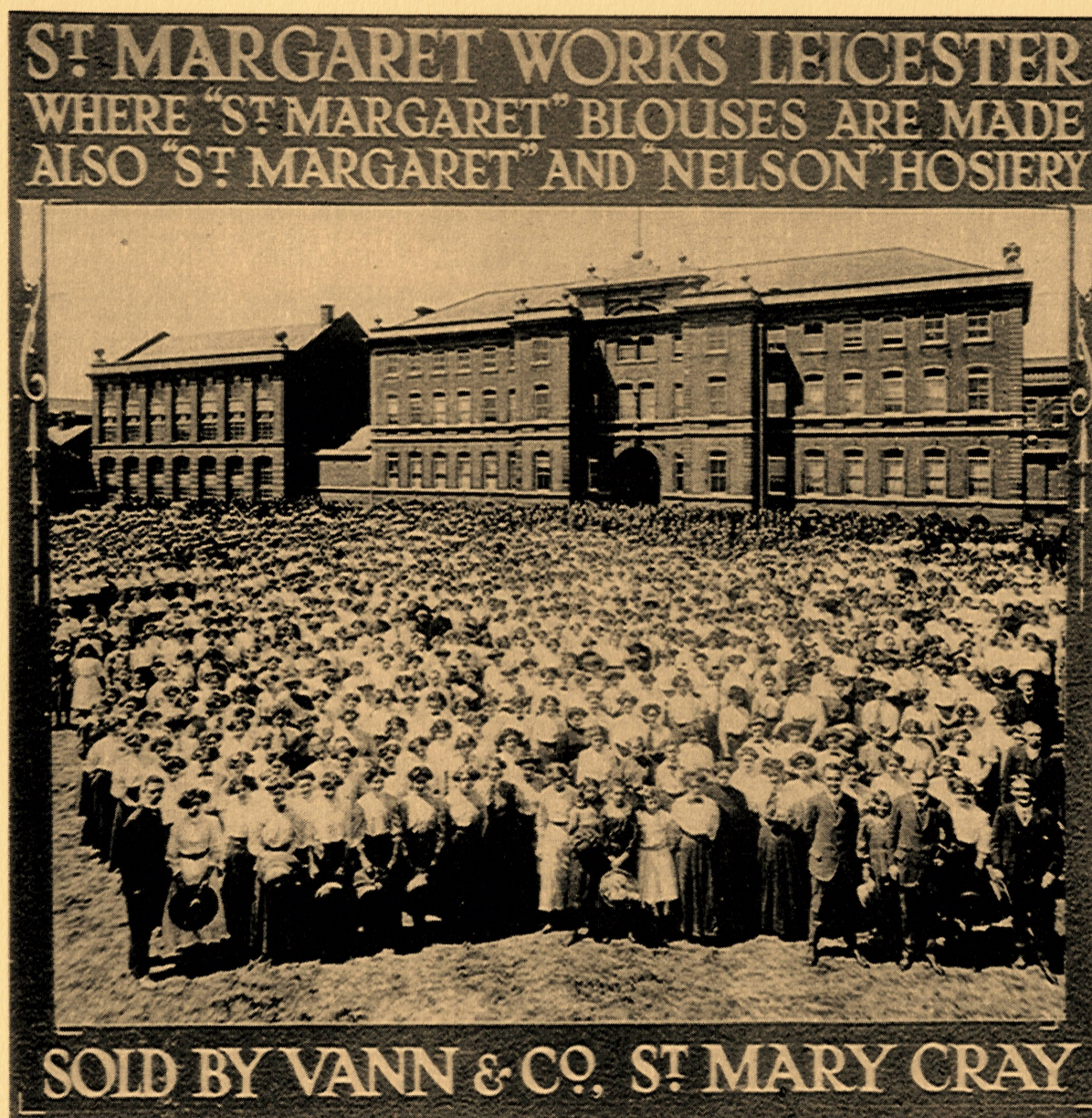


Friends of the Department of English Local History

NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

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EDITORIAL

Your editorial this year will be necessary rather than interesting, because its main purpose is to announce constitutional changes: the Friends are about to rise, like a medieval borough, to incorporated status. You, the reader, have always been very good with your subscriptions (and the frequent donations which come along with them: keep it up). Your informal committee has always been very good at raising money by a large variety of small means. As a result we are rich in a modest way, though we shall have to become richer before we can establish a studentship or studentships: our ultimate aim. But, as was pointed out at a committee meeting (where many skills are represented, from a potter to a company secretary), there is the problem of exactly who this fund belongs to. Accordingly it was decided that we should have a constitution, a formally elected committee and an annual general meeting. Establishment of these need not be too painful and, once it is done, all Friends will be able to voice their views in a constitutional way. We intend to have an inaugural meeting on **Thursday January 11th at 11.00 a.m.** in Marc Fitch House. Please do try to come. A simple draft constitution will be available in the Department from December (or please write to Harold Fox if you wish to be sent one in advance). Subsequent annual general meetings will probably be at about the same time of the year, unless other suggestions are made. The constitution as adopted on January 11th will be printed in next year's Newsletter. Pills must be sugared, so we hope that these meetings will be associated with a certain amount of hospitality and conviviality and that they will become occasions at which Friends can renew contact with one another.

THE DEPARTMENT

SEMINAR PROGRAMME 1994-5: AUTUMN TERM

In his paper on 'The place of custom in plebeian political culture 1550-c.1800' Dr Andy Wood (University of Liverpool) dealt skilfully with the different uses, ancient and modern, of the word 'custom', from the 'time out of mind' right acknowledged by the courts to the woolly liberal concept of how peasants lived without conflict. Compared to E.P. Thompson in framing his theory of the 'moral economy' of the eighteenth century, he looked further back to the growing importance of the written as opposed to oral record and struggles for legal rights and also further forward to the precedents for the vocabulary of the Chartists. To an elite who found that custom stood in the way of their economic interests it might well be despised as barbarous, immoral, obscure, difficult to understand and conflicting with written laws. But we were reminded that the fact that custom was appealed to as something static should not mislead us into treating it as any more inflexible than other aspects of plebeian culture.

Dr Phillipp R. Schofield (Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine) addressed the theory that the fourteenth-century plagues led to dissolution of the family land-bond. For his paper on 'Tenurial developments and the availability of customary land in a later medieval community' it was important to be able to trace continuity of occupation of land holdings on a manor with particularly good records. In Birdbrook, Essex, before the Black Death there was no 'market' in customary land and most transfers occurred on death. Apparently the custom was for ultimogeniture after provision for the widow's dower; so a successor was often a minor and was unlikely to enter the holding on the death of his father. The demesne was tilled as much as possible; but from 1405/6 it

was leased in a way affecting the pattern of land tenure.

Mr Peter C.D. Brears (once Director of Leeds Museum) gave an engaging account of his upbringing and career in Yorkshire and touched on a wide range of types of 'folk art'. He has made a regional and practical study of knitting sheaths, pieces of wood which were used to support the needles while knitting was in progress and which were commonly made as love-tokens. He showed us distribution maps of differing shapes and styles of decoration and also some examples which he had carved himself. His talk 'Folk art and food: cultural aspects of everyday life' prompted discussion about the need for resources and imagination to be applied to the study of the more ephemeral forms of material culture.

From the art historian's point of view 'Funeral monuments in the visual culture of post-Reformation England', the subject of the talk by Dr Nigel Llewellyn (University of Sussex), present a series of puzzles. Monuments appear to fall below standards of taste and scale and they mix different styles in no clear sequence. Dr Llewellyn, however, by setting them in their cultural and social context, advanced a convincing thesis. He pointed out that even among contemporaries the function of monuments was disputed. Their form and role changed so that they acted as part of the death ritual and became permanent replacements for the deceased and also exemplars to the living. We were treated to a fascinating sequence of slides showing the different types and styles of monument, all from his study county of Herefordshire. Many monuments were erected during the lifetime of the subject, who probably chose the representation and wording. The dispute between classical Latin and vernacular English was never settled and the 'puritanical' suppression of the human figure was as much Elizabethan as Cromwellian. Indeed most of the damage to monuments appears to have been the result of nineteenth-century efforts to tidy up church interiors.

John Goodacre

SPRING TERM

The Mercian cult of St Werburgh and its changing political implication formed the subject of the opening Spring term seminar by Dr Alan Thacker (Victoria History of Cheshire). He introduced the details of St Werburgh's life; the daughter of King Wulfhere of Mercia, she entered the nunnery of Ely and was associated with convents at Sheppey, Thanet and Hoo, in Kent, all of which were ruled variously by her aunts, great-aunts and grandmother. She was responsible for founding convents at Hanbury in Staffordshire, Weedon in Northamptonshire and Threkingham in Lincolnshire where she died in 700 AD. After her death, her remains finally ended up in Chester, of which city she is patron saint. Accounts of the saint's miracles appear to emanate from two sources. The first, which is associated with Hanbury and, in particular, Weedon, tells us that St Werburgh caused a flock of wild geese which were damaging a farmer's crops to hang their heads and droop their wings in shame and at the saint's behest to depart from the farmer's land, never to return. This story, however, has been pirated from the life of another saint, with the addition of an assertion that one of the geese was caught and eaten during the proceedings, but was restored to life before the flock finally departed. The other scene of the saint's miracles appears to be Chester, where Dr Thacker revealed a major early cult which was supported by Mercian royal patronage and illustrated the importance of her cult and its political and diplomatic ramifications.

Dr Howard Clarke (University College, Dublin) illustrated his seminar 'The topographical development of medieval Dublin' with a series of maps which led his audience from seventh-century Dublin through the later middle ages to the present day. He stressed that Ireland, unlike England, has no Roman urban history; instead monasteries and their enclosures are seen by some historians as proto-towns, although many failed to develop into towns in the

middle ages. Dr Clarke described Dublin's pre-urban landscape emphasising the importance of the River Liffey crossings and its situation as the focus of four long distance routeways. Viking raids led to the establishment of a fortified harbour at Longphort which developed as a slave trading base and by the mid tenth century an urban place was developing. Archaeological evidence shows that by 1170 Hiberno-Norse Dublin was an enclosed town with craft and trading activities, the Liffey had been bridged and stone walls built, a market existed and some building had taken place on the opposite bank of the river. By the end of the middle ages Dublin had developed into a major trading centre and the focus of English interest in Ireland.

It was a great pleasure to hear Ms Jean Birrell (University of Birmingham) eloquently deliver her seminar 'Deer hunting and the medieval forest'. Highlighting the comparative academic neglect of hunting as an important resource in the forest, Ms Birrell explained that the original purpose of many forests was exclusive royal access to hunting grounds. She drew on forest records to show that hunting was of primary importance as late as the fourteenth century. Dismissing the notion that forests were chiefly used for leisure activity for the king and his chosen companions, Ms Birrell instead highlighted the management of the royal forest as both a professional business and an important source of patronage. Detailed descriptions of how hundreds of deer were caught by professional teams and dogs in order to victual the royal households, particularly at key occasions in the year, were put forward. She described the way in which deer were caught, which dogs were used, whether archers and nets were needed and from which forests deer could be taken. Ms Birrell also demonstrated how individual nobles could take advantage of their position to hunt either with the king's permission or at the connivance of the keeper of the forest.

STAFF DISTINCTION: KEITH SNELL

We are delighted to announce the promotion of Keith Snell to Reader in the Department of English Local History.

VISITS TO THE DEPARTMENT

It has been a great pleasure this year to welcome visitors from all over the world and of all ages to the Department, as speakers, as members of our audiences and as seekers after its facilities and expertise.

Brookfield Community School

Terry Kilburn, ex-M.A. student, and fourteen sixth-form students from Brookfield Community School visited the Department in May. They were shown the facilities of Marc Fitch House and of the University (including the new lecture rooms opposite the Fielding Johnson Building where the card-operated locking system worked with a vengeance, entombing the party for several minutes in a deserted hall). Harold Fox then introduced the topic of deserted villages and took the party on an excursion into Leicestershire.

Extraordinary Seminar by Larry Poos

Professor Larry Poos, Professor in the Department of History at the Catholic University of America, made a special visit to the Department on June 23rd. His well attended seminar attracted many distinguished visitors. This was his first visit to Leicester which he recognised as the 'spiritual home' of English Local History and his topic, sixteenth-century migration, was of special interest to many people associated with the Department. The main source for this research were sixteenth-century diocesan cause papers of Chester, Norwich and Winchester which have been addressed with the rigour for which Professor Poos is well known. Although deponents in the diocesan courts were not considered representative of the population (being 85-90% male and drawn mainly from the middling sections of society), the records provided Professor Poos with the opportunity to compare migration patterns between regions. His conclusions were subjected to stimulating questioning and evaluation from his audience

Summer Seminar by Paul Hyams

We were extremely pleased when Professor Paul Hyams (Cornell University) offered to present a paper at short notice this summer on the topic 'Women and villeinage in medieval England.' As Marc Fitch House was in a state of abnormal chaos due to the combined effect of Pauline's holiday and the decorators, the seminar was held in the university library and evolved into a stimulating and lively round table discussion. Professor Hyams developed some of the arguments rehearsed in his book *King, Lords and Peasants* about the distinction between serfdom and villeinage. He discussed the ways in which the notion of freedom evolved in common law and stated that what was at issue for lords in the middle ages was land, the fruits of the land and rents; he said it was not always clear whether tenants paying money rent were more or less free than those doing customary service for their land.

When addressing what he called 'the woman question', Professor Hyams described the ways in which women were excluded from the legal debate over status and tenure. Society started from a patriarchal premise, women lived their lives under the control of men, only widows claimed a degree of freedom. A woman's role was to pass on male blood, a fact at both village and lordly level. The law was also gender biased and there were no women judges or jurors in either royal or manorial courts. In hereditary matters, too, women were regarded merely as conduits of property and status. Discussing the question of merchet (payment for a licence to marry) Professor Hyams noted that this was normally a contract between men, an assertion queried in the discussion, when manors in Cambridgeshire and Somerset were offered as places where women were known to have paid merchet for themselves. Professor Hyams discussed the potential for the sexual exploitation of female tenants by lords but believed there was no evidence for this. His visit was a refreshing draught of air on a blazing July day.

RESEARCH STUDENTS' WORKSHOPS

The Spring workshop, the best-attended in recent years, had a multi-media flavour. David Postles introduced students to the Department's computer resources and the Internet, while Julie Dexter, discussing her research on 'Class organisation of nineteenth-century dissent', illustrated her paper on the early popularity of Methodism with video clips. Film of thirties Germany demonstrated by analogy how mass movement attractions such as dressing up and singing songs also threaten exclusion. On the other side of the cyber-coin, Trevor Hill whose research focuses on 'Trading and genealogical networks in Shropshire small towns, c.1800-1860' described amusingly how his work was becoming 'bogged down' because of his enthusiasm for building computer databases. More databases were on display, however, underpinning the paper by Graham Jones, 'Church dedications as a tool for local historians', and informing the Somerset studies of Jem Harrison and Michael Thompson. Jem's presentation on his work, entitled 'A wetland-edge community in the Middle Ages', showed tables summarising Brent's demesne income and expenditure between 1251 and 1334. Arable on the demesne, where a third of expenditure went on wages and expenses, provided a diminishing share of income while rents were moving in the opposite direction. Mike described the process through which he had concluded that the original area of the virgate on Glastonbury Abbey's Polden Hill manors was almost certainly one of forty acres rather than the twenty which his early researches had suggested.

Reported work in progress for the Early and Later Medieval periods also included Teresa Hall's analysis of the morphology of minster settlements in Dorset. Rectilinear planning in about half the cases might characterise original layouts perhaps reflecting eighth-century influence from Wessex. In the session devoted to modern period topics, Vernon Davis, discussing his

research on 'Economics, exploitation and environment in north-west Leicestershire, c.1870', touched on social spatialisation as related to the area of Charnwood Forest. Jenny Bhatt whose research is entitled 'Dr Margaret Miller and the campaign for the right of the married woman to earn' talked about the difficulties of drawing conclusions from data. Margaret Miller appeared to have been dismissed for a variety of political and possibly personal reasons, with lack of tenure, under which any academic employee was vulnerable, working particularly against women. Last but very far from the least challenging in a day of ground-breaking research reports was Len Garrison's contribution on 'Documenting the black historical presence in Nottingham'. Len argues that Britain's black population is far older and more deserving of attention than conventionally presented.

At the Michaelmas term workshop, Robert Peberdy whose research is on 'The River Thames in the late medieval period', suggested dates and causes for a cessation of navigation until 1635. Derek Shorthouse who discussed 'Turn-out in county council elections in Gloucestershire', explored the decline in voting levels after the initial high turn-outs following the introduction of county councils in the 1880s. Trevor Hill demonstrated techniques for the delimitation of nineteenth-century town hinterlands, while Graham Jones discussed popular culture and the cult of saints. Jem Harrison asked if Somerset wetland management was developed under the Romans and Julie Dexter illustrated two aspects of the Somerset coalfield, friendly societies and the employment of women.

Graham Jones

THE JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE

To the value of £100, the John Nichols Prize is awarded annually for essays of up to 20,000 words which illuminate some aspect of English or Welsh local history. Since 1992, unrevised M.A. dissertations have been accepted for the competition,

provided that they have been awarded a distinction, in addition to essays submitted from external sources. The closing date for submission is the end of December in any year, essays being assessed by the end of March. If you think that you have an appropriate entry, please contact the 'John Nichols Prize Co-ordinator' at the Department.

Essay topics which have been successful in recent years include: discussion of marriage horizons in east Kent, 1620-40; the topography and development of Saxon Cambridge; a re-examination of Stow church; agricultural politics on the Bedford estates in early Victorian England; chantries in the parish churches of late medieval Bristol; cholera in Ely, 1832; civil marriage, sectaries and justices of the peace, 1653-7; the Family of Love in eastern England; churchwardens' accounts in the sixteenth century; and the decline of Stourbridge Fair, 1770-1934.

In 1993 the Prize was awarded to Tania McIntosh for her M.A. dissertation on the decline of Stourbridge Fair, but in 1994 it was conferred on Dr Steve Hindle, an external candidate. Steve was Lecturer in History at Anglia Polytechnic University at the time of his submission, but has recently accepted one of the prestigious research fellowships at Warwick University. A note about his essay appears below. His remarkable piece, however, does not define the normal standard of submissions and so you should consider applying - you have nothing to lose and £100 to gain.

JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE AWARD 1994

Steve Hindle, 'The keeping of the peace in early modern Cheshire.'

Extending the discussion of dispute resolution and the degree of participation in the law down to the lower courts, following Robert Shoemaker's account of the Middlesex Quarter and Petty Sessions, Steve Hindle concentrates on the use of recognizances or bindings over to keep the peace to assess how far the judicial process involved: (a) extra-judicial remedies; and (b)

discretionary action by the justices. Whilst pursuing quantitative analysis, he is also sensitive to the qualitative interpretation of the evidence. He is perhaps more circumspect than Shoemaker about the level of success of recognizances and is aware of the social issues behind the legal activity.

His multi-disciplinary approach, here and elsewhere, is exemplified in his paper on 'Gossip, gender and the experience of authority in early modern England', *Continuity and Change* 9:3 (1994), pp. 391-419. Both this published paper and 'The keeping of the peace' developed out of his Cambridge Ph.D. thesis (1992), which was concerned with social relationships in Cheshire c.1590-c.1630. It is to be hoped that 'The keeping of the peace' will soon be published.

David Postles

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF LOCAL HISTORY AT LEICESTER

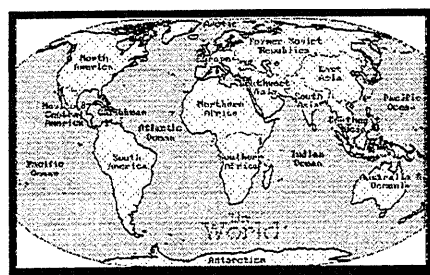
Work is now well in hand on the extended edition of *Local History at Leicester 1948-1978* which is to be produced as a contribution to the Department's 50th anniversary celebrations in 1998. We want the bibliography to be as complete as possible but because of the large numbers of students who have passed through the Department since 1978 it is not possible for the compilers to undertake a search for the publications of past students. We are therefore asking all ex-students to send bibliographical details of their publications to Marc Fitch House marking the envelope 'Anniversary Bibliography'. It is important that you include title, name of periodical with volume number and date, place of publication, year and page numbers. We also need a brief abstract (about 150 words) indicating the subject in order that each entry may be correctly classified. If you are in contact with past members of the Department who are not Friends we would be most grateful if you would encourage them to get in touch with us.

VIRTUAL FRIENDS?

Before



After



The Department is shortly to join the 'information superhighway' when information concerning its history and activities, including the Friends, is placed upon Leicester University's Campus Wide Information Server (C.W.I.S) and thereby the INTERNET. Any Friend or interested party, anywhere in the world, with a computer and modem will be able to access this information by logging on to the Leicester University's Information Server. As well as describing the traditional *genius loci* of Marc Fitch house, there will also be displays of the Department's latest computerised exploits including a tutorial on Medieval Charters and computerised cartography relating to religious worship in the nineteenth century.

It is anticipated that the computerised links will be up and running by the end of 1995. By the time of the next Newsletter the location (URL) of this information will be made known. It will even be possible to produce a 'virtual Newsletter', so if you've been putting off buying a computer, do so now and become a virtual Friend!

Alasdair Crockett

SEMINAR PROGRAMME 1995-6

If you would like to come to any of the following seminars, you will be very welcome. They are held in the Seminar Room at Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road. *We regret that it is essential that you notify the Departmental Secretary, Mrs Pauline Whitmore (0116-2522762) 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 start at 2.15 and end by 4.00 p.m. (approx), followed by tea.

Thursday 12th October

Professor Barry Higman (University of the West Indies), 'English landscape art and the Jamaican scene in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries'.

Thursday 19th October

Professor Alan Everitt (University of Leicester), 'Common lands: thoughts on their extent and role in "English History"'.

Thursday 2nd November

Dr Kari Maund (Department of History, University of Leicester), 'North Welsh dynastic politics and the Irish Sea province c. 950-c.1000'.

Thursday 16th November

Dr Terry Slater (Department of Geography, University of Birmingham), 'The topography of medieval towns: evidence from the town plan'.

Thursday 30th November

Dr Owen Davies (University of Lancaster), 'Witchcraft, cunning men/women and fortune-tellers in nineteenth-century urban contexts'.

Thursday 7th December

Professor Gareth Lewis (Department of Geography, University of Leicester), 'Counterurbanization and the rural turnaround'.

Thursday 11th January

Mr Graham Jones (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester), 'Penda's progeny: church dedications and the early history of Midland England'.

Thursday 1st February

Mr Michael Thompson (Department of English Local History, University of Leicester), 'The people of the Polden Hills in Somerset - 1260-1351'.

Thursday 8th February

Dr Steve Hindle (University of Warwick), "'Poor strangers crept amongst us": the politics of poor relief in a Fenland parish, c.1600-1914'.

Thursday 22nd February

Dr Panikos Panayi (Historical and International Studies, De Montfort University), 'Class and ethnicity in nineteenth-century Britain: the Germans in London, 1815-1914'.

Thursday 14th March

Dr Sarah Bendall (Merton College, Oxford), 'Local land surveyors of Great Britain and Ireland and their maps, c.1540-1850'.

DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS FOR 1994

T.G. Hill

Review of Dorian Gerhold, *Road Transport before the Railways: Russell's London Flying Waggon*, in *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 5:1 (1994), pp. 113-114.

H.S.A. Fox

'The millstone makers of medieval Dartmoor', *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries* 37 (1994), pp.153-7.

Review of M. Beresford and J. Hurst, *The English Heritage Book of Wharham Percy Deserted Medieval Village*, in *Agricultural History Review* 42 (1994), pp. 84-5.

R. Keep and H.S.A. Fox

eds *Friends of the Department of English Local History Newsletter* 7 (1994), 31pp.

C.V. Phythian-Adams

Gen.ed., J. Goodacre, *The Transformation of a Peasant Economy: Townspeople and Villagers in the Lutterworth Area 1500-1700* (Communities, Contexts and Cultures: Leicester Studies in English Local History, Aldershot 1994).

'Time, society and nation: conceptualizing English social history', in L. Repina *et al.*, eds, *Social History: a Problem of Synthesis* (Moscow, 1994), pp.22-23.

'General editor's foreword', in J. Goodacre, *The Transformation of a Peasant Economy: Townspeople and Villagers in the Lutterworth Area 1500-1700* (Communities, Contexts and Cultures: Leicester Studies in English Local History, Aldershot, 1994), pp.xv-xvi.

'The Irish Sea Province: a plea for academic co-operation', *Newsletter of the Group for the Study of Irish Historic Settlement* 3 (1994), pp.2-3.

'Leicestershire and Rutland', in C.R.J. Currie and C.P. Lewis, eds, *English County Historians: A Guide. A Tribute to C.R. Elrington* (1994), pp.228-245.

D.A. Postles

'The perception of profit before the leasing of demesnes', in R.H. Parker and B.S. Yamey,

eds, *Accounting History: Some British Contributions* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 116-38.

ed. *Nomina* 15 (1991-2), 156 pp (with J. Freeman, O.J. Padel and V. Smart).

ed. *Nomina* 16 (1992-3), 154 pp (with J. Freeman, O.J. Padel and V. Smart).

'Reviewing social networks: using Ucinet', *History and Computing* 6:1 (1994), pp. 1-11.

'Some differences between seignorial demesnes in medieval Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia* 58 (1993), pp. 219-32.

K.D.M. Snell

ed. *Letters from Ireland during the Famine of 1847* (Dublin, 1994), 219pp (2nd edn, Nov. 1994).

ed. *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 5:1 (1994), 121pp.

ed. *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 5:2 (1994), 112pp (with L. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

'Women and rural history', *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 5:2 (1994), pp. 123-7 (with L. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

'English local history at the University of Leicester', *The Harborough Historian* (Dec. 1994).

Review of Felix Driver, *Power and Pauperism: the Workhouse System, 1834-1884*, in *Journal of Historical Geography* 20:1 (1994), pp. 97-99.

Review of Gavin Hannah, ed., *The Deserted Village: The Diary of an Oxfordshire Rector, James Newton, of Nuneham Courtenay, 1736-1786*, in *Local Historian* 24:2 (1994), pp.119-120.

Review of Georgina Boyes, *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*, in *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 5:2 (1994), pp. 228-9.

Review of Norma Virgoe and Tom Williamson eds, *Religious Dissent in East Anglia: Historical Perspectives*, in *Local Historian*, 24:4 (1994), pp. 245-6.

E.M. Tranter

ed. *A History of Weston on Trent, 4, Houses and Everyday Life in Weston on Trent* (Weston on Trent Local History Society, 1994), v + 41pp.

RECENTLY COMPLETED THESIS AND DISSERTATIONS

Ph.D. THESIS FOR 1995

Robert Peberdy

'The economy, society, and government of a small town in late medieval England: a study of Henley-on-Thames from c.1300 to c.1540.'

Until recently, historians sought in vain for overall trends in the economic fortunes of larger towns in late medieval England. This study, by contrast, is concerned with one of the more numerous small towns: the seigniorial town of Henley-on-Thames. It seeks to illuminate the lower part of the urban hierarchy through an investigation of economic functions; trading and social relationships between town, hinterland, and the wider world; and accompanying developments in social structure and government. Thanks to Henley's plentiful archive of both guild and manor records, major themes have been studied at all periods and important evidence about the town's external trade has been found in the London recognizance rolls, in Southampton records, and elsewhere.

Introductory chapters argue that Henley may have been founded for a non-commercial reason in the tenth century, but thrived because of its advantageous location on river and road routes. In the late Middle Ages Henley moved through four stages of development, each with distinctive characteristics. From c.1280 to 1349 the town relied on grain-exporting dominated by Londoners; craftwork oriented to manufacturing and finishing; a large population and a balance between manor and guild. From 1349 to c.1420 grain-exporting by Henley men was developed; there was more processing amongst craftwork and at this time the guild gained ascendancy over the manor. From c.1420 to c.1490 wool-exporting developed and population contracted. From c.1490 onwards the

economy in Henley was dominated by an expansion of grain-exporting, a population increase and a falling off in the amount of processing craftwork which was undertaken. Henley's late medieval history appears to be shaped by changing external demand for its hinterland products and by the hinterland's response to those demands. It is hoped that this study of Henley in a broad context develops means by which towns can be studied so as to elucidate the chronology and nature of economic and social change in late medieval England.

M.A. DISSERTATIONS FOR 1994

Ian Babington

'The hand-made nail industry of the Black Country, a study of an occupational culture.'

One of the key influences in the economic development and emergence of the region known as the Black Country was the hand-made nail industry, a feature of the area's economy from as early as John Leland's time. The industry was central to both the society and the economy of the district, employing at its peak in c.1830 approximately 50,000 people - men, women, and children. This dissertation aimed beyond the narrative to recreate the lives, the attachments and the feelings of 'belonging' of the nailers. The intention was to depict and decipher the 'occupational culture' of the nailing population; this was done by exploration of various traceable themes such as the changing composition of the workforce, localised differences, working practices, union formation and politics and religion. Research concentrated mainly upon qualitative evidence in the hope that this would help to create a picture of the Black Country nailer as a sentient, human being and not the faceless, statistical product of prolonged number-crunching. The dissertation's chronological bias lay primarily in the nineteenth century, a time of great change for the hand-made nail industry, and for the local and national societies in which it was set.

Christopher Bennett

“Devouring nostalgia, and an infinite repulsion”: the impact of D.H. Lawrence on the town and country of Eastwood.’

This dissertation explored the impact of D.H. Lawrence on the community of Eastwood in Nottinghamshire, an area which Lawrence has so changed that its history is now presented in relation to his life and work; the Eastwood area is now ‘Lawrence Country’, not a former coal mining town. He was a product of the town’s history; but this has been reversed so that the town is now presented as part of Lawrence’s history. Oral, journalistic and other sources were used to show the ways in which Lawrence has changed the region and how the community he wrote about has perceived these changes. The dissertation demonstrated that since publication of his works Lawrence has been a distinctive figure in the community, though he has never been happily received by the area despite his acceptance by the rest of society. It took the passing of a generation and the recognition of tourist potential before Lawrence’s legacy began to be exploited. The changing nature of Eastwood’s attitudes was shown and local resentment at the way in which the needs of the present community were made subservient to the domination of the past was explored.

Jackie Bennett

‘The ecclesiastical topography of Fenland: the Anglo-Saxon period.’

The aim of this dissertation was to dismantle and then reconstruct the network of cathedrals, monasteries, minsters and ordinary churches of Fenland before the Norman Conquest using a combination of documentary, topographical, archaeological and architectural sources. Evidence from Domesday Book was used together with place-names, dedications, relics, known tribal territories and the known church sites, which were presented in maps and tables. The criteria for ‘minster’ status - including taxation values, architectural features, royal

and episcopal associations and the size of the ecclesiastical territories - were applied to the Fenland churches. The results filled in many gaps in the ecclesiastical picture, but did not reveal any definite ‘minsters’. Criteria formulated in other regions may not be applicable to Fenland and the reasons for this were explored. In-depth analysis for individual cases seemed the only way to proceed and the multi-disciplinary method was tested further by investigating three groups of parishes. Those selected lay on the peat fen in south Cambridgeshire, on the silt fen in west Norfolk and on the fen-edge in Huntingdonshire. The importance of using a wide range of evidence for ecclesiastical research was emphasised and attention was drawn to several other sites in Fenland that would benefit from this method of analysis.

James Brown

‘The nineteenth-century industrialisation of a primary market town: Grantham, Lincolnshire.’

The possibility that Grantham was one of Professor Alan Everitt’s primary market towns was examined in this dissertation which extended to a study of nineteenth-century industrialisation and migration. Secondary sources indicated that Grantham had all the necessary qualifications to meet Professor Everitt’s criteria for a primary market town. Published sources and census extracts showed that Spitalgate parish on the southern boundary of the town was the main focus of industrialisation and migration during the second half of the nineteenth century; here the new factories and industries were established and the new terraced housing and the new parish church were built. The primary sources used to investigate migration into the town were the census returns for 1841, 1861 and 1881, poor law rate books between 1821 and 1867 and deeds to private houses. Nineteenth-century migration into Spitalgate seemed to fit into one of two patterns: firstly in quantity, the majority of migrants coming from the immediate area; secondly in quality,

with only those with special skills coming from longer distances.

Janette Brown

‘South Highfields, Leicester: the evolution of a suburb, 1891-1991.’

South Highfields is a distinctive landmark in Leicester’s urban landscape yet sadly today it is more renowned for crime and urban deprivation than for the beauty and variety of its architecture. The area was originally the prestigious home of many of Leicester’s late Victorian middling classes and this dissertation sets out to trace the destiny of the estate from that time to the present day, exploring in particular the restrictions imposed by its geographic location and physical layout. This research focused initially on the late nineteenth century with a street-by-street analysis of the census enumerators’ books of 1891 which give a unique insight into the lifestyle, community aspirations and occupations of the first inhabitants for whom the estate was ostensibly built. Through a detailed analysis of domestic and occupational variables, microcosmic status differences between streets and even within streets can be mapped and a picture of their residents constructed. The progression and chronology of the area from a prestigious Victorian suburb to a deprived inner-city district is traced by using poll books to assess the turnover rates of the residents and trade directories to map the encroachment of the central business district and the increasing number of commercial and business premises. The census statistics for the Wycliffe ward, in which Highfields falls, local press reports and Leicester city council surveys and inner city initiative reports were also employed. The chronology of the decline of Highfields is also studied in light of the memories of Leicester residents many of whom answered a newspaper request for information on the area made by the author in August 1994. The later history of Highfields is largely coloured by its inauspicious reputation, sustained and

propagated by the local media and perpetuated by lack of investment. The evolution of Highfields has witnessed successive generations of residents redefine and imbue the area with new meaning until its recent status as a conservation area has preserved the visual landscape and begun to reverse the process of change and decline.

Jacqueline Cameron

‘The lives of female vagrants in the casual ward of St Mary’s Workhouse, Nottingham, April 1899- March 1900.’

Female vagrants, their treatment under the Poor Law, their work and movements into the county of Nottingham were examined in this dissertation. The principal sources used were the Casual Pauper Admission and Discharge Register of April 1899 to March 1901, the Nottingham Guardians Minute Books of December 1893 to January 1895 and the Workhouse Punishment Book for Southwell of 1852-1936. Evidence from the Casual Pauper Register provided the names and details of vagrant women entering the casual ward of St Mary’s Workhouse in Nottingham, though the large number of entries limited the research to the first year of the register; during this period 765 women were admitted. A number of questions were addressed, for example, the influence of contemporary ideas about womanhood on the treatment of women; what conditions in the workhouse were like and differences in treatment between men and women vagrants. The evidence suggested that women were kept in appalling conditions and on occasions may have been treated more harshly than the men. Current attitudes to women did indeed affect their treatment, particularly the treatment of single mothers. The tasks allocated to the female vagrants were limited to low waged and unskilled occupations such as cleaning, domestic service and laundry work, areas which had higher rates of unemployment than industrial work.

Nicholas Cooper

'The church in Anglo-Saxon Northumberland.'

The church in Northumberland and the way in which it operated in the Anglo-Saxon period was the focus of this dissertation which drew on a range of sources. The literary evidence in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* was included as were sources for the conversion of the county by Paulinus, Aidan and others. Other literary sources were used together with place-name, architectural and sculptural evidence to locate the centres of early christianity in the area. The results were compared with models of church organisation which have been suggested for other parts of the country in an attempt to identify the putative minsters of Northumberland. The later parish system was scrutinised with attention focused on Alnwick Deanery's parishes each of which was considered in terms of parish churches and chapels and their relationship to Northumbrian settlement. The dissertation suggested that there was a planned, coherent chain of minsters stretching from south to north across the centre of Northumberland between the ancient monastic sites along the Tyne and at Lindisfarne. Similarities between Northumbrian minsters and those elsewhere were identified, although their spatial arrangements shown to be unusual. It was demonstrated that extensive Norman replanning took place after the 'harrying of the north' and many settlements were altered along with their church sites while the old minster churches remained *in situ*.

Sean Hendy

'An exploration of the patterns of worship of the major religious denominations in the registration district of Bedfordshire at the time of the religious census.'

This dissertation aimed to provide a clear and accurate picture of the patterns of religious worship in Bedfordshire at the time of the religious census of 1851. It also made a county-wide analysis explaining the major

aspects of these patterns using statistical analysis. The most important elements of the 1851 census were the attendance figures though the sittings figures were also used and indices of attendances and of sittings were compiled in order to produce an even measure of religious observance. To these were added economic and social data taken from the national population censuses for 1831 and 1851, the Compton census of 1676 and the *Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales*. The results, though limited to the five strongest denominations in the county, suggested four major regions which had differing social, agricultural and economic conditions and patterns of religious adherence which highlighted these differences.

John Hutchin

'Attitudes to the relief of poverty in Leicester 1901-14.'

The nature of poverty and the manner of its relief were highly contentious issues in Edwardian Leicester. The legacy of stern Victorian morality coincided with enthusiastic support for the adoption of Liberal welfare reforms. Opinions ranged from calls for the detention of the undeserving poor in labour colonies to the provision of a minimum wage. The poverty debate in Leicester was a fierce clash of ideas which revealed much about contemporary social attitudes. The aim of this dissertation was to study the disputes and debates concerned with the relief of early twentieth-century poverty. Topics considered included housing, public health, unemployment, old age pensions and theories of physical degeneration. Analysis revealed the co-existence of highly moralistic condemnation of the poor and enthusiasm for municipal and state welfare schemes. This produced a highly interesting state of rancour in Leicester.

Sally Luxton

A small Poland? A portrait of the Polish community in Leicester.'

Based primarily on oral evidence, this study traces the origins and development of the Leicester Polish community and focuses on particular aspects of its growth and continuity. Problems that had to be overcome by the early immigrants included language, dealing with prejudice and finding work. The present-day community was examined with regard to identity and ethnicity through a study of its social and religious organisation and through examination of both individuals and the whole community. There was clearly a difference in the perceived identities of the older generation and the second-generation Poles, though this did not necessarily result in a decline in a feeling of 'Polishness'. Finally the prospects for the future of the community were considered through an examination of the way its youngest members participate in community life and the ways in which older people feel traditions can be preserved. Some second-generation Poles, although acknowledging their heritage, already feel themselves to be a 'different sort of Polish' from the early immigrants. There are already signs that the community has begun its decline and the likelihood is that by the fourth generation it will have become largely assimilated into the host community.

Rita Marks

'Padbury: kinship and community c.1538-1634.'

This study of the village of Padbury in north Buckinghamshire analyses demographic trends, kinship and inheritance patterns and social networks for the period c.1538-1634. The village was chosen because of its rich source material, particularly two exquisitely detailed estate maps of 1591. Added to these is a wealth of documents, including a complete parish register from 1538 and ninety wills for the period. The visual evidence of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is significant and houses and plots illustrated on the maps can

be identified in the village today. Nominal evidence from the maps provided the springboard for the study of the community. Demographic investigations showed that Padbury's population conformed to national trends although some variations in marriage age and household size were identified. The wills showed that testators came from all strata of society, while the reconstruction of social networks revealed a strong kin-linkage between households in the early period and a dominant clique of husbandman/yeoman families was identified throughout. Many of these core families survived in the village for at least three generations.

Pat Orme

'Alabaster monuments as a reflection of changes in liturgy.'

The complex reasons for changes in the iconography of alabaster church tombs were examined in this work which also considered how these monuments to the wealthy and influential managed to survive the Reformation and how they were perceived by successive congregations. Alabaster was selected because its use over a specific period can be defined. Fear of purgatory has often been cited as the reason for the increased number of church monuments in the hundred years preceding the Reformation and this dissertation examined the contemporary view of purgatory, either as punishment or a final offer of salvation. In the context of increased church building during the period, the possibility that piety or love might have also played a part in the increased number of monuments was also examined. Concentration on the period between 1350 and 1650 highlighted a change in the mutual dependence of the affluent deceased and the living faithful, for the poor were often paid or persuaded by their own pious hopes to join in masses for the souls of those who hoped for a speedy passage through purgatory. After the Reformation it became less necessary to be buried in the chancel where a tomb could be a perpetual *aide-*

memoir to the clergy and congregation and alabaster monuments tended to be situated in family 'dormitories' in the nave. Tombs already established close to altars in the sanctuary or in chantry chapels were permitted to remain for the post-Reformation liturgy demanded that the clergy vacate the chancel and move closer to their congregations. The possibility that the use of pews and increasing literacy may have caused divisions in parish communities was also investigated.

Melanie Parr

'The churchyard in the modern period: function, idea and place.'

This is a study of the ways in which the function, the idea and the place of the churchyard has developed in a period for which histories dealing with death and burial have been dominated by accounts referring to the urban cemetery. The dissertation concentrated on three neighbouring but contrasting rural churchyards in east Devon: the first, Netherexe, is large but stands isolated in an area of dispersed settlement; the second, Huxham, is far more limited in extent and is closely encircled by a small cluster of buildings; the third, Poltimore, is extensive and sophisticated, and is surrounded by a large nucleated village formerly dominated by an adjacent country house. A methodology, drawing largely upon fieldwork and supplemented by some oral history, endeavours to analyse the importance of the visual and pictorial relationships between each churchyard and its surrounding human landscape, the societal and kinship patterns revealed in the internal layout of the churchyard and in its memorial inscriptions and the attitudes to the three churchyards as voiced by a number of individuals demonstrating some close attachment to them. The study, consequently, was able to reflect upon how the churchyard is attached in role, form and thought to its locality and its inhabitants.

Jonathan Pitt

'Land and people in a late medieval forest: an investigation of woodland society.'

The supposed characteristics of medieval woodland settlements were examined in this dissertation which took as its focus two communities on the edge of Rockingham Forest, the villages of Geddington and Lowick. Court rolls were the major source used to examine the status of these communities in the late fourteenth century. The nature of these sources imposed a mainly qualitative approach in its analysis of field systems, the size and nature of holdings, land use, the extent of a pastoral, woodland economy, the weight of lordship and the degree of individualism and rebelliousness - all features claimed to be distinctive of woodland environments as opposed to felden regions. Comparison was also made with studies of other forest manors. Conclusions were necessarily tentative but in varying degrees 'woodland characteristics' were found in both communities in the study period. However the reasons for these characteristics were felt to vary when the circumstances of particular manors came to be studied in detail. In Geddington in particular, it was felt that the ancient demesne status of the manor affected certain aspects of its development. Features which affected all manors during the period were examined as was the importance of location on their development. The limitation of the source was understood and it was noted that the activities of only a relative minority of the manors' dominant inhabitants could be studied.

Wendy Raybould

'Around the Gap: an investigation into the character of a group of parishes, and the relationships between them, in the Northamptonshire uplands at the beginning of the nineteenth century.'

This study sets out to identify the economic and social characteristics of a cluster of eight contiguous parishes in the Northamptonshire Uplands centred on the Watford Gap. Using a

range of sources, from the census and land tax assessments to local militia lists and parish registers, three principal themes were explored over the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. These were population, landholding patterns and trade, including the local wool trade, which were examined in relation to each individual parish. Inferences were drawn on the relationships between them. The possibility of a cultural or societal boundary still being apparent along the line of the Watling Street was explored in the context of mobility, family connections and landed estates.

John Wallace

'Newspapers in Leicester, 1850-1900.'

In common with many of England's major towns and cities in the nineteenth century Leicester supported a strong and vibrant press which reached a peak in its power and influence in the period between 1850 and 1900. This dissertation is a critical analysis of the most important developments associated with Leicester's newspapers at this time, focusing especially on such factors as politics, circulation and advertising and social life, along with a detailed account of the changes which occurred as a consequence of the repeal of stamp duty in 1855. After this date new titles emerged which were aimed at a new mass readership; by the 1870s daily newspapers were introduced into the town and successfully dominated the traditional weeklies by the early twentieth century. It was possible to outline reasons for the success or failure of the various papers and to determine how the local press reflected society as a whole and its influence in forming public opinion on a wide range of issues. The most important questions raised in this study concentrated on the degree to which changes in society were reflected by these titles and the social role they played in extending their readership from a relatively narrow section of the population in 1850 to a much broader base, encompassing working people by 1900. Furthermore it examined the interaction

between local and national society and concluded with an assessment of the way in which the period between 1850 and 1900 helped to shape twentieth-century developments.

EVENTS SPONSORED BY FRIENDS

THE SIXTH W.G. HOSKINS LECTURE

The sixth W.G. Hoskins lecture, 'The Crown and the people of the provinces under the Tudors and the Stuarts', was given by Gordon Forster, doyen of northern history, founder of *Northern History*, contributor to both the Cheshire and East Riding volumes of the Victoria County History and sometime external examiner of the M.A. course in English Local History in the University of Leicester. Fond memories of W.G. Hoskins were recalled in his opening words which included a description of a field trip in Yorkshire when the young Gordon Forster was seated on the coach behind the two great men of English Local History, Professors Finberg and Hoskins. He expected great enlightenment on the passing landscape but sadly none was forthcoming as the eminent pair slept throughout the whole journey.

Returning to the theme of his lecture, the speaker stressed the emphasis on good order and obedience in the period of the Tudors and Stuarts and noted the need at the time for religious uniformity. Much use was made of various forms of propaganda which enforced the current philosophy of obedience and conformity. He described the institutions which were charged with the implementation of local statutes. The Privy Council, active between the time of Elizabeth I and the Civil War, supported civil order; the judges of the central courts were linked from the provinces to Star Chamber; Parliament, which passed statutes, was represented at a local level by the sheriffs and church courts. He noted that churchwardens during this period found their

duties increasingly secularised, through an increased range of duties such as the administration of the poor law.

In response to the social and economic tensions most evident from the 1530s, the role of government was expanded and an elaborate legislative framework was created. Some of the problems of enforcing law and order at a local level were discussed, as were some of the ways in which local and central activities interlocked and depended for their success on local co-operation.

Penny Upton

FRIENDS' OUTING TO GLOUCESTER

On a June day of sunshine and showers, twenty-seven Friends and their guests met at the Gloucestershire Record Office for this year's outing, planned by Derek Shorthouse, to savour some of the many delights of Gloucester. Archivist Paul Evans introduced the County Record Office and led groups round the various sections, the mummified rat in the conservation room serving as a warning to searchers lingering too long. Lunch waited for us in the National Waterways Museum on the dockside where we were given a talk by David McDougall on the history of the dock complex from its development and time of prosperity to its eventual decline. Fortunately lack of finance has stayed the hand of the demolisher and the complex has been preserved and the warehouses transformed, one housing the city council offices and others a variety of museums, from Gloucestershire Regiments, Advertising and Packaging to the National Waterways Museum itself.

Hugh Conway-Jones was our guide across to the Cathedral and we set off in a squall of rain under a canopy of multi-coloured umbrellas and screeching seagulls. By the time we reached the site of the Civil War defences the rain had eased and we learned of the Roman city being placed at the lowest crossing point of the river, the relevance of medieval iron working and the development of Gloucester as a market and county town with its important links by road,

river, canal, railway and motorway. The grid layout of its streets contains much of interest including the thirteenth-century Blackfriars Church with its timber roof and, not to be missed, the house of the Tailor of Gloucester. We changed guides again for our tour of the cathedral and Robert Martin introduced us to the delights of its treasures. The final event of the day was a trip to Dr Foster's for much needed rest and refreshment.

Special thanks must go to Derek Shorthouse and his guest who counted us all out and counted us back in again on a successful and action packed day which left us all wanting to return for a longer visit to Gloucester.

Cynthia M. Thomas

DAIRY DATES FOR FRIENDS

Seventh W.G. Hoskins Lecture, 18th May 1996

We are delighted to announce that Emeritus Professor Maurice Beresford, F.B.A., Hon.D.Lit. has accepted the invitation to give the seventh W.G. Hoskins Lecture in the University of Leicester (there *are* others). He needs hardly any introduction, for his name goes before him. His books include *The Lost Villages of England* (1954), *Deserted Medieval Villages* (1971), *New Towns of the Middle Ages* (1967) and *Medieval England: An Aerial Survey* (1958). His title for the W.G. Hoskins Lecture is the enigmatic 'Over the hedge: or chance in research'. We anticipate a large audience.

Inaugural Meeting of the Friends, Thursday January 11th 1996

This meeting will be held at 11.00 a.m. in Marc Fitch House: all Friends will be very welcome (see Editorial for more details).

Friends' Field Excursion 1996

This will, as usual, be held on a Saturday in June, the precise date yet to be decided. A range of exciting and unusual destinations in Leicestershire is being planned. Please reserve as many June

Saturdays as possible. Full details will come in March with the usual circular about the W.G. Hoskins Lecture.

MARC FITCH HOUSE AND ITS FACILITIES

GIFTS TO THE MAP ROOM AND LIBRARY

With funds for purchases for the Map Room and the Marc Fitch Fund Library ever more strained, we are all the more grateful to those who have made donations. Very warm thanks go to you all. This year your names include: John Adams, Marion Aldis, David Aldred, Joan Anderson, Stuart Ball, William Bates, James Brown, Janette Brown, Evelyn Christmas, Chris Draycott, Eileen Edwards, Gordon Forster, Harold Fox, John Heathcote Ball, Trevor Hill, John Hurst, Andy Jackson, Graham Jones, Rosie Keep, Maryanne Kowaleski, Melanie Parr, Robert Peberdy, David Postles (thanks for this year's gifts as well as for many in the past), Lydia Pye, Wendy Raybould, June Sheppard, Derek Shorthouse, Chris Thornton, Christine Vials, Eleanor Vollans, Penny Ward and Chris Wrigley.

Among the long sets which have been presented are a collection of the highly valuable British Association regional surveys, early issues of *Medieval Archaeology* and *Post-Medieval Archaeology* (all from John Hurst) and a large collection of guides once in the possession of David Scurrrell of Maidstone and presented in his memory by Penny Ward of Kent County Council Arts and Libraries Service. Please do continue to help us in this way.

LYDIA PYE

During the past year Lydia Pye has become a familiar figure in the Department, working quietly in the Marc Fitch Fund Library and getting to know and help students and staff. Lydia has been cataloguing and classifying sections of the

library as part of her dissertation for an M.A. in Library and Information Studies at Loughborough University. Her special job has been the re-arrangement and cataloguing of the London section, a difficult task because of the changing definitions of 'London' over the centuries. But, under the expert eye of Ann O'Brien and the (very) distant supervision of Harold Fox, she has now become an expert in London's topography and the metropolitan section of the library will very shortly be in ship-shape order. Lydia has worked in the past in the main university library in Leicester and hopes to continue her career in archive and library cataloguing, perhaps in other universities.

CELIA SWAINSON

An extensive collection of some thousands of offprints and guide books, amassed by Francis Steer and Marc Fitch, forms one section of the Marc Fitch Fund Library. We are fortunate that Celia Swainson is now in a position to resume the sterling work of sorting, listing and cataloguing the guides which she began two years ago prior to her husband's serious illness.

A graduate of the Open University, Celia's interest in Local History developed while she was still lecturing (on science for hairdressers!) at Wilmorton Further Education College, Derby, when she became a founder member of the embryo local history group of the village where she then lived. An interest in geology developed naturally into a study of the river Trent and the Trent and Mersey Canal within the parish; this formed part of a booklet published by the society which examined the effect of changing means of transport on the village. The discovery of numerous papers relating to the Derwent Navigation and the construction of the Derby Canal within the collections she was using coincided with an upsurge of interest in Derby in the restoration of the Derby Canal and resulted in the publication of her book *Waterways to Derby* (Scarthin Books) in 1992. active

THE MAP ROOM DATABASE

The exciting and ambitious project to computerise our Map Room catalogue is expected to be on-line during the course of the forthcoming academic year. Inputting has progressed well during the past year and the catalogue of the departmental collections of maps, books, pamphlets, slides, engravings and post cards will soon be linked into JANET; this will make it possible for staff and students to investigate the collections more quickly and will also make them available to scholars from other institutions. Details of how to access and search the catalogue will be made available when the project goes on-line.

B. McGarva

M.Phil. and Ph.D. THESES IN PROGRESS

The range and breadth of research undertaken by students in the Department is renowned. In each issue of the Newsletter we report on completed research summarizing theses and dissertations in the hope that they will become more widely known. This year we thought that it would be useful to include a round-up of current M.Phil. and Ph.D. students and a brief description or title of their work. Some of these titles are provisional or working titles and may change as the research develops.

Anne Barker 'Medieval landscape and settlement in Essex, especially in Dengie Hundred.'

Jenny Bhatt 'Dr Margaret Miller and the campaign for the right of the married woman to earn: marriage bars and middle class women in the 1930's with particular reference to Liverpool University.'

Paul Bowman 'Settlement, territory and land use in the east Midlands: the Langton Hundred c.150 B.C. - c. 1350 A.D.'

Alasdair Crockett 'Social geography of "secularisation" in England and Wales in 1851.'

Vernon Davis 'Economics, exploitation and environment in north-west Leicestershire, c. 1870.'

Julie Dexter 'The class organisation of nineteenth-century dissent.'

Eileen Edwards 'A study of the social structure and the commercial, religious and social life of Solihull as a small market town in the Arden region of Warwickshire, c. 1350-1580.'

Terry Finnemore "'To boundes of every field and round about their neighbour's lande": a study of the antiquity and evolution of boundaries and settlement units in south Staffordshire.'

Dorothy Fox 'Families, farming and faith: a study of the population of two parishes near Whitby, north Yorkshire with reference to isolation, occupation and religion.'

Len Garrison 'Post-war immigration and settlement of West Indians in Nottingham.'

Teresa Hall 'Minster churches in the Dorset landscape.'

Jem Harrison 'The composite manor of Brent: a study of the landscape, economy and society of an ancient Somerset estate up to 1350.'

Edwin Haydon 'Late medieval Bradninch and Tiverton.'

Trevor Hill 'The economic networks and kinship linkages of small town traders, with special reference to small towns in

Shropshire 1800-1870.' This thesis examines nineteenth-century transport systems and the function of small towns as a background to kinship networks.

Trevor Hockenhull 'Service catchment and spheres of influence in south Worcester, c. 1851.'

Graham Jones 'Church dedications and landed units of lordship and administration in the pre-Reformation diocese of Worcester.' Problems of chronology, periodicity, spatial distribution and use of dedications as historical evidence are addressed.

John Lovell 'The growth and problems of Far Cotton from its origins as a small farming community, up to 1850, to become a suburb of Northampton by 1914.'

Lynn Marston 'The town and manor of Glastonbury 1086-c.1400.'

Philip Masters 'The Anglo-Saxon and early Norman church in West Sussex: a study of church fabric, *parochiae* and parishes and their relationship to territorial organisation before and after the Conquest.'

Kate Parkin 'Community and neighbourhood in medieval society: Ely episcopal manors within the Hundred of Wisbech in the reign of Edward III.'

Derryan Paul 'The care of churches in Herefordshire c. 1662-1762: a study of the role of the higher clergy, parish clergy, tithe owners and landowners, churchwardens and ordinary lay people, including craftsmen.'

Elizabeth Robinson 'The lives and experiences of Rugby working women 1890-1950.' Using extensive oral evidence, this research is concentrating on how occupations and experiences for women in Rugby changed over sixty years.

Tony Rollings 'Aspects of Anglo-Saxon history in the east Midlands.'

Peter Scott 'The railways' influence on place-names in suburbia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Harrow Borough.'

Derek Shorthouse 'Local government and society in Gloucester c.1870-1920.'

Christopher Starr 'Attaining, maintaining and transferring gentry status in fourteenth-century Essex.'

Mike Thompson 'Social and economic aspects of Glastonbury Abbey's Polden Hill manors, 1260-1351.' The manors comprehended by the research are Shapwick, Ashcott, Walton, Street, Greinton and Moorlinch.

James Turner 'The landscape of Chinley c.1600-1900.'

Christine Vials 'Poor law in Northamptonshire, 1662-1834.'

Anne Wilson 'Popular entertainment in a provincial town, Ilkeston, 1881-1939.'

BOOKS WRITTEN BY FRIENDS

John Goodacre

The Transformation of a Peasant Economy: Townspeople and Villagers in the Lutterworth Area 1500-1700 (Communities, Contexts and Cultures: Leicester Studies in English Local History, Scholar Press, 1994. £49.50 but offered at a special price to Friends: see Special Offers).

Instead of dismissing the market town from urban history as an incompletely formed urban community, John Goodacre takes it as the primary urban unit in the pre-industrial period, the most common point of contact between rural and urban society. The author

places 'the rise of the market town' at the centre of the transformation of early-modern England, in that the market town both initiated changes in agriculture and also experienced, in a pioneering way, the urbanization that affected, a century or more later, the industrial and commercial centres of Europe.

Transformation of the rural economy in the two centuries after 1500 from peasant husbandry chiefly concerned with subsistence to 'improved' farming for the market was made possible by intensified trade across the country. Inter-regional trading made way for regional specialization. Of more importance was local trading, the redistribution of produce and provisions taking place in a town like Lutterworth between villages within its area, which allowed them to develop into contrasting communities. Not only was Lutterworth, with its markets, shops and inns, used by villages as the local exchange point for trade, employment and information but it also took the lead in local farming; townsmen pioneered the new techniques that enabled the agrarian revolution of the mid-seventeenth century to spread throughout the area.

Contemporary discussion about the different phases of agrarian development concentrated on the disruption of whole village communities that followed the enclosure of their common fields. The most vivid treatment of the subject is the pamphlet controversy between John Moore and Joseph Lee in the 1650s. They have often been quoted out of context; but the fact that they, as parsons with their own farms in the Lutterworth area, were personally involved with local husbandry doubles the value of their words as eye-witness accounts of the effects of change.

Apart from literary sources, the usual documents are relied on; surveys, taxation lists, parish registers and probate records, especially the probate inventories that provide sharp details to illustrate husbandry practices and the standard of living. Such information, however, has been worked over

so thoroughly and sensitively that it yields fresh levels of interpretation. Telling comparative population figures have even been teased out of unpromising runs of records. Sketch maps show the features of the town and locate the local places named and they are all meticulously indexed. The index also gives cross-references to proper names and in addition functions as a glossary of technical terms.

This latest volume in our departmental series is a classic study in the Leicester tradition. While following a clear theoretical scheme it revels in the minute details that delight the local antiquary and the family historian. It revises the pioneering work of Professor Hoskins on common-field farming in Leicestershire, the foundation of our understanding of the early-modern rural economy of the Midlands, and should in its turn stand as one of the most important local studies of the region to be published by the present generation of historians.

Furthermore by concentrating on the constant inter-action between the villages and the market town, not only does John Goodacre advocate the re-integration of agrarian history and urban history but he also makes fundamental contributions to both fields of study simultaneously. Above all he has pinpointed, for the first time with any precision for any region, the participants in and the timing of a crucial change in the overall organization of society, the shift from a customary to a market economy, a step in the transition from feudalism to capitalism that was eventually to affect the whole nation and the world beyond.

Rosemary Leamon

Life in Ecchinswell and Sydmonton in the Sixteenth Century (1995, 38pp. Available from the author, Short Acre, Brimpton Common, near Reading, Berkshire RG7 4RY. £4.40+60p for p&p).

These two settlements are on scarp foot, spring line sites within adjacent strip parishes on the Hampshire Downs just south of Newbury. Since the sixteenth century,

however, Sydmonton village has disappeared through being emparked. Sydmonton manor was held by Romsey Abbey until after the Dissolution when it was granted to the Kingsmill family, whereas Ecchinswell was held by the Bishop of Winchester. The study is based on wills and inventories complemented by other primary source material. There are introductory sections on the physical background and farming and on wills and inventories, followed by a detailed account of their content. Under appropriate headings are lists of craftsmen's tools, clothing and material used. Every object in the inventory is referred to in the text and/or detailed glossary. The text is illustrated by maps, diagrams of dwellings, tables and graphs executed by the author for this publication. Included also are examples of the inventories.

Margery Tranter

The Derbyshire Returns to the 1851 Religious Census (ed. Margery Tranter with D.A.Barton and P.S.Ell, Derbyshire Record Society, XXIII, 1995. lxxvi + 238pp. Available from the Society at 9 Caernarvon Close, Chesterfield, SW40 3DY. £30; members £15).

When the sixth decennial population census was taken in 1851, after much discussion, the simultaneous collection of information on religious buildings and attendance and on schools and educational provision was also authorized by Parliament. The Census Office, through the local registrars, was responsible for the organisation of all three censuses and also for the subsequent statistical analysis. As the registration districts were based on Poor Law Unions which frequently ignored administrative county boundaries, the first task which confronts the editor of a county volume is to abstract the county returns from registration districts. For many counties this is a comparatively minor task but some 65 townships in the administrative county are not included in the registration county of Derbyshire, being found in the districts of different divisions.

Forms were sent to every known church or chapel congregation, but these were not identical and the most searching questions were on those which the Anglican clergy were required to complete. Whereas nonconformists were not asked to supply details of income for their ministers or chapels, anglicans were required to give details of the endowments of the benefice income as well as the sources from which money had been raised for the church building. Every respondent was asked to supply details of the seating accommodation (both free and rented), times of services and numbers of attenders (both for the general congregation and for Sunday scholars) on Census Sunday, and to give an average attendance for both over a stated number of months. In the present volume the figures for Derbyshire, a county which contained both agriculture and industry, highland and lowland, have been analysed on a parish basis by means of a database and statistical programme. Computer-generated maps for all the major denominations have been derived from the results obtained therefrom. The detailed introduction analyses the statistics and discusses the patterns depicted by the maps within the overall context of the conditions and changes taking place within the county; themes such as the influence of the Evangelical Revival, of tithe disputes, landholding, internal denominational dissension are all explored. All forms included a space for the respondent to make optional comments. Although not universally used it allowed those who wished to independence by stating '1. Total and make specific points. The Independent minister at Melbourne, for instance, demonstrated his immediate abolition of all church rates. 2. The immediate and complete separation of the church from the state. 3. The National Universities to be open to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects', while at Hognaston the curate likened lay impropiators to receivers of stolen goods and proposed that they should be taxed - the proceeds to be returned to the parish for educational and charitable uses. The returns give an insight into Derbyshire in the mid-nineteenth century at a time when new technology in both agriculture and industry,

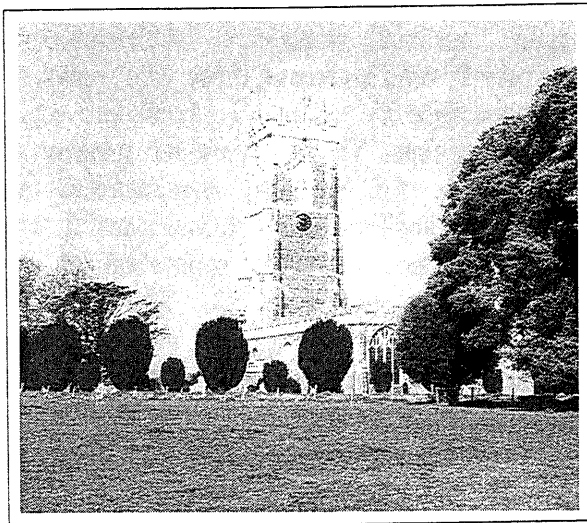
changes in perceptions of political and personal freedoms, charismatic movements and internal religious dissension, particularly among Methodists, were creating a social climate not dissimilar to the present.

Every extant return is reproduced, with minimal abbreviations, in the order in which

they occur in the bound volumes of the originals housed at the P.R.O. while the Poor Law Union and the unit within which each place of worship is mapped are clearly indicated.

THE '95 FIELD TRIP OR CLOTS ON THE LANDSCAPE

'It was like university should have been first time round', claimed one student, commenting on the Devon field trip as both an educational and a social experience. Harold Fox, who organised the event like a military operation, even secured glorious weather by soliciting the prayers of the monks of Buckfast, perhaps in return for promoting their tonic wine. Armed with cameras, clip boards and copious notes, thirty students set off each day to 'swarm' over selected sites. Yet the natives were invariably friendly, apparently viewing us as officials rather than tourists. 'Are you from the Tavy News?' one group was asked, while in another location curious locals wanted to know: 'Is it true that the Council are going to develop that site?'



Broadclyst church tower, perhaps completed in the decade of the Reformation **Photograph by Phillip Thornborow**



Beacon Terrace, Exmouth, one of Devon's earliest purpose-built developments for visitors (1792) **Photograph by Phillip Thornborow**

Once Harold led us at a cracking pace, oblivious to dozing adders, on an impromptu two-mile tramp across Dartmoor, one student claiming that this was his first exercise for six years. The mix of heady air, blisters and mental stimulation proved hallucinogenic for some. One modernist dreamed of intra-departmental tensions as Keith Snell had once pointed to the significance of sloping chimneys while Harold Fox urged that they be ignored.

By the second day we had all cracked the code. When Harold said: 'Note siren on clapper bridge on left,' like a well drilled army every head snapped to the right to catch a

young back packer dangling her long legs in the icy Dart. Shortly afterwards some of us were left to contemplate Dartmoor prison, while the majority were permitted to 'cuddle the wildlife' at Mrs Wilkinson's farm. After three hectic days, ending with increasingly dishevelled students trying to take in the whole of Exeter in an afternoon, we were treated to a day at the seaside. We found ourselves lost in Exmouth, hunting little yellow bricks in Topsham and examining gnomes in Dawlish, where those who wish to see the sea require a ticket from British Rail. As we attempted to work out the course of original coastlines some 'visually ferocious' students observed that the only waves left on

the strand were of the hairdressing variety.

With so much to occupy our attention there was, of course, no time for second-hand bookshops or even cream teas, though the latter might be considered a characteristic of the *pays*. As the course notes made clear, evenings were to be spent writing up the day's observations and preparing for the next excursion. Thus tales told of a bonfire on the beach, eating out in Exeter and convivial evenings in the bar of Druryard Halls must have existed in our dreams alone. Yet whether dream or reality, the Devon field course was instructive and very enjoyable for all concerned. Many thanks Harold. It was a real tonic even without the wine from Buckfast.

Philippa Richardson and William Bates

The class of '95 tanned, relaxed and still smiling on the Devon field course

Photograph by John Clarke



THE ARUNDELL ARCHIVE PROJECT

Arundells (from the Old French for 'little swallow') are first heard of in the South-West in the late eleventh century; by 1300 the senior branch was established at Lanherne, Cornwall; by the end of the fourteenth century they were among Cornwall's leading gentry families, holding many important local offices. Recusancy limited their activities after the Reformation but did not reduce their estate which remained a huge one, in Devon as well as in Cornwall. Their persistent success in marrying heiresses and in producing male heirs came to an end in 1701 when the last Arundell of Lanherne died and thereafter the far western estate came to another branch, the Arundells of Wardour in Wiltshire. Gradually the documents followed, being first stored in what is now known as Old Wardour Castle and later in the new house nearby, built in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The last baron Arundell of Wardour died in 1944. Wardour House was sold but the archive was saved by a successor, Mr R.J.R. Arundell, who built a muniment room to house it, in the vegetable garden of his residence at Hook Manor, just outside the castle park.

Mr Arundell did not welcome all visitors to the archive which, in any case, was in remote countryside and distant from Cornwall; few historians even knew about it. Between the late 1960's and the late 1980's I was privileged to be allowed to visit on many occasions, first as a research student, latterly in connection with contributions to the late medieval volume of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*. This was record-searching at its most enjoyable, before the days when some county record offices came to insist that you use microfilm not the originals or came to issue you with surgical instruments, the dreaded spatula for turning folios, lest the sweaty palm contact the parchment, and the equally dreaded perspex sheet. At Hook Manor, by contrast, research

could certainly be described as 'hands on'. In a little lobby to the muniment room, and beneath an engraving of Thomas Arundell, later a count of the Holy Roman Empire, capturing the Turkish standard at the siege of Gran, the amiable Mr Arundell occasionally conducted farm business on the telephone. But usually all was peace. Outside, the great beeches of the park murmured in the wind; inside spiders spun webs among the leather fire buckets from the old house, emblazoned with the Arundell arms; robes worn by Barons Arundell at coronations past spilled out from old boxes; friendly spaniels wandered in, occasionally dislodging the top plate from one of the piles of discarded nineteenth-century Meissen dinner services, so that each now rose from a scatter of broken gadrooned edges spreading out over the parquet floor in fans of blue and gold. There were important discoveries to be made, for example a huge but damaged medieval rental of the Devon manor at Hartland, which I transcribed dutifully, not knowing quite why (as research students do); much later on during a long hot summer in Leicester I went through my transcript, cracked the code of the document and used it to reconstruct Hartland's medieval settlement pattern in a series of maps for the *Agrarian History*. Above all one worked better for being *in situ* with history. The Cornish records from twelfth century to twentieth were all around; one felt as if in Cornwall for slumped on the floor was Martyn's old printed map of the county, with the Arundell inheritance picked out in colour, reminding one of those picture views of the estate, 'the wealth of centuries transmuted into ornament', upon which the Leopard Prince of Lampedusa gazed wistfully in his office at the Villa Salina. Outside, not far away, one could view the fourteenth-century tower house of Old Wardour and the new house with its sumptuous chapel. Friends could be tempted to come down and evenings could be spent exploring a little further afield, the rustic town of Shaftesbury with its burghal plan, or the medieval grids of Salisbury, the gardens at Stourhead or at Longleat.

Friends of the Department of English Local History

Having said all that it must be admitted that the set-up had its inconveniences (not least the lack of the euphemistic convenience which meant that when the Arundells were out the hedges had to be used; luckily Wardour lies in a tract of ancient woodland, so hedges are thick). Hand-lists to the collection were basic or eccentric and the archive was distant from the people who should have been its principle users, the local historians of Cornwall. It was therefore with considerable excitement that we heard, in the late 1980's, of the archive's possible sale. Rival valuations were made; permission was sought to exempt the collection from estate duty, a move which lowered its price considerably; the Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund, the Friends of the National Library and several other bodies were most generous with financial assistance. But a substantial further sum still had to be raised. At this point the people and admirers of Cornwall showed the stuff of which they are made and, in a campaign master-minded by Christine North (County Archivist) and Richard Carew Pole, the target price was eventually reached. It was thus possible for two excited archivists to bring back the Arundell archive to the Cornwall County Record Office on a hot July Sunday in 1991.

The next step was to think about a catalogue. The archive is immense, containing not only medieval treasures but also a great series of post-medieval documents, for example leases of all leasehold tenements on all of the Arundell manors, a rich source for local historians hunting for information about people and places. Cataloguing would have been beyond the resources of a record office whose staff were already hard pressed for time. The Leverhulme Trust was therefore successfully approached for funding and a team was established comprising a specially appointed cataloguer, some part-time secretarial and re-boxing assistance (all paid for by the Trust), the County Archivist as project supervisor, Mrs Moira Tangye (Chairman of the Cornwall Heritage Trust)

and her treasurer as financial overseers and myself in the modest role of director-at-a-distance, for Leverhulme prefer to have an outsider to keep an eye on progress. The first cataloguer to be appointed was Oliver Padel who raced through a good proportion of the archive in the knowledge that any of the documents might yield that rare new place-name form and who applied his extensive knowledge of medieval Cornwall to the re-arrangement of the documents. When Oliver went to the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic in Cambridge in October 1994 the post of cataloguer came to Lucy McCann, fresh from the Archives Training Course at Liverpool who, in no time at all, came to know the collection as thoroughly as her predecessor and who continued to work at the pace set by him.

And so began my second period of acquaintance with the Arundell archive, under circumstances very different from the first. The aim is to produce an arrangement of documents which exactly reflects the estate and its history, to give full calendar or near-calendar details of some items to help the searcher with documents which present difficulties (e.g. those in Latin) and to give as much detail as possible even with humdrum material such as the leases (which have been indexed by a team of volunteers). For me it is a pleasure to be able to help in small ways, again to feel that sense of entering an especially enigmatic landscape which comes very soon after crossing the Tamar; to see the archive and its arrangement taking a professional guise in a record office, presided over by Christine North (without whose enthusiasm none of what is described above would ever have happened), where searchers always appear to be well looked after and happy. They will be all the happier in a few months when the largest private Cornish archive has been fully catalogued and can be made available to the people of Cornwall and all who wish her well.

Harold Fox

FRIENDS QUIZ

This year for the first time you have the chance to win £10 by taking part in our intriguing Friends Quiz. The quiz is open to all readers of the Newsletter whether Friends, friends of Friends or the family of Friends. All you have to do is to write to us telling us what connection the handsome fellow whose picture is reproduced here has with local history and send your answer, with your name and address to: Friends Quiz, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR. The sender of the first correct answer to be opened on November 1st will receive £10. Thanks to **Alison Borthwick** for permission to use the drawing.



SPECIAL OFFERS

THE CHARTERS TUTORIAL

Finally, this hypertext tutorial has reached release state. It has been developed within the Department over recent months to facilitate learning Latin palaeography in the first weeks of the medieval option of the M.A. course. It comprises: the text of four Latin charters (100 lines); synchronous translation; synchronous notes on the structure of the charters; a glossary of all the words in the charters (parts of speech, parsing, root form, meaning) which is linked to a grammar file which discusses generic matters (nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns etc.) and the declension or conjugation of each specific word; a bibliography file; and images. It is thus more detailed than Gooder since it incorporates a great deal from Kennedy's *Shorter Latin Primer* in relationship to the vocabulary of charters.

Entirely point and click in the Windows environment, the tutorial is incredibly easy to use. It is now being offered for wider distribution essentially for free, since the charge is only £7 to cover the cost of three disks and the laser-printed guide (which has helpful screen dumps). Demonstrations can be given by arrangement.

Minimum specifications are: Platform = P.C. only (386 sx or higher); 4 or more Mb RAM. 4.5 Mb free hard disk space; at least VGA colour monitor preferably using 256 colours at 640x480 resolution (16 colours will produce poorer images); Windows 3.1 or 3.11 running over DOS 5 or higher. All disks supplied are virus-checked using the most recent virus checkers in the Computer Centre. Please write to David Postles in the Department if you are interested in this excellent offer.

PAUL WATKINS PUBLISHING

Paul Watkins Publishing again kindly offers a discount of 10% to Friends. Please write for his list to 18 Adelaide Street, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 2EN. This publisher

produces a good selection of history, including reprints (e.g. Hill's *Medieval Lincoln*, Wheeler's *Fens of South Lincolnshire*), original works (e.g. *We Didn't Know Aught*, women's oral history by Maureen Sutton and *Eleanor of Castile* by David Parsons), works of reference (e.g. *A Reader's Guide to the Place-names of the United Kingdom*, a complete bibliography of the subject), local works on Stamford and the proceedings of the Harlaxton Medieval Symposia. Three important recent titles are *Stamford in the Thirteenth Century* by David Roffe, *Gothic to Renaissance* by Philip Lindley and *Coventry's First Cathedral* edited by George Demidowicz.

THE NEEDWOOD BOOKSHOP

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

DEPARTMENTAL OCCASIONAL PAPERS

The following Occasional Papers are still available. All are at £4 (post free) except Finberg which is at £2. Please write to Harold Fox at the Department (sending no money in the first instance).

Finberg, *The Local Historian and his Theme*
Thirsk, *Fenland Farming in the Sixteenth Century*

Hart, *Early Charters of Essex* (revised edn)

Allison and others, *Deserted Villages of Northamptonshire*

Allison and others, *Deserted Villages of Oxfordshire*

Hart, *Hidation of Northamptonshire*

Hart, *Hidation of Cambridgeshire*

Merrill, *Cheshire Grand Jury*

Naughton, *Gentry of Bedfordshire*

Moylan, *Form and Reform of County Government, Kent*

Davey, *Ashwell, 1830-1914*

Schumer, *Evolution of Wychwood*

THE TRANSFORMATION OF A PEASANT ECONOMY

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

SEASONAL SETTLEMENT

It is hoped to arrange for a discount of *Seasonal Settlement: Papers presented to the Medieval Settlement Research Group's December Meeting, 1993*. Please write to Harold Fox after November 1st, the publication date. This volume is yet to be costed but should fall in the price range of £4 to £7. Contents: 'Introduction: transhumance and seasonal settlement in the British Isles', (H.S.A. Fox); 'Transhumance in medieval Cornwall' (Peter Herring); 'Seasonal settlements in medieval Gloucestershire: sheepcotes' (Christopher Dyer); 'Medieval shielings on the Isle of Man: fact or fiction?' (Gillian Quine); 'Aergi names as indications of transhumance: fact or fiction?' (Mary Higham); 'Cellar settlements along the South Devon coast' (H.S.A. Fox). This volume is published in the series Vaughan Papers in Adult Education, University of Leicester.

BACK-NUMBERS OF THE NEWSLETTER

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

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Membership: Dr Anne Mitson, 61 Trowell Road, Wollaton, Nottingham NG8 2EJ.

Reservations for seminars: Mrs Pauline Whitmore, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR. Tel: 0116 2522762.

Contributions to Newsletters and books for the Booksale: Please send these, marked 'Newsletter' or 'Booksale', to Marc Fitch House.

Editorial team

Rosie Keep (Editor), Harold Fox (Executive Editor), the University Reprographic Unit, Anne Mitson (distribution), Charles Keep (inputting), Margery Tranter and John Goodacre (proof reading).

THIS YEAR'S COVER

The year is 1911 and the 2,500 employees of Nathaniel Corah and Sons are assembled outside the company's main factory and warehouse near Belgrave Gate in Leicester. Called the St Margaret Works from the nearby St Margaret's Church, the building (dating from 1865) was thereafter extended to cover a four acre site. Although nowadays hemmed in by later buildings, St Margaret Works continues to be the company's headquarters. In 1886 it was the first textile works in Leicester to be lit by electricity.

The photograph shows the scale of the textile industry's reliance on women production workers. The male minority, segregated but still visible in the distance, were largely employed in warehousing and maintenance work, except the all-male directorate (see front row right) of J. H. (afterwards Sir John) Corah, his father Alfred and uncle John Arthur.

The company's founder, Nathaniel Corah, born in 1777 in Bagworth, Leicestershire, set up the business in 1815 when, after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, his engineering job in a Birmingham gun factory became redundant. Buying hosiery from home-based Leicester frame-workers and selling it in the much bigger Birmingham market, Nathaniel prospered. Perhaps the gun factory experience led to his pioneering the hosiery industry's shift from domestic to increasingly large-scale factory production. In 1926 Corahs made a radical decision to be first, among the otherwise hostile national brand name textile manufacturers, to supply 'St Margaret' clothing to the 'nothing over five shillings' (25 pence) bazaar shops of Marks and Spencer, a decision which played a significant part in the company's continuance today as Corah plc.

John Taylor

This print is taken from one of the hundreds of glass slides which form part of the Millar collection, now in the care of the Department. The departmental archive contains many other important and fascinating collections of slides, prints and engravings which are soon to be made accessible to local historians and students through the new on-line catalogue which will be launched later this year.

