and so on, she is going to do the nitty gritty

of that. I have got interested in individual farms - what was an Anglo Saxon farm like? Was it three miserable little huts with a fence round them, or was it something more like a farm we see today with farm buildings and arable and woodland? I am using place-name evidence to try and build up some local studies. I am doing one on Devon at the moment. In many of these places a farm then must have been a bit like a farm now because that is all that the landscape allows. So I am back to where I started really. Its great fun because it means walking around looking at places, and listening to farmers.

I have also been working recently on a polyptych drawn up in the early ninth century for the lands of St Victor de Marseille. It describes the whole population on all of its farms giving all the names, starting with the farmer and his wife and all the children with their ages and so on. It is a wonderful document which has been used by demographers but I want to use it to understand what kind of family structure there was on the different farms in the ninth century. I am going to Provence this summer to prowl around some of these places and see what I can find out about the topography. So that it is a kind of extension to what I am interested in England which is farming families. Fascinating *and* a really good holiday I hope. That's the advantage of studying farmers, they immediately get you into the culture of the country.

Friend: Thank you.

A WADD OF NOTES

That he had deposited 'very detailed notes on classes given by W.G. Hoskins, which he attended at Vaughan College in 1946-47', excited me, but 'Roy Wadd of Knighton'? He meant nothing to me. In 1946-47 I was 15-16 and studying hard (sort of) for my School Certificate. I lived in Leicester then, and on an impulse had taken an evening job at the Woodgate Branch of Leicester City Libraries (my headmaster had a fit!).

The librarian, my boss was Derrick Bott, a keen historian, During quiet lulls we engaged in long discussions and a friendship developed. He was enthusiastic about somebody called Hoskins, but it was clear that 'Mr Bott' (as I always knew him) was himself deeply knowledgeable about the city's past. He proudly showed me his copy of Hoskins' *The Heritage of Leicestershire* and, somewhat hesitantly, lent it to me.

Together, Mr Bott and I traipsed round Leicester (happy days, when the Clock Tower was the city centre and the hub of the tramway system). he pointed out a building Hoskins had identified as Leicester's oldest inn, in a corner of the market. Wherever we went, Mr Bott would repeat nuggets from Hoskins' lectures. Occasionally we went cycling together - churches mainly, but he would give a running commentary as we pedalled our way through country lanes to places like Kings Norton and Galby and ... oh, I don't know, after 55 years I've rather forgotten.

When my family left Leicester in 1947 Mr Bott and I corresponded regularly and he came to stay with us once or twice. The bug he'd caught from this Hoskins fellow had gripped me too. As my interest in local history developed, so Mr Bott would write encouraging letters. Then I joined the Royal Navy. Some ships in which I served did 'active service', so after some months at a stretch without setting foot on dry land, correspondence faltered. One day, we were dismayed to watch our precious mail delivery go to the bottom of the sea. I often wonder if it contained a letter from Mr Bott, because I never heard from him again. When I returned home, he'd moved house and I had no idea where he went. So the item about 'Mr Roy Wadd of Knighton' brought back a flood of memories. Recently, Mike Thompson showed me his purported notebooks and the moment I saw that distinctive handwriting I recognized it as Mr Bott's. Slipped inside one of the notebooks was a postcard ... from me!

It turns out that Mr Wadd had also attended Hoskins' lectures at Vaughan College, and it was he who acquired the notebooks from Mrs Bott and later deposited them on her behalf. The sad sequel is that Mr Bott died of a heart attack some years ago. I would dearly have loved to renew my acquaintance with him. he would have been so proud of my good fortune to be associated with Marc Fitch House.

Tony Upton

[Editors note: It is a matter of regret that the notebooks Tony recognised as Mr Bott's were attributed (in the 1997 Newsletter) to his friend Mr Wadd, the kindly depositor.

Tony has also established that Mr Bott had published two papers: 'Oliver Cromwell's castle, *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 26 (1950), pp. 133–139; and, 'The murder of St Wistan', *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. 29 (1953) pp. 1–12.]

THE UNEXPECTED AT WALPOLE SAINT PETER'S

Time was getting on and I was still far from my night's lodging. Behind me lay another day crammed with absorbing, if relentless, fieldwork. Once in such a while, one yearns for a major visual treat, not least after hours spent investigating small fenland river ports. 'Walpole S. Peter' directed the signpost: a well-remembered name celebrated as a triumph of the earlier Perpendicular in countless ecclesiological tomes and, because of its spectacular size, as 'The Queen of the Marshlands' locally. It was too good an opportunity to miss.

Well, here I was at last – somewhat past five – after losing my way several times because of placing too much reliance on a sign-posting system that was strictly designed to keep strangers at bay, and therefore anxious lest the church had already been locked. I scrunched hurriedly up the gravel path and passed through the vaulted two-storied south porch, to be greeted by a card reading 'Service in progress. Please enter quietly if you wish to join in'. How could one not? I listened, but not a sound could be heard inside.

I pushed gently at the heavy medieval door which, inevitably and embarrassingly on all such occasions, voiced noisy resistance. Still no hint of activity within. Very quietly I stepped down into the church to find myself in a luminous open space, lit from the south-west through generous perpendicular windows, the airiness of which was immediately apparent as one glanced upwards. But then, when I looked northeastwards, obliquely across the building, I was shocked to be immediately confronted to my right by an incongruous, dark wooden wall of renaissance screenwork slashing, as it were, through the lightness across the entire width of the church from south to north. Effectively, I was standing in an enclosed 'antechapel' comprising the two westernmost bays of the mighty medieval nave, unfurnished except for a large table of the 1600s and a couple of chests. With its three classically pedimented portals connecting each of the bisected aisles, the elegant early seventeenth-century screen looked more like an elongated version of one of those demarcating the screens-passage end of a wealthy Oxford or Cambridge college hall, than appropriate furnishing for a consecrated medieval building.

Beyond the screen, little was immediately visible through the open balustrading that ran above the panelling between its open doors. I peered half left towards the tower arch where, as though something might still be going on, a dim bulb was yet shining under another early seventeenth-century feature, a small gallery; but there was no sign of movement there. All I could do now was to steal across to the southernmost of the Jacobean screen portals through which to catch a discreet glimpse, diagonally across the church, of the distant east end where surely one might discern evidence of a service still in progress. For the first time I was able to gain a general impression of the sheer extent of this soaring early-perpendicular building. The eye, however, was drawn magnetically towards the most elevated high altar I have seen in years, still raised in its original position above the vaulted processional tunnel linking the two sides of the churchyard beneath it. Over the altar, furthermore, lights burned. But of a priest or a congregation, however small, there was neither sight nor sound.

I walked along the western side of the screen, and through the opening into the central aisle between the five remaining bays of nave arcading, to find myself wholly alone in the massive stillness of a great church. Except for the surviving lower panels of the rood screen, and in the distance a screened-off chapel defining the eastern end of the south aisle, it was obvious at a glance that there was not much of the usual early East-Anglian woodcarving around. Instead, and visually dominant to the left of where I stood, towering above me like a stubby spire over the relocated 1532 font, was a substantial, dark, octagonal font-cover with intricate, abstract seventeenth-century fretwork.

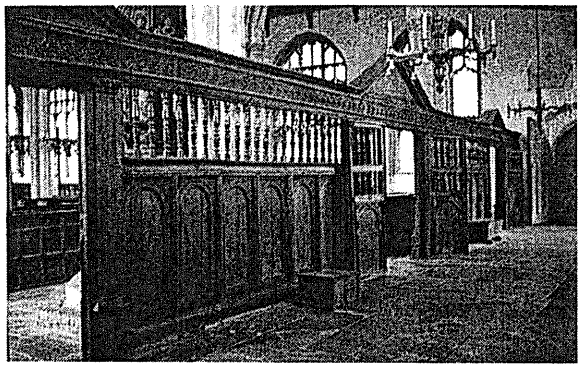
Extraordinarily too, on the floor near the font, and below the poor box of 1639, lay a burnished wooden cradle of traditional plain design, with its own curved hood, looking for all the world as though it had just been used at a baptism.

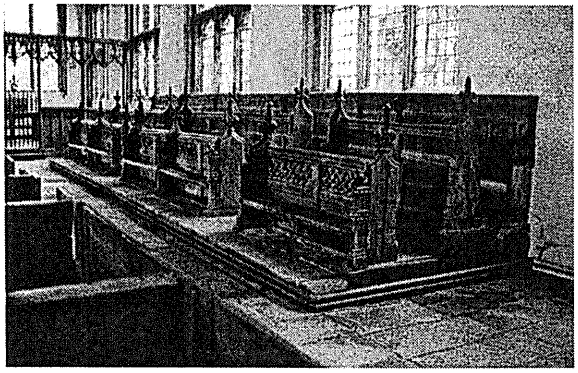
And then, as I swung round to gain a wider view, I took in the pews, for they too were not medieval. To my astonishment, the whole body of the nave east of the screen was literally full of post-Reformation seating. On the other side of the central aisle, and overlapping the arcades, stretched row after row, row after orderly row, of early seventeenth-century pews, all very similar in height and style (with friezes of blank ornamental arches) to those of Brooke in Rutland. In the south aisle, the seating was tiered in three semi-continuous rows along the entire length of the wall as far as the chapel, with fifteenth-century woodwork - without images, of course - incorporated towards the front and at the ends. Here members of the congregation thus faced north towards the eye-catching Jacobean pulpit with its voice-projecting tester and imposing stair on the further side of the chancel arch.

I had come to see an exceptional East-Anglian church of *c.*1400. What I had not been led to expect was a church within whose graceful outer shell of medieval stone would be an interior radically remodelled in wood to suit the Reformed usages of around 1620. Between a west-end newly defined by the great screen and, on the east, what presumably then was still a complete rood screen below the level of its loft, a vast auditory space had been deliberately contrived to create a church within a church with no expense spared. In it a prosperous Marshland congregation of perhaps 250 souls had sat in sober hierarchical rows, to receive the Word as that was then preached in accordance with the seemly Protestantism of Archbishop George Abbot's Church of England.

More than this, so personal and so immediate is early contemporary seating - especially when *en bloc* and more or less in situ - it was almost as though these very folk had but risen from their pews and departed the church a matter of minutes before I arrived.

Charles Phythian-Adams





Two views of the interior of St Peters, 1) The great west screen from the north-west looking towards the south door. 2) Tiered seating in the south aisle east of the screen.

WHERE THEY ARE NOW

The following news of Friends and former students has been garnered in response to suggestions made by respondents to the questionnaire. It is hoped to extend this item in future years, and to this end you are asked to let the editor know of any landmark events in the lives or careers of anyone who has, or has had, affiliation with the department.

Alasdair Crockett PhD, Research Assistant, ELH 1994–98
Alasdair is about to enter his third (and final) year of his Prize Research Scholarship at Nuffield College and tells us that he is 'still working on the same old themes – nineteenth-century religion, secularization and religious pluralism'. Alasdair and his wife, Fran, became the proud parents of a baby, Charlotte Elizabeth, in October last year.

Ian Friel MA, ELH 1976–77
After completing his MA, Ian worked at The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich from 1977 until 1988 when he joined the Mary Rose Trust in Portsmouth. He is currently Museum and Community Arts Officer at Littlehampton Museum in West Sussex. Established as one our foremost scholars of maritime history, he has been responsible for numerous papers and other publications (see *Departmental Bibliography and History – 1948–1998* published last year) and is currently working on a maritime history of the British Isles. He completed a PhD at the University of Keele in 1990, and has recently been elected to Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries.
Ian tells us that he would be delighted to hear from former fellow students and advises that the latest news he has of some of his contemporaries is as follows: **Victoria Barrow** is living and working in Oxford; **Penny Berryman** is living and working in London; **Mollie Hobson** is living and working in Kent; **David Fleming** is Director of the Tyne and Wear Museums Service; **Bill Campion** is (so Ian believes) working for the VCH in Shrewsbury; **Tim Wilson** is Keeper of Western Art at the Ashmolean Museum, Tim was a Museums Studies student who took a local history option, and another such is **Sam Mullins** who is Director of the London Transport Museum.

Jonathan Pitt MA, ELH 1993–4
Earlier this year Jonathan completed his PhD on 'Wiltshire minster *parochiae* and West Saxon ecclesiastical organisation' at King Alfred's College, Winchester, and is currently exploring future career opportunities and preparing articles for publication.

Peter Scott MPhil, ELH 1995
Peter has very recently been in touch to advise of his succesful attempts to save the London Electricity Board Archive of over 1,500 items, some of them 100 years old. He has also been busy editing an impressive church guide, *The Parish Church of Saint John the Evangelist, Great Stanmore, Middlesex: A Brief History and Guide* (2000), a copy of which he has donated to the Marc Fitch Library.

Nicola Verdon MA, ELH 1995–6
Nicola completed her PhD at Nene College and is now a lecturer at Harlaxton College (the British campus of the University of Evansville, USA, near Grantham).

Helen White MA, ELH 1982
Helen advises us that after eleven years at the V&A and five years with Tyne and Wear Museums, she is now a lecturer in Museum Studies at the University of Newcastle.

LIBRARY ACQUISITION

The University Library is in the process of acquiring microfilm copies of the Essex Archdeaconery Office act books from the 1560s through to the early seventeenth century. The resurgent use of the ecclesiastical courts in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century has been illustrated most recently by Helmholz from the perspective of canon law, and from various social perspectives (marriage formation, social crimes, sexuality, bastardy, defamation) by Sharpe, Ingram and Marchant, while Laura Gowing has looked at female language and sexuality in the London consistory court.

The Essex court material is particularly interesting as it is one of those jurisdictions which persistently in the 1560s and 1570s re-introduced public penance in the secular sphere of the market place, and sometimes within the spiritual public arena of the parish church. Parallels are the

contemporary Nottingham and Colchester archdeaconery courts, which also imposed public penance in the market place.

Other jurisdictions do not seem to have followed the same policy; for instance research so far reveals no example at Lichfield, while the records of Winchester, Salisbury and Oxford yield only rare examples. There seems then to be a different pattern of re-adoption of public penance in the market place for which Essex is one of the principal examples.

We therefore have some interesting developments as, by the early sixteenth century, public penance in the market place, which had been common in the Middle Ages, had almost disappeared and the pre-Reformation church had in practice moved to reserving penance to the spiritual forum (although penance in church was often public, entailing humiliation as well as reconciliation). A wide range of penance was involved at this time and in the case of pilgrimage to local shrines, there is an interesting intersection of official and 'popular' cultures, which perhaps raises questions about the formation of voluntary religion and private devotion and convention.

What happened in Essex and some other jurisdictions from the 1560s (there are some gaps before then) is a reintroduction of penance and humiliation in the secular public forum which runs counter to Bossy's view of an interior, private penitence in the sixteenth century. The Godly may well have selected the the humiliation of sinners in the secular public forum to regulate and discipline social order (the preponderance of cases are sexual). Nevertheless, the range of penitential impositions was much narrower by the late sixteenth century than it had been in the earlier part. What had also changed from late medieval penance in the public forum was the form of discipline. In the late sixteenth century, penance involved conscience - humiliation by example - whereas in the late Middle Ages, sentences of penance in the market place had involved bodily discipline such as whipping (*fustigatio*). By contrast, whilst bodily discipline declined in the spiritual courts, it continued unabated in local civic courts.

The request for the Essex archdeaconry material has developed out of ongoing researches, but the films will be available for anyone to use and constitute an important source for the study of social ordering in the period they cover. Anyone wishing to use the material for a dissertation, or perhaps doctoral research, would be welcome to do so. It will be available in the University Library, hopefully in this academic year.

Dave Postles

BOOK REVIEW

While it has not been customary to carry book reviews in the Newsletter we have made an exception in the case of the following volume co-edited by a Friend (Dr P. Morgan, University of Keele) and which numbers amongst its contributors one of the department's post-graduate students, Denis Stuart, who has already enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a lecturer in local history at the University of Keele. Future requests for review will be sympathetically considered.

Staffordshire Histories: Essays in Honour of Michael Greenslade, edited by P. Morgan and A.D.M. Phillips. Published in 1999 by the Staffordshire Record Society and Keele University (ISBN 0 901719 27 4). xii + 304 pp. 8 figs and 23 plates. Price £15, from the Centre for Local History, Keele University, Keele, ST5 5BG.

This volume is a tribute to Michael Greenslade, of the *Victoria County History*, who has devoted most of his life to recording and illuminating the history of Staffordshire. It contains a brief appreciation of the honorand by Christopher Elrington, twelve essays (by thirteen authors, including the two editors), and an index compiled by C.R.J. Currie. The subjects of the essays range in time from pre-Conquest days to the 'golden days of farming' from 1840 to 1870. The essays vary in length from eight to thirty-six pages.

The first essay, shortest of them all, is a study of the parish of Leek at its greatest extent, which possibly coincided with the pre-Conquest estate. It was greatly reduced in size by 1086. The second essay (a long one with 16 plates) deals with the architecture and Romanesque sculpture of Tutbury Priory. Its exclusively monastic buildings have completely disappeared, and the history of the Priory can be compiled

only from its cartulary of 1452-58, some antiquarian writings, limited archaeological investigations, and the surviving church, now much modified. The subject of the third essay is the Guild of St John the Baptist, Walsall. Religious guilds and fraternities, including the membership of both men and women, were a ubiquitous expression of late medieval Christianity. Staffordshire was no exception, and Walsall is probably the best documented example. Established by 1390, its accounts show clearly that it was an important local institution.

There follows an essay on '"Behaving badly": Lichfield women in the later middle ages'. It is spoilt, in your reviewer's view, by shrill but irrelevant complaints derived not from history but from modern feminism. The Court Book of the Dean of Lichfield between 1457 and 1492 records many cases of moral offences mainly by men, although some 130 women appear in the visitations. They are there, however, only because 'preconceived male views about how women ought and ought not to behave have exposed to view women whose lives would otherwise have been completely hidden from us'. It is a relief to turn next to a study of Adbaston churchwardens' accounts, 1478-1488, written by one of the editors, a member of the Friends. The short text (edited here) and a description of the manor, the church and the parish, reveal something of Adbaston at that time.

The following essay is 'Fire on the Chase: rural riots in sixteenth-century Staffordshire'. A number of enclosure riots took place on Cannock Chase between 1580 and 1582. Hedges and fences enclosing some hundreds of acres of woodland were burned or removed. The conventional explanation, of course, is that the riots were a (reasonable and proper) peasant reaction to (wicked) landlord encroachment of common rights. Closer examination shows that the difficulties began with the rivalry of two local magnates, the protestant Aston family of Tixall and the recusant Pagets of Rugeley and Cannock. The rioting was not the community in revolt against injustice, but the exploitation of tension within the community by a criminal sub-group. You must read this essay yourself: your reviewer thinks that it is the best of the bunch!

The seventh essay is called 'Loyalty and a "Good Conscience": the defection of William, fifth Baron Paget, June 1642'. The fifth baron, grandson of one of the protagonists in the last essay, was a protestant (consistency is not a characteristic of this family!). In June 1642 he switched his allegiance from Parliament to the King, but changed his mind again in 1644. Obviously exposed to criticism from both sides, Paget's dilemma is thoroughly analysed.

The next essay is 'Service of truth: early Quaker poor relief in Staffordshire to the mid-eighteenth century', written by Denis Stuart now a post-graduate student in the department. The number of Quaker poor in Staffordshire always remained small, but the records kept by the Leek Monthly Meeting from 1737 to 1753, provide a basis for comparing the merits and the levels of relief afforded by the parochial and the Quaker systems. The examination shows that the national system was on a totally different scale: the Quakers confined their relief to their own members, but their assistance was more generous and constructive than the parochial system.

The next essay, 'The man from Shropshire', seems at first an intrusion from another county. The first instalment of *Bleak House* (1st March, 1852) prompted William Challinor, a Leek solicitor, to send to the author details of a dispute (Joseph Cook v. Samuel Fynney and others) that arose at Lane End Farm, Onecote, near Leek. The story (somewhat simplified) was included in the fifth instalment of the novel (1st July, 1852). Why did Dickens call Gridley (i.e. Cook) the 'man from Shropshire'? No very convincing explanation is adduced. The next essay shows that at least we can affirm that Dickens was at Stafford in April 1852, reporting that it was 'as dull and dead a town as any one could desire not to see'. This sort of description may have been 'an interesting literary commonplace', but the author's account of Stafford at that time is extremely interesting.

A sombre note is struck by the next essay, 'Childhood and sudden death in Staffordshire, 1851 and 1860'. In Staffordshire the police records, leading up to inquests, have helped to illuminate this study of a difficult subject - the deaths of children, and especially working-class children, in the home. The last essay, the

longest, examines the workings of the Tithe Commutation Act (1836), other official returns, and estate cropping or field books, especially those from the Trentham estates of the dukes of Sutherland. The latter tend to support the view that the development of cropping patterns at this time was not a continuous expansion of grassland at the expense of tillage.

This collection of essays is lively and stimulating, and a substantial contribution to Staffordshire's history. The book is well produced, and, by today's standards, inexpensive. The ISBN number printed on the back of the jacket is wrong.

Derek Shorthouse

FRIENDS PUBLICATIONS

Friends' Papers no. 1 *Lay Piety in Transition* - the sales of which have benefited the Friends' funds to a considerable extent - is now out of stock but it is hoped that, in due course, Dave will be producing a revised and enlarged edition. Papers 2, 3 and 4: Tania McIntosh's *The Decline of Stourbridge Fair* (£4 inc. p&p); Amanda Flather's *Politics of Place* (£6 inc. p&p); and *John Sneyd's Census of Ipstones in 1839* (£6 inc. p&p) by Marion Aldis and Pam Inder, are also selling well although copies remain available for purchase.

The jubilee edition of the *Departmental Bibliography and History* is selling well but copies are still available (£11 inc. p&p). It provides a rich, indeed indispensable, listing of over 3,000 items authored by the staff and students of the department over its lifetime.

In addition to these publications the department itself has some books and papers for sale and further details of these may be obtained from Ken Smith at Marc Fitch House.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Reservations for Seminars:
Mrs Pauline Whitmore, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR; tel: 0116 2522762; FAX 0116 2525769.

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Purchase of Friends publications: Derek Shorthouse, 3, Cams Ground, Highnam, Gloucester GL2 8LZ tel. 01452 311974, or Mike Thompson, Marc Fitch House, tel. 0116 2522837, e-mail mgt4@le.ac.uk

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