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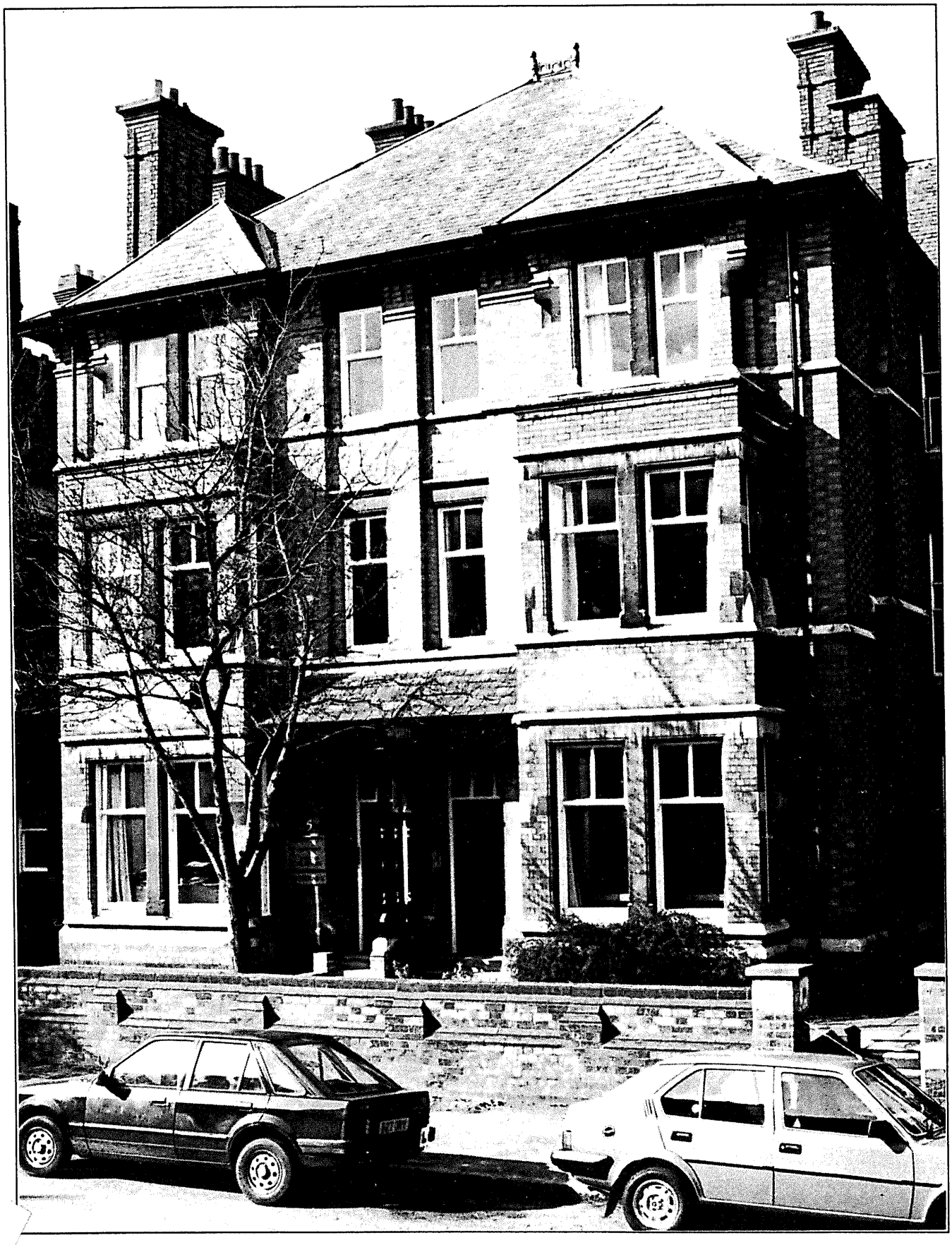
Friends of the Department of English Local History

NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER NUMBER 4 • OCTOBER 1991



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EDITORIAL

We can report in this issue, as in the last, a very successful year for the Friends of the Department of English Local History. In numbers you are growing fast: an estimated 243 as we go to press. A large number of you turned out to make the W. G. Hoskins Lecture a resounding success. Some of you have contributed to this issue of the Newsletter and have helped to see it through all stages of production. Above all, through your subscriptions, and some generous donations, you have ensured that our balance is a healthy one.

Financially, therefore, we are in the pink. At the suggestion of Charles Phythian-Adams, a small proportion of our profits last year went towards a very worth-while service, the cost of opening the Marc Fitch Fund Library on selected Saturdays during term-time. The experiment is to be repeated and a list of the relevant dates is given below under 'Marc Fitch House and its Facilities'. It was always our intention to devote whatever profits we could make to services of this kind, over and above those which the University could reasonably be expected to provide. Our growing funds raise the question: what should our ultimate goal be? Among the steering committee of the Friends, and in the Department, there is a growing body of opinion which suggests that we should aim to achieve an investment income to be used to provide bursaries for students wishing to study English Local History. Both government funding and charitable bodies are likely to be hard pressed in the future, yet the demand for access to our subject is increasing. The Friends could help bridge the gap. With a little extra fund raising, and so long as membership numbers remain buoyant, we could possibly reach a five-figure sum (in pounds sterling) within, say, five years. Your views on this suggestion are welcome and should be sent to 'Friends', c/o the Department.

Activities last year included production of the Newsletter, the W. G. Hoskins Lecture and tea, and a book sale. In order to be more successful at fund raising we shall have to apply for charitable status which may mean that it will be necessary to introduce an annual general meeting into the pattern of the year's events. If we have to inflict an A.G.M. upon our members should we also introduce another, more pleasurable, event into the calendar? It has been suggested that there should be a summer field excursion, each year led by a different member to a new location. If you have any ideas or - even better - if you might be willing to organize an occasion of this kind, please again write to 'Friends', c/o the Department.

Membership is growing but we still need to catch up with a good number of ex-students. With this Newsletter comes a list of Friends (excluding current students). If you are a former student and recognize obvious gaps in the list - friends whose addresses you have, but who are not yet Friends - please write either to them or to the membership secretary, Anne Mitson.

The **Department** is reflected in the Newsletter within the first 22 of its pages. Indeed, the first part of the Newsletter is something of a departmental gazette, reporting on past and future activities and on departmental publications, and summarizing dissertations - in the hope that their contents reach a wider public than was sometime the case before. What is not yet reflected in these pages is the sudden increase in student numbers which occurred first in October 1991 and then again this month. Incredibly the Department now teaches a total of 82 students. This says a good deal about the academic vitality of the subject and means a self-generating increase in the number of Friends (and, eventually, in subscriptions!)

The **Newsletter** has grown in size. This issue is, in fact, larger than it appears by comparison with last year's, because of changes in fonts and font sizes which are not completely understood by the editor. We are especially grateful to contributors from outside our organization: John Fisher of the Department of Maps and Prints at the Guildhall Library, Tom Williamson of the Centre of East Anglian Studies, John Craig of Peterhouse, Edwin DeWindt of the University of Detroit, Nat Alcock of the Department of Chemistry, University of Warwick and David Wykes of the Department of History, University of Leicester.

Many hands lie behind the final appearance of the Newsletter. Therefore we thank: Mark Davies (cover); Ian Hickman and his team (reproduction); John Goodacre (proof-reading); Margery Tranter (almost everything). Jem Harrison did a good deal of the word processing despite his broken arm, a casualty of academic exuberance. The enhanced appearance of this Newsletter owes everything to our resident computer expert, Paul Ell. Your copy will have arrived as a result of the hard work of Anne Mitson.

Useful contact addresses are:

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

Attendance at seminars and the use of facilities at Marc Fitch House: Mrs Pauline Whitmore, Department of English Local History, University of Leicester, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester LE1 7QR (Leicester 522762).

Contributions to and comments on the Newsletter: 'Friends', c/o the Department.

EVENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Annual Conference of the Council for Name Studies

The annual conference of the Council for Name Studies (its twenty-third meeting) was this year held in Leicester under the auspices of the Department. The emphasis on this occasion lay somewhat more on place-names than on personal names. Several papers may be grouped as being related to ancient land units. That of Barrie Cox (University of Nottingham) dealt with place-name elements in townships on the boundaries of Rutlandshire; that of Mary Higham (Clitheroe) concerned the 60-mile perambulation of medieval Burton Chase on the border of Lancashire and Yorkshire; her slides showed that many of the boundary markers were archaeological features and that the district centred on Ingleborough with its hill fort and ancient speech-platform. Della Hooke (University of Birmingham) demonstrated that Anglo-Saxon boundary markers in south-central England reflected contemporary land-use regions, but further west the boundary marks were more often natural or archaeological features; and Margery Tranter (Department of English Local History) examined early land-use and linguistic patterns, as indicated by place-names, on the heathland watershed where the counties of Derby and Leicester meet. Peter Warner (Homerton College, Cambridge) examined some of the medieval freemen's holdings in green-side settlements on the periphery of larger estates in Suffolk, tracing them back to recorded tenants in the Little Domesday Book.

Linguistic studies of place-names were presented by Brian Coates (University of Sussex) who demonstrated that a few *ingas* names may not be folk-names, but are names compounded with the various forms of *ing*; by Peter Kitson (University of Birmingham) who offered, without bemusing us, his thousands of calculations made to assess the relative importance of elements used to qualify boundary markers in Anglo-Saxon charters; by Gillian Fellows-Jensen (Kobenhavns Universitets) who re-examined earlier controversies on Scandinavian *thorp* and Anglo-Saxon *throp* names, and offered a slightly wider interpretation of their significance. Ann Dornier (University of Leicester) brought a reminder that place-names on the European continent are not irrelevant to the study of place-names in Britain, in her consideration of the *vicus* element in France. Personal and place-name studies met in an examination by Bill Nicolaisen (State University of New York) of the present (telephone directory) distribution of personal names deriving from Pictish *pit* and *aber* place-names, and concluded, to his pleasure, that the descendants were still concentrated in ancient Pictland.

The final discussion was lively and ranged from the problems of countries with a limited range of personal names (including, to our delight, an occasion when Fellows was cited in contrast to Jensen!) and consideration of *ald* as a description of Anglo-Saxon boundary markers, to the significance of the use of 'new' in all periods, and to apple trees, pear trees, stones and their quality of hoariness. Moistness, however, characterised the afternoon field excursion when Richard McKinley led a wet but enthusiastic walk to Burrough Hill, followed by a substantial tea in Melton Mowbray and a tour of the facilities of Marc Fitch House.

A discussion by all those attending the conference showed that there was general support for the proposed formation of an open Society for Name Studies. The conference gained greatly from the organisation of Richard McKinley and David Postles of the Department of English Local History who articulated our activities. We owe them, and Professor Charles Phythian-Adams who welcomed us with kind words and liquid refreshment, our thanks for a very pleasant weekend.

Mary Atkin

The Second W. G. Hoskins Lecture

David Hey is no stranger to Leicester, having worked under W. G. Hoskins in the Department. He is now a Friend and a frequent visitor to Marc Fitch House. As a prolific author on a wide range of subjects, it is hardly surprising that his lecture attracted a large audience, so large indeed that the preceding day was spent in frantic re-assessment of crowd control in the University Library's seminar room and in negotiating with the University's portering service over the movement of spare chairs from one part of the campus to another. We were not

disappointed, and were treated to a highly entertaining but enlightening talk which clearly demonstrated how the phenomenal interest in family history can provide a wider understanding of the social and economic history of England. If, like me, you occasionally show a little impatience with the scores of genealogists who fill our record offices and who always manage to arrive early in their enthusiasm, thus securing the best seats, think again: they have much to offer.

David Hey began by reminding us that the appeal of family history is not new, pointing appropriately to research by W. G. Hoskins into his own family history. But family history did not begin in the twentieth century. The Tudor period saw a growing fascination for genealogy and it would be wrong to suppose that this interest was confined to the wealthy. Richard Gough's preoccupation with his parish and the families living in Myddle resulted in a remarkable manuscript, combining family and local history. Thomas Bewick in the eighteenth century noticed this concern with ancestry and Thomas Hardy, in the nineteenth, drew on family memories for his novels.

Having established the wealth of relevant source material both in the past and the present, the question was posed: 'How can family history add to local history?' It is necessary to relate family history to the local societies of which the families formed part. For many years, since Laslett's early study, it has been acknowledged that the majority of the population in the Tudor and Stuart period was mobile. Yet family historians frequently note stability. How can we explain this dichotomy? David noted a number of factors, but one of the most important considerations was the tendency of demographers to focus on a single town or parish. It is becoming increasingly apparent that families in the past had a sense of identity with a wider neighbourhood area than their own parish. Core groups provided stability and ensured that the local culture was kept alive. They set patterns to which newcomers into the area conformed. It was to these stable families that others turned in the case of disputes, thereby ensuring that the distinctive traditions persisted. When these core families moved into neighbouring parishes, customs were taken with them, including the distinctive characteristic of speech. This point was amply demonstrated by the speaker's own distinctive accent, from a very localised part of Yorkshire, one often not recognised in Sheffield some seven miles away from its place of origin.

Turning to examine surnames as evidence for stability, David noted that while there are now a number of printed hearth tax returns for different parts of the country, the editors of such collections rarely comment on the genealogical context. This material provides considerable evidence on the distribution of surnames, demonstrating differences in the stock of names within and between counties. This point was illustrated by the surname Daft found in Nottinghamshire, where all ten named in the 1664 hearth tax lived in Hickling. Ten years later there were twelve Dafts in the same parish. Later evidence suggests they all had a single common origin. Moving on to a more up-to-date source, David went on to show the importance of the modern telephone directory in studies of the distribution of surnames. The Blankbys, for example, are found in the Chesterfield and Sheffield directories having originated from Blingsby in Derbyshire. In some 600 years the Blankbys have rarely moved outside a 20-mile radius of the original village site. Similar evidence was provided by the Bagshaws, the Downers and (inevitably) the Crappers. The speaker concluded by using his own ancestors to illustrate some of his earlier comments. Here we were encouraged to label our own photographs more carefully if they are to prove a useful source of evidence in the future. A photograph of his grandparents taken outside their home had the unhelpful comment on the back: 'This was taken 10 years ago.'

Despite such setbacks, more family histories are needed in order to enrich out knowledge of local societies. They can add to our evidence on topography, population, upward and downward mobility, stability, corporate identity: the list is long and varied. As the audience retired, after this stimulating lecture, to Marc Fitch House for an excellent tea, I for one determined to view family historians in a new light.

Anne Mitson

Launch for Leicestershire, Alecto Style

On April 29th a large gathering (including many Friends) at Marc Fitch House met to view the launch of the set for Leicestershire in the county series of Domesday facsimiles published by Alecto Historical Editions. Geoffrey Martin (once of the History Department, University of Leicester, and ex-Keeper of the Public Records) opened the proceedings by welcoming the facsimile for its technical accomplishment and scholarly potential, and for its power to diffuse the qualities of a priceless historical source throughout the world. On show were displays of the complicated processes involved in the making of this exact likeness of Domesday Book, and the Leicestershire set itself. Like all county sets in this edition it contains a comprehensive guide to Domesday Book by a number of scholars, an introduction to the Domesday coverage of the county itself and a complete translation and facsimiles of the relevant folios. Counties published so far are Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Kent,

Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Middlesex, Northamptonshire with Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Somerset, Staffordshire, Surrey, Sussex, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire and Yorkshire (all at £225, except Yorkshire and Lincolnshire which are £265). By arrangement with the publisher, Friends may obtain a county facsimile at a 10 per cent discount. This offer closes on December 1st, so act quickly: persuade your wife, husband, boyfriend, girlfriend, admirer or well-wisher to earn your lifelong affection by giving you that very special Christmas present. All enquiries (no cheques) to Harold Fox who will then pass them on to Alecto. Please hurry to make the most of this once in a lifetime offer.

Departmental Seminar Programme 1990-9: Autumn Term

Unlike the functionless relic, so beloved of folklorists, a custom that thrives by adapting can easily be overlooked. Stephen Caunce (University of Leeds), in his paper on 'Twentieth-century farm servants in east Yorkshire', described how he started out on an oral history project, treating the practices among farm workers as outmoded traces of pre-industrial society. He soon surprised himself by re-discovering in detail a complete way of life and labour which responded to the market demands of industrial areas and only died out finally in the 1930s. Boys and men were engaged at the Martinmas hiring fairs for a year's work, nearly always on a fresh farm, and they worked their way towards marriage up a rigid hierarchy of farm hands housed on the premises. The key man was the foreman, a married 'hind' responsible, alongside the shepherd and beast man, for labour on the arable, which was mainly carried out by the horse lads. Apart from annual feasts for re-establishing contact with home and family, lads spent their free time, like Sunday afternoons, in comparing the fat horses on rival farms and their principal hobby was pilfering delicacies for the animal under their own care.

At Oxford University's Department of Plant Sciences Petra Day has been involved in an inter-disciplinary study of Oxfordshire forest areas from the Middle Ages to the present. In her paper on 'Woodland and its origin in the medieval forest of Shotover' she tackled the medieval evidence from Domesday onwards. No actual woodland is recorded until a perambulation of 1298. There are later records of disputes on the periphery, concerned with the extent of forest law and with the stages of disafforestation. She has worked back from the present to map the medieval extent of woodlands. Even with the aid of pollen analysis, however, she has come to the conclusion that none of the present areas of woodland can be positively equated with any original 'wildwood'.

In his paper on 'Evidence for early dialect distributions' Peter Kitson (School of English, University of Birmingham) used radically new techniques to question commonly repeated statements about Old English dialects. By making systematic searches of all words in charter boundaries and by a fascinating detailed plotting of variants he has shown, for example, that occurrence of the alternatives *mæd* and *mædw* is related to the prevalence of either Saxon or Anglian dialect. Even more startling were historical inferences about the westward expansion of Wessex which seem to be implied by different dialect terms for boundaries.

The contrasting settlements in the complex Essex parish of Havering include Romford, the first sizable market town out of London on the Colchester road. Marjorie McIntosh (Department of History, University of Colorado at Boulder), in her 'Changing roles for the suburban market town of Romford', analyzed the whole area in immense detail in Tudor times and spoke authoritatively on all aspects of its society and economy. Of especial note was her definition of the 'urban yeoman', whose emergence in the mid sixteenth century was peculiar to the town, and her discussion of the disruption of the 'old order', under which the town's office-holders were usually members of the principal tenant families. Pressing back into medieval times, however, she came to the surprising conclusion that this town developed in other respects, such as communal involvement in dealing with the poor and in religious innovation, a whole century before most other small towns, obviously because of its proximity to the capital.

Mary Carter ('As I was going to St Ives . . . An urban society and its hinterland in early modern England') is no advocate of urban centres as primary causes of economic growth. She has studied her chosen town, the 'simple' market town of St Ives, in the context of two dozen settlements in three types of *pays* around it. Apart from three villages which themselves constituted minor centres, she has noted that an inner set of villages around the town, although predominantly agrarian, nevertheless contained a wide range of occupations usually counted as more urban. She has explored various networks, such as the contacts of the watermen along the River Ouse, the religious allegiances to different churches and meeting houses and the role of the manor and vestry. Even with the growth of the nearby county town of Huntingdon as the recognized social centre in the eighteenth century, St Ives still retained its hold over trade, especially the cattle trade. We have her word for it that the polygamist in the rhyme was a Scottish drover, drunken Jock Anderson.

John Goodacre

Departmental Seminar Programme 1990-91: Spring Term

In his paper on 'Church and diocese in the West Midlands: the transition from British to Anglo-Saxon control', Dr Stephen Bassett (School of History, University of Birmingham) discussed the questions: what did the pagan Anglo-Saxon people find in the West Midlands in the way of christianity and how much of what they found was retained? Bede is disappointing in that he does not say anything about the Anglo-Saxon conversion in the area, but he does tell us that the English did not have bishops of their own because there were no suitable men. It is thought that British bishops were used as stop-gaps. Dr Bassett introduced us to fascinating evidence, including some of a topographical nature, which traced the establishment of an English minster at Worcester in 679 A.D. and suggested the possibility that the urban churches of St Alban and St Helen, and their whole *parochia*, may have been a British 'see' already in existence when the English first set eyes on the city.

Dr David Cressy came from the Department of History at California State University to discuss 'Symbolic action in seventeenth-century England'. He gave us a great deal of evidence for the participation of the people in ceremonies and displays which, he said, emphasised the seventeenth-century skill of seeing and doing. Such actions were far more effective than hearing or speaking; they were worth a thousand words. The burning of images and effigies, sometimes of Catholic worship, illustrated the triumph of reformed religion. Showing respect to the King, to judges and others in authority was expected and those who failed to do so were condemned. The monarchy was often the victim of symbolic action. When the enemies of Elizabeth failed to overthrow her, they defaced her portrait. Likewise, someone picked out the eyes of Edward VI's portrait in Chichester Cathedral. Images of Charles I were subject to ritual debasement as his reign deteriorated.

Dr Jeremy Goldberg (University of York) spoke on 'Marriage and economic opportunity for women in town and country in the later Middle Ages'. It was an exceptionally wide-ranging talk, based on the rare nominal poll tax returns of 1377, material from the records of the York consistory court and much other scattered evidence besides. He found that in later medieval towns there were far greater opportunities for women than existed in the countryside; urban women therefore achieved greater independence, extending to choice of marriage partners and attempts to nullify existing marriage contracts.

Professor John Widdowson (Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, University of Sheffield) introduced a learned and witty paper on 'Dialect study in the Sheffield area, 1790-1990' by reminding us that the English are proud of their language but not always of regional dialect. People judge us on what we say and how we say it. In the south, the northern accent is considered by some to be ugly; in the north one is criticised for trying to be southern. Professor Widdowson gave numerous examples of how anecdotes often give an insight into dialectic attitudes. Dialect words varied a great deal in different regions and it is possible to use them in order to identify local communities with a great deal of accuracy.

We were pleased to welcome Dr Brian Short from the School of Cultural and Community Studies, University of Sussex who presented a paper on 'South-east England from 1000 A.D.: theoretical perspectives on the development of intra-regional differences'. He set out to show how power relationships are expressed between people and between regions. He emphasised that regions are not about physical features but about people. Uneven development between one region and another reflected the expressed preference of the powerful at any historic moment, a theme which Dr Short illustrated with many examples from the coastlands and the Weald of the South East.

Bill Hayes

Seminar on London's Medieval Hinterland

The Department, together with the School of Archaeological Studies and the Centre for Urban History, sponsored a seminar given by Jim Galloway and Margaret Murphy from the Centre for Metropolitan History. Their paper, 'Marketing produce in London's hinterland *c.* 1300', introduced some recent results of the Centre's research project entitled 'Feeding the City', which seeks to integrate urban and agrarian history. The study area for this innovative research project includes all of south-eastern England from Northamptonshire to Kent and covers hundreds of manors. Drawing partly on demesne account rolls for its data, the project has been able to show that manors with easy access to London developed a progressive, market-orientated policy for their surplus produce in order to maximise the cash potential of both stock and arable. Among the more unexpected crops to have been marketed in the capital were those produced in demesne gardens. Marketing strategy varied from manor to manor: some sold to merchants, others to local markets such as Henley-on-Thames, which developed as an *entrepot*, forwarding goods down the river. Other manors sold crops and stock directly to the capital. The seminar provided a fascinating insight into how manors modified their agricultural regimes to feed the capital during a period when its population grew to a size now known to have been far larger than that estimated by historians in the past.

Rosie Keep

Third Research Students' Workshop

Following the success of the second seminar day for part-time research students the June before last, a third migration of the species was planned for Saturday 2nd March, 1991. A Saturday meeting enabled those with full-time jobs to participate more easily and facilitate the evasion of long lost supervisors except Harold Fox, who is reputed to live in Marc Fitch House. This proved to be a good gamble: we even managed to prize him from his office to join us for coffee and lunch, for which we promptly charged him £2. In the interests of equality and fairness we let the fresh faces have the morning, and gave the afternoon over to those who attended last time. This carefully planned schedule had to be rapidly revised when Harold stole the first speaker, Jem Harrison, for an impromptu supervision. John Goodacre was quickly volunteered to exchange places on the timetable and he initiated the proceedings at 10.00 a.m. John's paper was on 'Small town slums', and in particular those of Lutterworth; around these he guided us, from rural community to crowded nineteenth-century courtyard, from feudalism to capitalism. His basic theme was of a non-agricultural population within peasant society and a separation of functions within the area of an unexpanded Lutterworth. Robert Peberdy, self-proclaimed 'Father of part-timers', followed with a study of Henley-on-Thames in the later Middle Ages, in which he asked how far Henley fitted R. H. Hilton's three-part model of a small town in this period. Despite initial appearances seigneurial Henley appears to have been little more than a sham. From 'Father' to 'Infant', as Tony Rollings enthusiastically regaled us with his plans for, and the possibilities of, the Anglo-Saxon East Midlands: a refreshing burst to lift even the most jaded part-timer and fire our minds for working in isolation.

And so to coffee. If the noise in the common room was anything to go by, we were all doing well on rekindled passion for our own research. Back in the seminar room Trevor Hill embarked on the trading and genealogical networks of nineteenth-century Shifnal, with numerous diagrams and maps of spheres of influence. Another new part-timer, he is ready to tackle the linkage between these and various means of transport, as well as the social and religious life of a trading community. Lynn Marston, who escaped last time because she organised the day, was next in the hot seat; she spoke on re-writing, on re-assessing and re-visiting documents, all to do with medieval Glastonbury. Not happy with things to date, she has gone for a familiar part-time approach of 'if in doubt, expand': Glastonbury 1250-1539 is now Glastonbury from dawn of history to present day. A familiar face: Jenny Bhatt took us as far as lunch with a look at girls' schooling and how emphasis has changed from a basic need for education to a move away from domestically biased training and a need for co-education to overcome this 'domestic' bias. And with this domestic bias to the fore we retired for lunch, ensuring no sexual division of labour at washing-up time.

In the afternoon, Jem Harrison finally got his say with a vivid portrayal of life as a part-timer. Interspersed in his outline of the medieval Somerset manor of Brent were snippets revealing research at the grass roots: hours of painstaking transcription, not being able to see the wood for the trees, a cell nine feet by six into which he forces himself with a shoe horn, rampant catalogue cards and all of the dilemmas of modern technology. Terry Finnemore began by stating 'I only have one slide' (of a map of south Staffordshire), before giving a brief update on his work, a short aside on the drawbacks of hedgerow dating and a debate on writing-up. Is it better to use a type-writer, a biro or to risk life and limb and go for a word processor? One slide to many slides: Anne Barker showed us the various aspects of Dengie Hundred, salt-marsh, felden, woodland. If readers have any bright ideas about why some reclaimed land may be tithe-free, please let her know. The day was drawing to a close. Madge Brown has also progressed to writing-up: another one of us facing the dilemma of quill or technology and just how to get the technology to cope with footnotes. Last but not least, a few words - by me - on Coleford in Somerset and the geography of a two-centre mining community at the turn of the century.

We retired to the common room for tea and cake, and a 'seditious' conversation on things we wish we had known when we started on our research.

Julie Dexter

FUTURE EVENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Seminar Programme 1991-2

If you would like to come to any of the seminars listed below you will be most welcome. They are held at Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road. It is essential that you notify the Departmental Secretary (Mrs Pauline Whitmore, 522762) *the day before,* as there may well be limits on the number of spaces available at some of these seminars. *It is hoped that it will not be necessary to turn away visitors who have not telephoned.*

17 October 1991. The making of the English working class revisited: the question of rural England (Dr Roger Wells, Brighton Polytechnic).

14 November 1991. Theodore, Clofesho and the diocese of Leicester (Dr Simon Keynes, Trinity College, Cambridge).

28 November 1991. Watermills, windmills and technological innovation in the Middle Ages (Dr Richard Holt, University of Birmingham).

5 December 1991. By-employment, trade,

nonconformity and the Chilterns of Bucks. (Dr Margaret Spufford, Newnham College, Cambridge).
16 January 1992. Midland open fields: fact and theory reviewed (David Hall of the Fenland Project).
13 February 1992. Geographical Information Systems and their relevance to local historians (Dr David Unwin, University of Leicester).
27 February 1992. Fear and loathing in Shipston-on-Stour: a small town in revolt (Professor Christopher Dyer, University of Birmingham).
5 March 1992. Literacy and locality (Professor David Vincent, Keele University).
19 March 1992. The provincial press in the eighteenth century - and the local historian (Dr Jonathan Barry, University of Exeter).

Third W. G. Hoskins Lecture

It is a great pleasure to announce that the third W. G. Hoskins lecture will be given by Professor David Palliser of the University of Hull. The date is May 9th: all Friends will be sent a reminder early in the Spring. David has an impeccable pedigree as the third W. G. Hoskins lecturer. He was taught by Hoskins at Oxford; the preface to his *Age of Elizabeth* acknowledges 'Professor Hoskins for many years of encouragement, example and friendship'; he has an innovative essay on dearth in *Rural Change and Urban Growth*, the Hoskins *Festschrift*; he wrote on *The Staffordshire Landscape* for the 'Making of the English landscape' series, edited by Hoskins. Among many other publications is, of course, his widely known *Tudor York*. Two other contributions may be less familiar to the readers of this Newsletter. First is the monumental *Annual Bibliography of British and Irish History*, produced for the Royal Historical Society, which he has steered towards completion every year since 1985. Second, astute readers of the acknowledgements in The Buildings of England Series will have seen references to 'Dr D. Palliser', tributes to his eye in the field.

Discussion Session on the Origin of the Midlands Village

As part of the programme for the annual conference of the Economic History Society, to be held at Leicester in April, the Department is convening a discussion session on the origins of the Midlands village. The date is Saturday 11th April. In the chair will be Professor Christopher Dyer. Speakers are Glenn Foard (Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit) on 'The evidence for village formation'; Dr Ros Faith (Wolfson College, Oxford) on 'Estates, demesnes and the village'; Harold Fox, 'The late Saxon agrarian context'; Dr David Rollason (University of Durham), 'The ecclesiastical context'; Dr Anne Williams on 'Aristocratic residence and the village'. There will also be a panel of invited discussants, including Charles Phythian-Adams, Paul Harvey, Chris Thornton, David Roffe and others. The Economic History Society's policy is to welcome attendance from the locality and from those who wish to come to their annual conferences for only one session, for a fee of £7.50, to cover the reproduction of abstracts, postage and overheads. Please write in the first instance, with a cheque payable to 'Economic History Conference 1992', to the convenor, Harold Fox, *before February 1st.*

Fourth Anglo-American Seminar on the Medieval Economy and Society.

This conference (July 17th - 19th) is being organized by Bruce Campbell (Queen's University of Belfast), in association with the Department. Speakers, on a variety of themes, will be: Professor Paul Harvey (Durham), Professor Robert Stacey (University of Washington at Seattle), Dr Caroline Barron (Royal Holloway and Bedford New College), Professor Edwin and Dr Anne DeWindt (University of Detroit), Dr Harold Fox (Leicester), Dr Christopher Thornton (Hertford College, Oxford). There will also be a symposium on 'Commercialization and the Economy 1000-1300', chaired by Derek Keene (Centre for Metropolitan History) and with contributions from Professor Graeme Snooks (Australian National University), Professor David Farmer (University of Saskatchewan), Nicholas Mayhew (Ashmolean Museum) and Dr Richard Britnell (University of Durham). A lavish reception will be held at Marc Fitch House. These meetings are always truly Anglo-American and have become indispensable for medieval economic and social historians. The organizer regrets that he cannot permit casual attendance at single sessions, for this would erode the number of places available for those coming from North America. Medievalists who wish to attend the whole conference should write in the first instance to Harold Fox, *before February 1st.*

Visit of the British Association for Local History

A party made up of members of the British Association for Local History will visit the Department and the University on November 16th.

Fourth Research Students' Workshop

This workshop will be held on Saturday March 7th, from 9.30 a.m. to approximately 4.00 p.m.

FUNDED RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT

Here we report on research funded from outside the Department: Keith Snell's ambitious project on religious pluralism, supported by a large grant from the Leverhulme Trust; Harold Fox's programme on medieval demography, financed by a pilot grant from the E.S.R.C.; and work for the *Historical Atlas of the South-West England.*

The Local Geography of Religious Pluralism in England and Wales, 1676-1851

Research started in the Department on this Leverhulme-funded project in June 1991. The early stages have involved the completion by Paul Ell of his prior work on the 1851 census of religious worship, at the level of registration districts. Data at this spatial level are now entirely computerized and mapped with the aid of the GIMMS computer cartographic package. The enormity of the task, coupled with the formidable computing expertise and mainframe space and processing time demanded, has tested the University's Computer Centre to its limits. But the result completely eclipses any earlier work on the geography of religion in England and Wales. We have now moved to the analysis of religious data at the parish level, setting them within the context of a wide range of demographic and socio-economic variables such as population figures, ratable values, migration data, poor-law expenditure, occupational data, and the combined measures that can be derived from information such as this. The aim is to produce special studies of particular counties and regions throughout England and Wales. Attention is being concentrated initially on Leicestershire and Derbyshire, and computerized entries made accordingly. In this we are very fortunate in being allowed access to the as yet unpublished Derbyshire 1851 religious figures so laboriously computerized by Margery Tranter in the Department - invaluable data which will permit more exhaustive analysis of this neglected and important county. We hope, in addition, to develop the study further through the use of time-series data from sources such as the 1829 religious returns and visitation returns, and to analyze the nonconformist circuit systems within the context of the mapped parish data within each county. Following the computerization of the data for all parishes in these two Midland counties we shall move to analysis of comparable data elsewhere, probably in Devon, Sussex, Monmouthshire and Cumbria. The project is due to run for a further two years, and will be dedicated to the bringing forth of a contemplative, illuminating, and authoritative text on the geography of religion and its causes and associations. The book will probably be published by Cambridge University Press.

Paul Ell and Keith Snell

Garciones of Glastonbury

Having been heard muttering about the subject for many years, usually heavily in disguise in darkened rooms, I have at last returned to my work on the demographic implications of the unusual (not quite unique) nominal listings which I discovered at Longleat House in the 1980s. Covering all manors on the huge estate of Glastonbury Abbey, these listings name all landless males over the age of twelve (*garciones*) and state the tax paid, except for those in the parental home ('with mother', 'with father'). They thus supply what is lacking in most medieval listings of people, the names of the landless and the poor.

Combined with the information in surveys, the listings inform on population densities. They tell much about the landless and about how fluctuations in their numbers influenced population trends. They can be used to put precise figures on mortality per thousand in 'crisis' years of poor harvests and in the year of the Black Death. They begin to allow us to see the swirls and eddies of a floating, often migrant, insecure and under-privileged segment of the population in these years when the number of English medieval people fluctuated around its peak. There were, of course, considerable differences between manors; these are being examined in the contexts of local resources, local farming systems, the size-distribution of holdings and intensity of 'manorialization' as expressed by the degree to which exaction of the lord's services stimulated the labour market.

The E.S.R.C. grant is for ancillary work on other estates designed to throw light on the context and purpose of the Glastonbury lists and for detailed study of three manors. The ancillary work is largely complete. It has been discovered that similar taxes existed on other estates: at Newnham (Worcs.), for example, exactions were made from ' a villein when he comes of age, unless he be the immediate servant of his father or mother' and at Shipdham (Norf.) tax was paid by any able-bodied 'single-man', except those 'in the service of mothers or fathers'. Taxes of this kind, in other words, were not unusual and can be seen as a means by which lords kept track of labour which they might wish to use at certain seasons, as a source of seigneurial income from a segment of the population which would otherwise yield little and (which is how contemporary jurists saw them) as a means of securing 'recognition' of the villein status of the landless. But only from the Glastonbury estate do large numbers of listings survive, giving us truly remarkable 'annals of the labouring poor' for the Middle Ages.

Study of the three manors is now under way and will yield published papers which will be considered as pilots for the next stage of the project: computerization of the estimated 40 thousand entries in all listings from Glastonbury's forty or so West-Country manors.

Harold Fox

The Historical Atlas of South-West England

Work has continued on research for maps and text for the medieval section of the *Historical Atlas of South-West England*. Cartography is being funded by a major grant by the British Academy to the University of Exeter's Centre for South-Western

Historical Studies (see elsewhere in this issue). The expenses of research are funded by the University of Leicester's Research Board. Maps contributed by the Department will relate to medieval rural settlement, agriculture, towns and rural industry. Thus far, most of the expenditure has been on trips to record offices for research into the medieval rural industries of Devon and Cornwall: the explicit aim is to attempt to marry the information on individuals in national sources (e.g. the aulnage returns for clothiers and taxation exemptions for tinners) with that in local sources such as court rolls and surveys. The industries covered are tin streaming, cloth making, pottery manufacture, quarrying and silver mining.
Harold Fox

STAFF CHANGES

Richard McKinley

This September Richard McKinley retires from his post as Honorary Marc Fitch Senior Research Fellow, although happily he will remain with us in an unofficial capacity. Richard came to University College Leicester in 1949 not long after the Department was founded: the young Manchester graduate, already with several years of overseas war service behind him, was given 'space' in the College's Hatton Room as Local Assistant Editor for the Victoria County History, under W. G. Hoskins. His retirement thus marks over forty years of association with the Department.

Richard has always been the Department's foremost scholar. All of his colleagues have recognized that, without any sense of envy or jealousy. It is an established fact. Even Herbert Finberg, himself not adverse to parading a good deal of pure scholarship, described Richard as 'the most learned man he knew'. A rigorous training at the renowned Manchester School under Jacob, Redford, Namier and Cheney, work for the Victoria County History under the ever-vigilant and painstaking Pugh, and his own scrutiny of so many counties for the English Surnames Survey - all have given him an unrivalled command of English history. What one dreads most in asking him to help with some historical query is the negative answer for as likely as not this means that the problem is without solution. Many members of staff in the Department and many generations of students have been guided towards a happy solution to their queries by his profound knowledge of the Middle Ages. But more than that, he will probably be able to assist if the question is on the subject of twentieth-century local government, or the poor law, or the Tudor subsidies . . . the range is enviable and the recall instantaneous.

One cannot write of a Manchester medievalist without recalling the sombre features of Tait and Tout who peer awkwardly out from the frontispieces of their *Festschrifts*. Richard McKinley is not at all like that. His is a humane and benign appearance, with a good deal of humour just below the surface. Although they may not be offered without a little prompting, a fund of humorous anecdotes (not least about the Department) and a wry chuckle can be drawn from him without much difficulty. He will talk too about his service years in Burma, where his task was to calculate the range of artillery fire, about his travels in Europe and in more exotic places and about his reading, which ranges far beyond his research.

His colleagues and students value all of these qualities and above all, in an age when it is no longer safe to assume that most people in universities are entirely sincere, they value his complete integrity and reliability. He never deviated from the research task in hand. He thought hard about how to teach his students, a task which became increasingly difficult in medieval palaeography classes, as more and more of them initially lacked the necessary Latin. He was dedicated to the rhythms of the academic year. You knew where you were with Richard McKinley.

As he retires he leaves behind him two monuments which add lustre to the Department of English Local History. One is the Victoria County History of Leicestershire, originally edited from the Department by W. G. Hoskins. Hoskins to a large extent planned the thematic volumes, but it was left to Richard to bring these plans to fruition and to carry the series forward with topographical volumes on the City of Leicester and on Gartree Hundred. He admits that when he first came to Leicester his task was to infill the vacant spaces in the design. The sections on 'Religious history' came naturally to him, for he had recently completed a M.A. dissertation on the cartulary of Breedon Priory; but characteristically he turned his hand also to chapters on subjects initially more foreign to him, on 'Political history, 1885-1950' and on 'The forests of Leicestershire' - and made them his own. The V.C.H. volumes for Leicestershire, although still incomplete, are undoubtedly among the best of the county sets of the post-war period. The thematic volumes contain a glittering collection of scholars: Richard himself, Simmons, Plumb, Thirsk, Hilton. The topographical volumes, a *genre* still (quite wrongly) maligned in some circles, belong to the new generation which, for each parish, adds comprehensive sections invaluable to the social historian, on nonconformity and economic history for example, to the old paragraphs on 'manorial descent' and 'the church'. This work came to an end in 1956, when the local funding ran out. Richard's other great achievement comprises the first five volumes of the English Surnames Survey. The team which conceived the Survey - Marc Fitch, W. G. Hoskins, F. W. Steer, Sir Anthony Wagner - naturally turned to Richard, and he returned to Leicester in 1965, after spells as Archivist for Exeter City Council and for Staffordshire,

to become its first Director. From the outset the Survey was very much under his command: he influenced the choice of counties to be covered, he designed the strategy for research, he did all the work at the quarry face itself (except for the volume on Yorkshire, West Riding); the very scheme for classification of names was his, for when he started there was none which was satisfactory for the uses to which surnames were now being put - the elucidation of certain problems of social and economic history. His primacy in the field was acknowledged in 1989 when he became Chairman of the Council for Name Studies in Great Britain and Ireland.

When he retired as Director in 1986, four volumes in the Survey had been completed, a further one was reaching completion, and another was under way - a remarkable achievement. At the retirement celebrations in that year, Charles Phythian-Adams described Richard as 'the historian's historian', a compliment which many may aspire to, but few achieve. Just so. But recently the editor of monumental series has turned his hand to a popular book and at his second retirement we can celebrate the distillation of twenty-five years of work, the *History of British Surnames* (Longmans) which is 'selling well'. For this and for all of his achievements we cannot thank him enough.

Harold Fox

Paul Ell

Paul Ell first joined the Department as an M.A. student in October 1986. After January 1989 he was partly with us as a part-time research student and after October 1989 even more tenuously attached, working, with a much coveted E.S.R.C. grant, at the School of Geography, University of Birmingham. His Ph.D. thesis is now rumoured to be nearing completion. Following this chequered career he re-joins us, and can be warmly welcomed, as Research Associate for the project on religious pluralism (described fully above).

Paul Eden

Paul Eden joined the Department for three months during the summer, as the third student-cataloguer for the Marc Fitch Fund Library. It is difficult to write accurately about him, because he insisted on shrouding his past in secrecy. There are rumours that he is a Devonian by upbringing (which explains a lot) and worked, among other things, as chef and security guard before reading Politics at Swansea and Library and Information Studies at Loughborough. His special contribution in the Department has been to devise and initiate the classification for the county collections in the Topography Room.

MARC FITCH HOUSE AND ITS FACILITIES

The People in the Portraits: Sir Thomas Fitch

One of the most sensitive of the portraits now gracing Marc Fitch House is that of Sir Thomas Fitch, baronet, which hangs in the vestibule to the Library. It is also entirely appropriate to the scholarly activities which now surround it, because Sir Thomas made a notable contribution to the built environment and transports systems of seventeenth-century London. It is possible that Dahl, the artist, commemorated the profession of Sir Thomas by representing him with a scroll (a building plan?) in his left hand, although this is not certain because the oils have darkened in that area. It is known that Sir Thomas was born in Barkway, Herts. in 1637, but other aspects of his early life are still obscure. Although of yeoman ancestry he was apprenticed as a carpenter. He must have risen rapidly in the building trades, for he was still under thirty when he worked on the reconstruction of a number of buildings after the Great Fire of 1666. The first structure on which he is known to have been employed was the new house of Sir Ralph Bankes at Kingston Lacey (Dorset) for which Fitch did the brickwork in 1663.

Even more important than his commissions in 1666 was his execution of Sir Christopher Wren's scheme to clear and deepen the noisome Fleet Ditch, making it into a useful canal flanked by quays and houses. Fitch was responsible for cutting and supporting the channel and for constructing wharves, work carried out between 1672 and 1674. Reddaway, the historian of seventeenth-century London, remarks that he was a man of 'utmost integrity' who ensured the ultimate success of a risky venture; for his services he was paid £50,000 and presented with plate worth £200. A knighthood followed in 1679. Later contracts included fortifications and the Garrison Hospital at Portsmouth (1679-80), the Great Storehouse at the Tower of London (1688), the Bishop's Palace at Wolvesey, Winchester and the Court House at Windsor. He was employed on this last work in 1687; on 7th September 1688 he was created baronet, but died nine days later. The building was completed by Wren. The portrait must have been painted at a date very close to his death, for Dahl did not begin to practise in London until 1688.

Sir Thomas is associated with two homes. Like many other successful men he bought an estate in Kent, at Mount Mascall near Bexley, described by Hasted as standing 'on an eminence, having a double avenue of trees in front of it down to the road'. His London house was probably another gain from his great scheme on the Fleet canal: built where the Fleet joins the Thames, an eighteenth-century painting shows it as a most elegant town house of the urban renaissance flanked by a few feet of formal gardens

and then steps leading down to the water's edge. It has been suggested that the design was by Wren, with whom Sir Thomas worked on so many projects.
John Fisher and others

The Marc Fitch Fund Library

All Friends of the Department are entitled to use the Marc Fitch Fund Library (by prior arrangement in the case of those who are not staff or students). The basis of the collection comprises books of historical interest collected over many years by Dr Fitch and by F. W. Steer, and reflecting both the wide-ranging and specific interests of both scholars. At Marc Fitch House the collection has been re-arranged in a small way in order to match emphases in teaching within the Department, although in essence it still reflects the genius of its founders. We begin in the vestibule with works of general reference. The 'general' sequence in the Reading Room (i.e. books and sets not relating to a particular county, place or region) starts with works on historical reference and on sources and their interpretation. The long west wall for the most part houses printed sources, its greatest treasures being complete sets of the Harleian Society series and the Index Library. We move on through genealogy, family history and heraldry to general works on British and English history and then to specific aspects: economic and social, parliamentary, legal, religious and educational. At this point special sections have been created to mirror emphases in teaching: on historical demography, personal names, historical sociology, occupations, status and class and popular culture in all of its ramifications, from uses of leisure to dialect and slang. The long west wall of the Topography Room continues the general sequence with sub-sections on historiography, techniques and concepts, the history of cartography, place-names, history of the landscape, agrarian history, urban history and architectural history.

The bays of the Topography Room contain the topographical sequence, with books arranged by county and, within counties, by subject and place. The fundamental principle behind shelving a book in the Library is that a 'local' work is placed in the topographical sequence unless there is very good reason to shelve it elsewhere: this seems proper in a local history collection and reflects the library as it was when moved to Marc Fitch House. The rule is broken in the case of certain 'special collections' such as those on the history of cartography and on place-names. All English counties are covered but the Library is especially strong on Essex, London, Oxfordshire and Sussex, reflecting the topographical interests of its founders. The shelves of the first two bays begin with Bedfordshire, under the roving eye of Lady Anne Fitch, while the last contain works on Wales, Scotland and Ireland and on regions which span counties (e.g. the Weald) and some splendid folios. We cannot, in the space available here, single out individual works or sets, though it must be said that the London collection contains a huge sub-section on livery companies, undoubtedly the most comprehensive of its kind outside the capital. Adjuncts to the Topography Room are the F.W.Steer Room which houses as yet unsorted guide books and offprints, and the locked rare books cabinets whose contents will be described in future issues of the Newsletter.

Several programmes of re-shelving have been completed: these were necessary in order to ensure that spaces are left in areas where the collection is expanding. Cataloguing to high professional standards is under way, with the help of students from the Department of Library and Information Studies at Loughborough University. Purchases are made in order to keep up existing strengths and to expand into subjects which relate to teaching and research in the Department. Some of the books now even boast spine labels, thanks to a small grant from the Friends. A programme of binding is being carried out by Mr Trevor Hickman of Wymondham. Things are falling into place, users now find it easier to find books, shelf labels and spine labels are gradually giving the Library a ship-shape appearance . . . but there is still a long way to go. Any Friend who loves books and who wishes to help in some specific task should write to the Honorary Marc Fitch Fund Librarian, at the Department. This offer will be especially exciting for anybody who has a special interest in guide-books to churches, country houses, castles, towns and villages.

Gifts to the Library

Since the date of the last Newsletter, the Library has been enhanced by gifts from: Professor Luke Herrmann, Alec McAulay (Leicester University Press), Professor Jack Simmons, Henry Reed, Trevor Hickman, Amanda Goode, Lorne Ali, Cyril Hart, Professor K. Ugawa, Professor B. Simon, the Squire de Lisle, Keith Davis, John Lovell and Professor M. Beresford. We are very grateful to them all. John Lovell's gift is in memory of Mr J. H. Brown of Husbands Bosworth; Alec McAulay's includes a number of works on urban history; Henry Reed's improves coverage of Buckinghamshire; The Squire de Lisle presented a copy from the limited edition of his *Operations of the Quorn Hounds, 1869 - 1870*; Professor Beresford generously donated a large and valuable collection of offprints relating in the main to British deserted villages. This last gift is separate from the collection of foreign books and offprints on villages and deserted villages which was announced in the last Newsletter. Some of these have arrived but the rest are still awaiting transport in the basement of Fortress House (English Heritage). They have been briefly inspected: a box marked 'Africa' is especially intriguing.

Library Opening on Saturdays

Thanks to a donation from the Friends the Marc Fitch Fund Library is now open on some Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The dates are as follows: 19 Oct., 2 Nov., 23 Nov., 7 Dec., 18 Jan., 1 Feb., 15 Feb., 29 Feb., 7 March, 2 May, 16 May, 23 May.

DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS

C. Dyer

Hanbury: Settlement and Society in a Woodland Landscape, Occasional Papers, Department of English Local History 4th ser. 4 (1991), 73pp.

This account of the settlement and landscape of a Worcestershire parish breaks new ground in the study of local history. Archaeological and documentary evidence are combined in a way that has not been attempted before. All sources of information have been examined and they have been integrated to show how the landscape has been settled and cultivated over a period of more than 4000 years. The medieval and modern woodland is shown not to be a survival of primeval forests but the end-product of constant change. In some periods the countryside has been extensively cultivated, and in others the grain fields have reverted to wood and pasture. Many previous studies of medieval settlements have been concerned with villages, but Hanbury like many woodland communities had no village centre. Its medieval people, following their Romano-British predecessors, lived in hamlets and isolated farms dispersed over the landscape. These apparently disorganized settlements are here analysed and shown to form distinct patterns. The physical arrangement of the houses and land is related to the society of the woodlands; so this work is about serfs, poachers and ale-house keepers as well as the buildings, fields and woods in which they lived and worked. Social history helps to explain the development of the landscape, because every change was not determined by the physical environment. People, peasants as well as kings and lords, made choices about where they lived and how they worked the land.

H. S. A. Fox

'The occupation of the land: Devon and Cornwall', in E. Miller, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, III, 1348-1500* (1991), pp. 152-75.

The brief from the editor for authors of the provincial chapters on 'The occupation of the land' in the later medieval volume of *The Agrarian History* was that they should deal with 'changes in land-use and the desertion of villages'. It soon became clear that the former topic could only be tackled through statistical analysis, at a regional level, of all surviving inquisitions *post mortem*. This was achieved over the course of two early summers in those far-off days - submerged now and obliterated, irrecoverable as Lyonness, so quickly have the waters come flooding in - when, free from the iron rule of CVCPs, UFCs and ESRCs, serious historians could clear their desks at the end of spring, departing to enjoy London while the parks and plane trees were still fresh and full of wonder and the towers and pinnacles of the Public Record Office stood out white against the June sky. The results of this work on land-use are presented in two tables which form the basis of a discussion, fleshed out with other sources, of contrasts between regions, and their causes. There are hardly any true deserted medieval villages in Devon and Cornwall: this chapter looks instead at the desertion and dwindling of isolated farms and hamlets, using documentary methods pioneered by the author. There are also discussions of the fate of tenants' and lords' buildings during the later Middle Ages.

'Farming practices and techniques: Devon and Cornwall', *ibid.*, pp. 303-23.

This chapter looks at the degree to which farming regions were developed within Devon and Cornwall during the later Middle Ages. It concludes that isolation (in some cases) and the stimulus of diverse types of markets (in others) encouraged regional contrasts in farming type. In particularly isolated regions, distant from urban, estuarine or industrial markets, diet remained traditional and commercialization was expressed only in the development of stock raising. In regions close to towns, ports and concentrations of industrial consumers the types of crops grown reflected demand and there was a tendency towards dairying. The statistical basis for this examination of nascent farming regions is an analysis of crop combinations from all known demesne accounts and of animal demography from the same sources and from inventories (the demographic structure of a flock or herd clearly reveals the uses to which it was being put). The chapter also examines crop yields, the determinants of yields, inter-regional movements of livestock, the productivity of flocks and herds, and drink.

'Tenant farmers and tenant farming: Devon and Cornwall', *ibid.*, pp. 722-43.

This chapter concentrates on the rural populations of Devon and Cornwall during the later Middle Ages. Changing patterns of holdings belonging to tenant farmers are analyzed: sizes of farms increased, numbers of smallholders diminished and there was a good deal of circulation of families among farms as the concept of hereditary descent of land to a degree fell into disuse. Factors influencing this last development are discussed in detail. The houses and field systems within which tenant farmers lived and worked are briefly described. Half of the chapter is devoted to people who held no land, to

labourers, to tinners (although there is some debate as to whether or not most medieval tinners were also farmers, a debate partially resolved here) and to workers in the South West's other diverse and lively industries. A new methodology for investigating the prevalence of medieval service in husbandry is introduced. Sources range from rentals and court rolls to lists of tinners exempt from taxation and John Leland's *Genethliacon*, a poem written to celebrate the birth of a new Duke of Cornwall in 1537.

'Social relations and ecological relationships in agrarian change: an example from medieval and early modern England', in U. Sporrong, ed., *The Transformation of Rural Society, Economy and Landscape* (1990), pp. 125-35.

L. Garrison
'The Black historical past in British education', in P. Stone and R. Mackenzie, eds, *The Excluded Past: Archaeology in Education* (1990), pp. 231-44.

D. Hey
The Fiery Blades of Hallamshire: Sheffield and its Neighbourhood, 1660-1740, Communities, Contexts and Cultures: Leicester Studies in English Local History (1991), 367pp.

One of the least understood periods of English history is the century following the restoration of Charles II, when England was on the threshold of becoming the first industrialized country in the world. Urban historians of this period have told us much about the county towns, cathedral cities and ports but little about the places that were soon to outpace these ancient centres to become England's great Victorian cities. It is clear that by the late seventeenth century Sheffield and a few other industrial towns already had specialized economies that set them apart from the rest. Sheffield is worth studying, therefore, both as an interesting phenomenon of the times and as a harbinger of the complex industrial societies of the Victorian era. The discipline of local history is moving towards the study of larger societies than the single urban or rural community, to those neighbourhoods or 'countries' to which people felt that they belonged. Sheffield was the centre of a distinctive local society known as Hallamshire, whose inhabitants were united by a sense of common inheritance and fortune. This book, therefore, is concerned with the whole of Hallamshire, and with all the inhabitants therein, particularly the metalworkers who gave the place its special character.

The book begins by taking a step backwards in an examination of the early settlement and economy of Hallamshire before tracing the beginnings of growth of population at the close of the seventeenth century. Chapters follow on the world of the cutler and on Sheffield's trade with the wider world. It ends with a discussion of the open social system of the region, so different from the self-perpetuating oligarchies of some other contemporary towns, and with an analysis of the 'two cultures' of Sheffield.

J. D. Harrison
'Celebrations to sources: an investigation into 2-2-2 well tanks of the Bristol & Exeter Railway', *Historical Model Railway Society Journal* 14 (1991), pp. 3-9.

This article is an exercise in culling evidence and tackling the apparent contradictions thrown up by the sources. Beginning with contemporary reports of the celebrations to mark the opening of a small railway in Somerset, it sets off in pursuit of the engine that hauled the opening train in 1854. We journey through the relevant secondary sources gleaning basic technical details, we then note detailed differences in photographic evidence and finally inspect the archive material at Kew. The engine in question was one of five small tank engines which, according to the secondary sources, were designed for branch line work by James Pearson. Material in Kew gives the impression that Charles Gregory was responsible for the design. The article considers the evidence *in toto*, its nature and background. It then puts forward a tentative conclusion about the roles played by the different parties involved with these engines. Perhaps because of its romantic image and passionate devotees, railway history can suffer the scorn of those who consider their own speciality to be more respectable. However, its popularity has helped to ensure the survival of an abundance of source material that facilitates a rigorous examination of even quite obscure and enigmatic issues at local and regional levels. This article is a step in that direction.

T. G. Hill
'Shropshire to Birmingham settlement certificates 1686-1726', *Shropshire Family History Journal* 11 (1990), pp. 78-9.

'More Shropshire to Birmingham settlement certificates 1727-1757', *ibid.*, pp. 118-9.

'Seasonal migration to London market gardens', *ibid.*, 12 (1991), pp. 9-11.

D. Paul
'The bibliography of local history', in M. D. Dewe (ed.), *Local Studies Collections: a Manual*, 2 (1991), pp. 102-18.

This chapter is intended for both librarians and local historians. It aims to answer two questions. How do you trace items on a particular place? And how do you trace items on particular aspects of history? It covers monographs, periodicals and texts and calendars. The following materials are excluded: handbooks on local history and guides to sources;

books on dating, palaeography and Latin; and guides to contemporary printed sources like directories. Bibliographies in which these may be traced are listed. The section on places divides into the British Isles, England and Wales, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, with a final section on urban history. The emphasis is on bibliographies and indexes which are available in public and academic libraries. For the first time in a work of this kind, separate attention is given to the Celtic countries. Each of these has its own specific range of bibliographical tools and the chapter aims to establish their scope and to identify gaps. It includes unpublished indexes in the national libraries of Wales and Scotland. The section on aspects of history has the following sub-sections: bibliographical guides for local historians; monographs and articles as bibliographical tools; bibliographies of history; and on-line databases and CD-ROM. It concentrates on major general guides and omits specialist bibliographies, for example, on agricultural history or vernacular architecture. Many of these are listed, however, in the more general works. The chapter provides a starting point and concludes with advice on how to trace material systematically.

C. V. Phythian-Adams

'Local history and national history: the quest for the peoples of England', *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 2 (1991), pp. 65-90.

'Rituals of personal confrontation in late medieval England', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 73 (1991), pp. 1-23.

General editor's foreword, in D. Hey, *The Fiery Blades of Hallamshire: Sheffield and its Neighbourhood, 1660-1740*, Communities, Contexts and Cultures: Leicester Studies in English Local History (1991), pp. xiii-xvi.

Re-thinking English Local History, Occasional Papers, Department of English Local History 4th ser. 1 (2nd edn, 1991), 58pp.

'Ceremony and the citizen: the communal year at Coventry 1450-1550', in R. Holt and G. Rosser (eds), *The English Medieval Town: a Reader in English Urban History 1200-1540* (1990), pp. 238-64.

D. Postles

'Gifts in frankalmoign, warranty of land, and feudal society', *Cambridge Law Journal* 50 (1991), pp. 330-46.

Warranty was one of the most important diplomatic introductions into charters in the twelfth century. It is suggested in this paper, *pace* Holt and Hyams, that gifts to the religious cannot be assumed to have informed tenurial relationships in general. More particularly is this so in the case of warranty of charters. The argument, implicitly, but not necessarily, Milsomian, is that warranty of charters was probably introduced initially during the vicissitudes of Stephen's reign, at the period of maximum insecurity for mesne tenants, when 'good lordship' (in the sense of maintenance and protection) was at a premium, and thus entirely in a 'truly seigneurial world' in secular feudal relationships.

'Heads of religious houses as administrators', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *Harlaxton Medieval Studies vol. 1: England in the Thirteenth Century* (1991), pp. 31-49.

Previous historiography, perhaps initiated by the late R. A. L. Smith and followed by Knowles, has established the notion of a cohort of heads of religious houses who were strong administrators in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Although recent research has moved away from the role of individuals in the administration and exploitation of estates, this notion has not been completely dispelled. It is suggested here that the concept of administrator-prelates, as enunciated in the recent past, is much too simplistic. There may, indeed, have been a small nucleus of able men, but there were equally large numbers of heads and houses which suffered critical financial vicissitudes. Moreover, the context of financial re-organization had, in many cases, been established more widely by institutional reforms and external intervention. In the space available for this paper, only some general points could be addressed, but the subject would merit more profound examination.

'Personal naming patterns of peasants and burgesses in late medieval England', *Medieval Prosopography* 12 (1991), pp. 29-56.

This paper is a preliminary attempt to address some issues in naming, from an anthropological perspective. The main argument relates to the relationships between culture (naming) and agency (functions, norms and institutional organisation of society). The paper thus reviews issues such as: social relationships of power; spiritual kinship; notions of patrimony; notions of kinship. Since others are working on gender and naming, that variable is not addressed. The main objective is to examine how far notions of patrimony and inheritance affected naming. It is tentatively proposed that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that notions of patrimony informed patterns of naming of males amongst a *core* of families, although *not* more widely.

N. Shinotsuka

Early Modern Western Europe and Rural Industry (1991), 405pp.

K. D. M. Snell

Church and Chapel in the North Midlands: Religious Observance in the Nineteenth Century, Occasional Papers, Department of English Local History 4th ser. 3 (1991), 77pp.

This Occasional Paper analyses the census of religious worship of 1851, concentrating on the census North Midland division (Leicestershire, Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire) with further less detailed attention paid to all counties in the south of England. In particular, it takes quantitative methods and approaches, as now widely used in many branches of social, economic and local history, and applies them to questions in the historiography of religion that have hitherto been tackled largely with literary evidence. Such questions relate to the geographical reciprocity and complementarity of different religious denominations: the extent for example to which Methodist denominations filled into regional vacuums left by the Church of England (as has often been argued with reference to newly industrialising regions), or alternatively spread into areas where the Anglican church was strong. There is also the issue of the degree to which types of old and new dissent complemented or challenged each other in their coverage and appeal. It is argued that new dissent proved most successful in areas with weak old dissenting traditions; the so-called 'Tillyard thesis' is thus supported. Further, the quantitative analysis in the book answers questions that relate religious provision and church attendance to urbanisation: asking how far the towns and cities of the North Midlands exerted a negative influence upon religious observance.

While much attention is paid to denominational differences by region, analysed geographically and statistically, the book also probes the issue of class and occupational allegiance to particular denominations, arguing for significant differences in such allegiance, particularly within different branches of Methodism. Given such concerns, the book will be of interest to those wishing to apply quantitative methods to cultural phenomena, with a view to exploring cultural boundaries and regionally varied associations. It is argued for example that patterns of denominational reciprocity in the North Midlands varied considerably between counties, and that these patterns differed in important regards from those found further south. General arguments like those advanced by Currie, Tillyard, Gilbert and others need therefore to be further refined to take account of such diversity. A major computerised follow-up study is now under way, funded by the Leverhulme Trust (see elsewhere in this issue under 'Funded Research').

Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture 1 (1990-1), 292pp. and 2 pt 1 (1991), 124 pp. (with E. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

'Agrarian histories and our rural past', *Journal of Historical Geography* 17 (1991), pp. 195-203.

'Defining the rural', *Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture* 1 (1991), pp. 143-5 (with E. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

'Leicester in the 1840s', in *Follow the Man from Cooks* (1991), pp. 10-11.

R. Stuttard

'Putting it down to posterity', *Co-operative News* new ser. 3750 (1991), p. 5.

C. Thornton

'The determinants of land productivity on the Bishop of Winchester's demesne of Rimpton, 1208 to 1403', in B. M. S. Campbell and M. Overton (eds), *Land, Labour and Livestock: Historical Studies in European Agricultural Productivity* (1991), pp. 183-210.

This paper investigates the level and trend of land productivity within a detailed reconstruction of husbandry on the Winchester demesne of Rimpton in south-east Somerset. The level and trend of arable productivity is calculated using weighted aggregate net yields (per acre measured in wheat equivalents), a method which takes into account the changing percentage of the arable acreage occupied by different crops, changes in relative crop values and the degree of fallowing. The trend of arable yields at Rimpton revealed low productivity in the early years of the thirteenth century, followed by a sharp rise to a peak between 1225 and 1275. Although output stagnated in the late thirteenth century, a clear decline was not visible until the years between 1325 and 1375.

These findings run contrary to Postan's neo-Malthusian interpretation of the thirteenth-century economy which argued for the exhaustion of the anciently cultivated arable core. They also run contrary to that model's expectation that arable yields would rise when production contracted to better soil and when increased grazing resources and animal numbers improved manure supplies. An explanation for Rimpton's high yields between 1225 and 1275 was found in the expansion of the arable and the ploughing up of fertile nitrogen-rich assarts (old pastures), and perhaps by the later years of a climatic optimum. The quite reasonable levels of output maintained up to the 1320s also reflect the continuing effects of the complete overhaul in the demesne's management after 1224, including policies to nitrify the soil with legumes, to provide more manure and marl, to improve seed quality and to intensify the use of labour services. These inputs continued until *c.* 1320, but thereafter many yield-enhancing policies

were discarded. The timing of this 'check' is very suggestive of the change in demand deriving from the much debated pre-plague famines, and not surprisingly, mean yields were immediately reduced in the period between 1325 and 1375. Indeed, the correlation between crop prices, arable cultivation and land productivity at Rimpton indicates that most of the improvements in arable technique were not permanent but followed the growth and decline in the market demand for grain. The paper thus supports Boserup's view of a generally positive relationship between population trends and land productivity in areas of intensive arable husbandry.

M. Tranter
"'Of cows and churches": reflections on the origins of Derby', *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report* 4 (1989), pp. 21-4.

Derby is unique among the Five Boroughs in bearing a name which has no linguistic connection with either its Roman predecessor - *Derventio* - or the Anglo-Saxon *Northworthy*. This article is a response to a suggestion made in the MSRG's previous Report that the *wīc* ending of the area of the town known as Wardwick implied not a dairy farm, 'Walda's *wīc*' as stated by Cameron in *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*, but a trading settlement resulting from proximity to the Roman fort further north at *Derventio* (Little Chester). The semantic history of the elements *wīc*, *wich* and *vīcus* as suggested by both continental and English scholars is summarized and parallels with dairy farms close to town centres in other parts of the country are drawn. The early ecclesiastical topography of Derby is briefly outlined, attention being drawn to the fact that five of Derby's six churches had outlying chapelries as well as to the location of the cult centre of St Alkmund (a Northumbrian saint) in the north, and to the church of St Werburgh (a Mercian saint) in the south of the town. The distinction between the royal ecclesiastical possessions in the northern sector and those of the independent lords in the southern area is noted and the question of a possible link with the uneasy relations between Mercia and Northumbria in the eighth and ninth centuries is raised.

RECENTLY COMPLETED THESES

Jonathan Kissock
'The origins of the village in South Wales: a study in landscape archaeology' (Ph.D. thesis, 1990).

The debate on the origins of nucleated settlements and their associated open-field agricultural systems is now one of the most frequently encountered in landscape studies. This thesis has explored the debate in a processual framework. A hypothetico-deductive methodology has been employed and the evidence is presented in a retrogressive manner. The study is spatially limited to the four 'old' counties of Monmouthshire, Glamorgan, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire; there are no fixed chronological limits. The first chapter sets out the background and defines the overall aim. This is then expanded into a number of overall objectives. Each objective is presented in the form of a model from which hypotheses were deduced and then, in subsequent chapters, tested. Underlying each model was the premise that the village is the physical - and therefore usually the archaeologically recoverable - manifestation of a particular form of social organisation.

It is argued that three processes led to village origins. A number of villages were deliberately planted in order to stabilise the Norman-Celtic boundary in mid-Pembrokeshire. These were probably founded *c.* 1110 by *locatores*. They had the inflated status of 'rural boroughs' in order to attract settlers. Two processes contributed to village origins in the pre-conquest period: the need to increase agricultural production (to support both aristocratic and ecclesiastical elites) and the requirement to re-organize agriculture following the fragmentation of the earlier multiple estates.

The thesis also examines other related topics. The evidence for the stability of village plans was explored. A wide range of material - maps, the degree of concentration of landownership, population figures and the shape and size of deserted villages - is discussed as part of this area of study. It is argued that village shape had not usually changed and hence deductions made from morphological studies - for example on deliberate plantation - were valid. Another study examines the landscape of Gower in some detail. This chapter demonstrates the differences between the Anglo-Norman and Celtic landscapes of nucleation and discusses the vibrancy of the upland economy in the later medieval period; and it also develops the concept of hedge dating beyond the 'one species per century' formula. This thesis contributes to the wider debate in two ways: it gathers new information and offers new interpretations of the village in South Wales. It also develops and refines some of the approaches and assumptions made by landscape archaeologists.

Joyce Miles
'The rise of suburban Exeter and the naming of its streets and houses, *c.* 1801 - 1907' (Ph.D. thesis, 1990).

This is a study of the rise of the suburbs of Exeter, the county town of Devon, between the years 1801 and 1907. The dates chosen coincide with the publication of the first detailed census return and the completion of the first local authority housing. Fieldwork and analysis of local archives have revealed the manner in which the suburbs developed and their role in contributing to a city which was undergoing

change in its economic base. Each suburb developed at a different pace and with its own characteristics. An investigation into the pattern of development is supported by a study of the naming of streets and houses in the new suburbs which sheds light on the aspirations and attitudes prevalent at the time.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century Exeter had lost its once-flourishing woollen industry, and trading through its port had diminished. It was a small, compact city, a provincial market centre without a thriving industrial base. An analysis of local authority committee minutes, parish records, newspapers and other relevant documents revealed the gradual expansion of the suburbs. The magnificent crescents and terraces of the early years attracted prosperous middle-class residents who, in turn, generated a need for professional services from lawyers, bankers and doctors, thus contributing towards Exeter's economic recovery. By the end of the nineteenth century the city was showing signs of revitalization. It was ringed by suburban development of various kinds - from terraces which contain some of the country's finest architecture to rows of small, flat-fronted dwellings for those who worked in the city's trades and services. A study of the rise of the suburbs of Exeter is a valuable guide to and a reflection of the city's metamorphosis.

James Moir
'A world unto themselves? - Squatter settlement in Herefordshire, 1780 - 1880' (Ph.D. thesis, 1989).

By the early nineteenth century, Herefordshire's commons hosted 96 settlements comprising ten or more dwellings. Were they peopled by 'squatters' who had built their shanties illegally on the waste and were the inhabitants a rough, uncivilised people who indulged themselves in vice and profanity of every kind? Contemporary views are understandable given the geographical isolation of these places, but they ignore entirely the diversity of settlements encountered as a result of the varied topography and types of agriculture practised within the county's five principal regions. Except in the south-west corner of the county, farmers themselves relied little on the exercise of common rights, an important pre-requisite for the growth of squatter settlements. Conversely, this mixed agricultural economy created a wide range of employment opportunities; commons settlements were marginally placed between woodlands and fields, creating a rhythmic cycle of seasonal employment for male commoners. In contrast, women's lives were structured around the spatial organisation of domestic tasks and, in particular, access to and control of fire and water.

Threatening to undermine this cohesive intermeshing of complementary roles in squatter society was the problem of tenurial insecurity, although obsessions with the origin of squatter housing have tended to obscure the increasingly complex web of tenurial inter-relationships in which the squatter, freeholder, copyholder, vestry and manorial lord were entangled. From the point of view of tenure, settlements tended to develop along three distinctive paths: some became enveloped by large rural estates, illustrated in the case study of Tarrington's commons. More isolated settlements retained a staunch freeholders' presence; in others petty landlords predominated as a result of enclosure and proximity to market centres. This classificatory model becomes a useful tool for analyzing nonconformist tendencies. Each type of settlement, though, should be viewed in the context of a developing capitalist economy, which ultimately is responsible for giving birth to, and destroying, squatter communities.

Michael Nix
'A maritime history of the ports of Bideford and Barnstaple, 1786 - 1841' (Ph.D. thesis, 1991).

This study can be divided into two parts. The first attempts to place the ports of Bideford and Barnstaple in the broader contexts of international, national and regional trends during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The effects of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and of industrialisation in South Wales are presented as important elements in the development of the Bideford shipping industry. The work is also concerned with the more localised economic significance of commerce, trade (legal and illegal), transport infrastructures, hinterlands and industrial and agricultural production. Further, the importance of Bideford and Barnstaple in the Newfoundland cod trade, the North American tobacco traffic and the trade in Irish wool during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is emphasised and helps to reflect the retrenchment of the two ports by the 1780s, the starting point of the enquiry.

The second part of the thesis is concerned with the shipping industry. Occupational structures and geographical distributions of shareholders with capital invested in Bideford vessels are analyzed, as are investment patterns directed towards the expansion of the fleet at the turn of the nineteenth century. The shipping stock of the port of Bideford, and to a lesser extent of Barnstaple, is also examined to discover, at a local level, medial models of vessels deployed by the two ports. Technical comparisons of the models for 1787 and 1803 revealed the modifications which were adopted to meet new trading opportunities in the Bristol Channel. A brief exploration of shipbuilding is also undertaken, examining broad trends and placing Bideford and Barnstaple in the wider competitive context of the Bristol Channel. Finally, the masters and men who

operated the vessels are studied, with particular reference to the distribution and occupational, demographic and social structures of the mariner community located in the village of Appledore.

Alan Storm
'Family and maritime community: Robin Hood's Bay, *c.* 1653 - *c.* 1837' (Ph.D. thesis, 1991).

This study of a coastal settlement, in challenging its traditional classification as a 'fishing village', may strengthen the case for more investigations of the kind. Coastal erosion at Robin Hood's Bay created a compactness which contributed to the cohesion of the population. Confined between upland and the North Sea, the settlement shared the remoteness, cultural even more than geographical, of seaward looking Whitby. With enclosure as a detectable factor, population was probably drawn from the adjacent countryside in the fifteenth century, to accumulate around a fishing-farming nucleus.

In the seventeenth century the traditional manorial situation in the mother parish of Fylingdales began to change, with the introduction of 1000-year leaseholds. This contributed to relative immobility of the settlement's population. Servicing by sea of the local alum industry, and the rise of the coastal coal trade, became the means of extending the equalitarian and co-operative order of fishing to seafaring and shipping enterprise. The return on this, assisted by long tenures, was sufficient to support the growth of networks of kin so forbidding in their complexity that family reconstitution, from parish registers and wider genealogical sources, became essential to the study. Concern to protect the family is observable, but the growth of strong, puritanical nonconformity did not frustrate opportunities presented by smuggling. Attitudes, traditional skills and the economic and social order enabled great advantage to be taken of the increase in nineteenth-century shipping, until steam-power intervened. At the heart of both enterprise and resistance to change was the finest mesh of long-standing, entrepreneurial kin testifying to the powerful socialisation that had fostered continuity of residence and maritime employment. The ethic, and the social and economic order of this obscure community make the description 'fishing village' inadequate. Further scrutiny of the coast, not only for the history of merchant shipping, but for people conditioned to the ordering of their own lives, might be profitable.

M.A. DISSERTATIONS FOR 1990

Rosie Keep
'Settlement and territory in east Herefordshire in the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods.'

This dissertation draws on a variety of sources to explore some current themes in early local history, taking as its focus two Domesday hundreds in the east of the county. Each of the hundreds formed a contrasting *pays*, one upland and one centred on a river valley. Chapter 1 used a simple computer programme to analyze Domesday statistics in order to show that by the late eleventh century there were real contrasts between the regions in terms of resources, values, lordship and society. In Chapter 2 an effort was made to explore the degree of territorial continuity in the area. The two hundreds were shown to have formed part of the medieval rural deanery of Frome, which focussed on the minster church of Bromyard. This territorial unit was related to the region's dense cluster of Iron Age hillforts and a very strong correlation was observed between the boundaries of the rural deanery and the hillforts, suggesting territorial continuity from the Iron Age. The final chapter returns to the theme of *pays*, using surveys from the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries to recreate in detail late medieval settlement in three sample parishes. By using locative by-names it was possible to observe the way in which the position of farms in the upland parish remained stable between the thirteenth century and the present day. In the valley parishes by contrast, locative by-names were rare and settlement appears to have been nucleated at its core with vigorous assarting taking place at its periphery.

Maureen Shettle
'The development of fire protection in Surrey with especial reference to south-west Surrey, 1666 - 1941.'

This dissertation examines how the threat of fire was perceived by local communities in the non-metropolitan areas of Surrey and the methods, if any, which were used to combat it in the years between the Great Fire of London and the nationalisation of war-time fire services in 1941. Special attention is paid to the area around Guildford and Farnham. Topics such as the influence of fire insurance companies, fire protection in rural areas and the growth of organised fire brigades in the nineteenth century are examined in detail through the use of a variety of sources including borough, parish and insurance company records. In most areas of the country outside London there were no mandatory legal requirements for public fire protection until 1938; consequently very different practices and attitudes to the danger of fire were encountered within the county. In the period under review no evidence could be found of the type of fire catastrophe which so frequently destroyed whole towns in other regions. Whilst good fortune was deemed to be a major factor behind this, the gradual improvement in fire-fighting resources and water supplies played a significant part, along with the local use of readily available non-flammable building materials of tile, brick and stone.

THE JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE FOR 1991

The University of Leicester offers an annual prize (now valued at £100) for an essay on some topic in English Local History. The prize, named after the historian of Leicestershire, was established by Professor H. P. R. Finberg, with the generous assistance of Sir Philip Nichols. Candidates may write on a subject of their own choice, subject to prior approval by the Head of Department. Essays must be original contributions based on genuine research and should not exceed 20,000 words in length; they should be submitted to the Department, together with a stamped, addressed envelope for return, by 31st December. We are pleased to announce that the prize-winning essay for 1991 is 'The use of churchwardens' and parish accounts' by John Craig, a research student at Peterhouse, Cambridge. His own summary of the essay is printed below.

Summary

Parish accounts have become a fashionable source particularly among revisionist historians of the English Reformation who have used their evidence to explore the space between Reformation statutes and parochial practice. Current fashion, however, has shown little interest in contextualizing churchwardens or their accounts within the broader dimension of early modern society. This essay seeks to do just that, to place late sixteenth-century churchwardens and their accounts squarely in the context of their parish communities. Based primarily upon the surviving churchwardens' accounts from Elizabethan Suffolk, the opening half of the essay addresses the question of who served as churchwarden. Related questions concerning social status, wealth, contemporary perceptions of the office and the potentially conflicting pressures exerted from the parish and the ecclesiastical hierarchy are raised and discussed. Far from being a despised post filled by 'low and base persons', the weight of evidence demonstrates that holding the office of churchwarden was a mark of status, and wardens were generally drawn from the middle ranks of society. Recognition of the importance of churchwardens as 'brokers' mediating between the Crown and local communities opens new areas for further historical enquiry.

The second half of the essay is devoted to a discussion of the parochial accounts of Mildenhall, Suffolk, which survive for the late sixteenth century. The richly detailed records of this sprawling fenland parish provide a case study for an analysis of parish accounts. One chief use of such accounts, when they are worked through systematically, lies in the way in which they reveal an important and thick layer of information on parochial activity; against this the often deceptive records of the church courts or rhetoric of the clergy can be properly set in context. More importantly, however, the Mildenhall accounts contain evidence of the existence of broad parochial initiatives and consciousness. The insistence upon a society of ranks and status, the cyclical divisions of work and worship and a concern for space, property and access are themes that can be identified in evidence as varied as the payments for different sorts of wine, the constant maintenance of bells and the replacing of locks and keys. These activities, in their specific form, it is argued, owed more to a sense of what peasant and middling folk deemed important and necessary than they did to definitions fashioned by the crown.

ANNUAL FIELD COURSE, 1991: FOURTEEN GO MAD IN DEVON (with apologies to E. Blyton)

Teatime is a good time to arrive anywhere, and that was the time we arrived at Duryard Halls, Exeter University. The following morning, the doyen of Devon landscape history, Harold Fox, led the intrepid party towards the South Hams. The deep, warm soils, the absence of trees, counterbalanced by a patchwork of enormous hedges enclosing the narrow lanes, made for a very distinctive landscape. The lanes also provided a new experience for drivers; the puncture, *of course*, was the result of a faulty tyre. Despite the typical scattered nature of settlement, these rolling hills had been tamed by the Anglo-Saxons. On day two Dartmoor stood in marked contrast. The isolation of ancient settlements at Hound Tor and Lettaford was immediately apparent. At Lustleigh we encountered our first *llan* churchyard, a dubious creation, say some, but one nevertheless worth recording if only because Harold believes in them. With the inclusion of the coastal settlements of Dartmouth and Hallsands, we covered in two days the Bronze Age to the twentieth century: an excellent start to the Devon Experience.

Tiverton was our first stop on another hectic day. We followed Harold through the busy streets, weaving our way between the market-day shoppers. Our final destination was the hidden garden behind John Greenway's Almshouses, where Harold gave alms in the shape of jam doughnuts to any passing local history student. Next on the agenda was Cullompton, its church having a wonderful representation of the Golgotha or place of skulls. All of this was followed by a perambulation around Exeter with the group splitting up to view the observables relevant to their own period of study. Wednesday was the day of the seaside resort, although unfortunately it was too cold for even a paddle. It was also the day for a hike down the hill to see the remains of the enigmatic chapel at Lidwell. In Shaldon the tea shop was invaded by local history students, discussing the findings of the day whilst sampling one of the best cream teas to be had in

Devon. Our last stop was Coombe Cellars, where the single surviving cellar had been renovated to the point of being unrecognizable.

Thursday found us in north Devon, visiting coastal settlements and two intriguing ritual centres. The first of these was Chittlehampton, a small village with a large and splendid church, dedicated to St Urith, an obscure saint whose very gender had become forgotten until quite recently. In marked contrast to Chittlehampton were Appledore and Clovelly, although these north-coast settlements are different again in character from those in the south. Appledore is a mariners' settlement, as the gravestones in the churchyard attested, many remembering those who had drowned at sea. Clovelly is now known as a tourists' delight, but we came here to see the quay, made of huge stones, and to speculate on origins - when and why did people select this perilous, unpropitious site? Our last stop for the day was the parish of Hartland, in particular the church at Stoke St Nectan and the quay. We returned to Dartmoor on our last day, which again provided evidence from the Bronze Age to the twentieth century, including the fifth-century Sourton Stone (perilously sited near the A30) and abandoned mine engine houses and still occupied miners houses (where we were gently admonished by the tour leader not to 'swarm'). Students of the Anglo-Saxon period were able to see (with the eye of faith) the hint of a *llan* churchyard at Lydford, and the well-preserved Alfredian *burh*, and all enjoyed a brisk climb up Brent Tor to see St Michael's church, and the view. We completed our day at Tavistock, a market town rebuilt and expanded by the Russell family in the nineteenth century. On the whole, Devon weather was kind to us, and thanks to the navigators and drivers, we saw and recorded (on miles of film) information necessary for our reports.

Janice Brooker, Lois Edwards, Nigel Eveleigh

ANOTHER LETTER FROM JAPAN

I spent one year from April 1990 to March 1991 at the Department of English Local History. The days at Leicester seem now like a dream, because they were quite different from the present ones in Japan. Now I am very busy giving lectures, conducting a seminar every week, having meetings and so on. In the Department I could use all my time as I liked, and enjoyed reading various books on English Local History and visited several local archives including Calderdale District Archives in Halifax to collect materials. All the staff and students at the Department were extremely kind to me. I have to thank Pauline Whitmore in particular, for the kindness she showed to me and my family. My daughter enjoyed her school life very much, through Pauline's kind introduction to us of a schoolmaster. I almost every day miss my class-mates.

I enjoyed very much the lectures on Anglo-Saxon and medieval England given by Charles and Harold and the palaeography taught by David Postles; regretfully the talks by Keith Snell on early modern and modern England I could not attend because of the time-table. This systematic guidance in the study of Anglo-Saxon and medieval England was very useful for me, and I was much impressed by their ardent activities in instructing graduate students. Among the most impressive lectures for me were the ones by Charles on the reconstruction of ancient Claybrooke parish from charters, on estate history in Leicestershire in the pre-Conquest period from Domesday Book and on the boundaries of counties closely related with watersheds; and by Harold on the topography of rural settlements in Anglo-Saxon and medieval times. It is my great pleasure to have attended these invaluable lectures based on their original researches, which showed me the genius of the way and methods of the Leicester School of Local History. Also I enjoyed the palaeography of David, though it took quite a lot of time for me to prepare the homework before attending his classes.

I shall never forget fieldwork in the three Leicestershire settlements directed by Harold on a very cold day last October, when we visited Newtown Linford, Ingarsby and Hallaton. The trip was marvellous for me, since I am interested in how different types of settlements were formed and what character each type had from the point of view of social structure. Harold's comments on various settlements were particularly stimulating, not only in the fieldwork but also in his lectures and in his personal talks. After having come back to my country, when I talked about my experiences in the Department, at a conference on English medieval history in Japan, all of the members were envious of my fortunate life in Leicester. What a pity it was that I could not attend the fieldwork in Devonshire last April!

Curiously however, the more I enjoyed my life, the more I felt uneasy about its glorious style. While I was in Leicester I could not understand why I felt so. Now I can say that this was caused by the fact that I had little to give to my friends in Leicester; I could scarcely contribute to the advancement of English Local History in my work. This was perhaps due to my failure to grasp the problems which we Japanese have in studying English history. For example, the concept of agriculture is not the same for us as for you. For you it almost always means both corn growing and livestock raising, but it does not do so for us, because our agriculture does not normally include it at all; for us livestock raising means something quite different from agriculture. In your country, although sometimes the distinction is made

between a corn growing district and a pastoral one, in the former type of district livestock is also normally kept in much higher degree than in our country. It is necessary for us to understand why livestock have been so important in English or rather European agriculture, compared with the Japanese case, before we examine distinct features of each of these two types of district in England. We have more serious problems than you in the study of English history.

We Japanese export many commodities to your country, but in the field of history, regretfully, we have scarcely achieved results which would inspire you, although a considerable number of studies on English history have been made in Japan. The reason for this may be found partly in the fact that little attention has been given to our own problems. Now I am continuing my work holding this firmly in my mind, and I hope that the outcome in the future may have some significance for you too.
Nobuyoshi Shinotsuka, Tohoku University.

PROPER STUDIES: AN AMATEUR OF ENGLISH LOCAL HISTORY REMINISCES ON THE EARLY DAYS OF THE DEPARTMENT

History today is becoming more and more professionalized, and no one can fail to be impressed at the resultant vast improvement in the quality of published work. Still more impressive is the dedication shown by the modern professional in the face of considerable financial restraints. What a pleasure it was to read the latest Newsletter, brimming with enthusiasm concerning projects recently completed and those still on the drawing-board. For obvious reasons, close contact between the work of the amateur and that of the professional is especially important in local history. In its wisdom, the Department has always extended a friendly hand to the amateur historian. My own experience at Leicester might be cited as an early example.

I never had felt quite at home in my first profession as an air engineer. On leaving the R.N.V.R. at the end of the war, I decided that my future lay in general practice, so I entered Barts as a medical student. After further training I became a G.P. at Yaxley near Peterborough, where I spent 35 happy years in practice, retiring only recently. While studying medicine I became severely bitten by the history bug. Barts happened to possess by far the finest medical muniment room in the country (it is of course the oldest English hospital, competing claims notwithstanding). There in my spare time I was taught palaeography by Dr Gwennyth Witteridge, the hospital archivist; after a spell on the wards I would descend to the basement and under her watchful eye transcribe some of the hospital's original twelfth- and thirteenth-century charters, comparing them with copies in the hospital cartulary. Subsequently I would take the odd day off from my medical studies to visit the Chelmsford Record Office where I received further unofficial archival training from Miss Hilda Grieve and the renowned Frederick Emmison.

I then became interested in the early charters of Barking Abbey (where I had been to school), so I skipped a few pharmacology lectures and spent some afternoons in the Department of Western MSS at the British Museum, where I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the mysteries of Anglo-Saxon charters by Dr C. E. Wright. The detective work of identifying forgeries and locating place-names thrilled me, and eventually I became known at Barts as the nut-case who spent more time in the B.M. than on the wards. The end result was a 50-page pamphlet on the early charters of Barking Abbey, a small edition of which was published at Colchester in 1953, two years after I had qualified in medicine.

At Leicester, unbeknown to me, Dr Herbert Finberg had been working (with infinitely greater expertise) on a similar theme, and the same year saw his publication of a handlist of the early charters of Devon and Cornwall. How he got to hear of my Barking pamphlet, I never did discover. I was invited to lunch at his London club. It was an awe-inspiring experience. He was of course a gastronome, and I was duly impressed when he sent back the cheeses because they were not individually wrapped and had all been presented on the same plate. Herbert asked me to prepare a similar handlist for Essex, a task which I approached with gusto. There was a little local difficulty, in that I had no qualification in history at all, having dropped my formal studies in the subject in 1937, two years before matriculation, with the vow (which I have kept) never to pick them up again. So I do not have even a history 'O'-level. That presented no problem to Herbert, who enrolled me as a part-time student at Leicester and fixed up my fellowship of the Royal Historical Society. I thought it might be nice to join the Antiquaries, but he never did fulfil his promise to arrange that too! My Essex handlist duly appeared in 1957.

At about that time Leicester became a full-blown University, empowered to award its own degrees. Herbert wanted the honour of presenting the first Leicester M.A. candidate from his own Department. As I was the only student available for this distinction, I was told to present myself for examination. I did so quaking in my shoes. For my external examiner I had none other than the formidable Dr Florence Harmer, who came down specially from Manchester. For the occasion she was resplendent in scarlet, having attired herself in Herbert's recently-acquired Oxford D.Litt. gown. As I entered the cell (at the time the Department was housed, perhaps not inappropriately, in the old lunatic asylum) she fixed me with a piercing gaze, and gave

me my come-uppance with the memorable warning: 'Remember, *Mister* Hart, for this examination *I* am the doctor, and *you* are the patient!' As I feared, I found my *viva* a lot harder than those of the M.B. finals, and I was referred. It was a just verdict, but Herbert was not to be thwarted. I was set a further task (on hidation, which I found useful in later years) and required to complete it by an impossibly early date, which I achieved by burning much midnight oil. Thus I became Leicester's very first M.A.; in fact, since I headed the procession of candidates, I received the first substantive degree of any kind awarded by the University. I still treasure my copy of the graduation ceremony, which is now I suppose an historical document.

Subsequently Herbert and I divided England up between us. His *Early Charters of the West Midlands* and *Early Charters of Wessex* appeared in 1961 and 1964 respectively, and my *Early Charters of Eastern England* and *Early Charters of Northern England and the North Midlands* followed in 1966 and 1975. The series was almost completed in 1979 by Dr Margaret Gelling's *Early Charters of the Thames Valley;* only Sussex and Kent remain uncovered. All were published by Leicester University Press, and in addition there appeared in the Occasional Papers series my *Hidation of Northamptonshire* (1970) and *Hidation of Cambridgeshire* (1974). Later I became for a while a Research Fellow in the Department. At present, in retirement, I am at work on a book on the Danelaw. Watch this space!

I remember my Leicester days with affection. Like myself, Herbert Finberg had been trained in a discipline very different from that of history; he was a classical scholar who spent his early working years as a typographer. He used to joke that we were just a couple of quacks. He was indeed the quintessential amateur; but that did not prevent him from acquiring a profound knowledge of his adopted subject and developing an original approach to its interpretation. For nearly 20 years I sat at his feet *in statu pupillari.* It could be an energetic business. We tramped many charter bounds together, often in remote and beautiful country. Some I rode on horseback, just as the Anglo-Saxons did when drawing them up. I can strongly recommend this approach. One gets a better perspective of the lie of the land, and is better able to interpret the boundary. Then I recall us in the late 1950s spending one whole holiday week in our shirtsleeves in the library, photocopying completely Kemble's *Codex* and Birch's *Cartularium.* As we struggled with the primitive apparatus, Herbert commented on every charter. Later he presented me with bound sets of both works which still grace the shelves of my study, their margins covered with our scribbles. My indebtedness to him cannot be put in a few words. He taught me most of what I know about early English history, and I am proud to have been numbered among his friends.

Both of us were radical writers, so exposing ourselves to considerable criticism. Amateurs have no special rights in this respect, just because of their non-professional status. Once identified, factual mistakes should of course be pointed out and corrected, no matter who it is that makes them; so too should opinions that are obviously erroneous (though here the process is more hazardous). Both of us, over the years, received much kindness and understanding at the hands of our professional critics. Our activities in the realm of early English history were not however always welcomed, nor have our errors always been gently handled by members of the establishment. A famous Anglo-Saxonist is alleged to have once remarked: 'the trouble with Hart is that he was taught by Finberg!' When another dubbed me 'the A. L. Rowse of Anglo-Saxon history', I did not know whether to feel flattered or mortified. A third told me bluntly that my contributions 'had done a great disservice to Anglo-Saxon history'. That hurt.

Recent judgements on my work include the coded comments 'bold', 'full-blooded', and even 'controversial'. I do not complain of this, for it is true that I favour the robust approach. *Mea culpa!* As they gain experience, most historians become more cautious in their attempts to interpret sources. But caution if carried to excess merely stifles debate and encourages dogma. History is seldom well served by censorship, even when self-imposed. Few historians set out deliberately to misinform their audience; yet we all of us, professionals as well as amateurs, are continually making mistakes. As with scientific theories, attempts to interpret history, however renowned the exponent, are simply no more than a series of approximations to the truth. We may well feel that ultimately truth is inexplicable, wrapped up in mystery, 'in light inaccessible hid from our eyes'. That, of course, is no reason why we should not go on searching for it.

I see no real antithesis between the disciplines of history and medicine; for me, they are two sides to the same coin. The proper study of mankind is man.
Cyril Hart

BOOKS WRITTEN BY FRIENDS

Jane Laughton, *Seventeenth-century Rainow: the Story of a Cheshire Hill Village* (1990), 46pp.

Rainow is an upland village, some 650 feet at its lowest point and over 1700 feet at its highest, lying on the western fringes of the Peak District close to the Derbyshire border. Climate and geology combined to produce a terrain in which a dispersed settlement pattern developed, with small clusters of dwellings scattered at large over the landscape. A flurry of industrial activity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries proved relatively short-lived, mainly because

the threat of the railway never materialized. Consequently, the early settlement pattern has survived to a large measure intact. Rainow has also been fortunate in its lords: in the medieval period it lay within the royal Forest and Manor of Macclesfield and in the seventeenth century part of the township fell into the hands of the Earls of Derby. There is thus a wealth of documentation available for the historian. Some of this source material has been used in this book, in combination with the probate records of more humble inhabitants. A survey of crown lands commissioned in 1611 provided a detailed picture of the settlement at the start of the period, describing each tenement individually: dwellings, outbuildings, gardens and fields. It proved possible to trace development as the century progressed, by turning to the hearth tax returns and to the Derby papers.

The book includes chapters on the topography of Rainow, on its houses and on the families which lived in them. There is also a treatment of the agrarian economy which inevitably concentrated on pastoral activities, with a bare minimum of arable. Such parishes are traditionally associated with the development of rural by-employment, particularly when, as in Rainow, partible inheritance prevailed. Eighteenth-century Rainow was certainly a village of weavers, colliers and stonegetters and a chapter in the book examines the evidence for industrial activity in this part of Cheshire in the early modern period. The 1611 survey was accompanied by a map, sections of which have been reproduced to illustrate the text. There are also some adaptations of contemporary woodcuts and a few black and white photographs. Although written for a fund-raising event in the parish, this book attempts to transcend the parochial and to present Rainow as a typical upland Pennine settlement.

Howard Usher, ed., *The Ticknall Tramway* (1990), 22pp.

The Ticknall Tramway was a primitive form of horse tramway, which was born in the Canal Age and survived long into the Railway Age. For a distance of eight miles it wound its way through the rural areas of Leicestershire and south Derbyshire. The purpose was to carry lime from the limeyards at Ticknall to the Ashby Canal at Willesley Basin and, on the return journey, to carry coal from the Ashby pits to the Ticknall limekilns. Much of the route is woodland or pasture and remains of the passage of the tramway survive to the present day (unlike other pioneering tramroads in industrial areas which have mostly disappeared). The line was built by Benjamin Outram to a gauge of 4ft 2ins and seems to have been in use from about 1802 until about 1913.

The origin of this booklet was a manuscript prepared by the railway historian G. O. Holt and presented to the Ticknall Preservation and Historical Society by his widow. It is illustrated with drawings taken from original photographs, with maps of the route and sketches of the rail. A section of the flanged, fish-bellied rail is on show in the Leicester Museum of Technology and a similar type can be seen in position at the Middleton Top engine house on the Cromford and High Peak Railway. A copy of Outram's original proposals of 1798, from the Harpur-Crewe archive at Matlock Record Office, is included in the booklet. It is interesting that Outram originally proposed either an inclined plane or a tunnel, 600 yards long, in order to cross Pistern Hills. In the event, by taking a route further east, the length of the tunnel at Old Parks was reduced to 447 yards. The booklet can be obtained from the editor at 86, The Woodlands, Melbourne, Derby, DE7 1DQ, price £1.50.

Frank Bamford, *Mansions and Men of Dunham Massey: from Errant Earl to Red Dean* (1991), 102pp.

In 1855 a handsome Gothic church was consecrated in the township of Dunham Massey on the main road from Chester to Altrincham; only a handful of houses existed within a radius of a third of a mile. This book considers the mystery of how the Earl of Stamford came to build St Margaret's church and in the next thirty years to develop around it an uniquely wealthy estate of one hundred great houses and mansions. This very special development was associated with the greatest industrial revolution of all time, the establishment of a mechanized cotton textile industry in South Lancashire with Manchester as its metropolis. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century there were thousands of millionaires (in today's terms) among the cotton masters and their associated industries and professions. The dirt, smog and noise of Manchester drove some of the newly rich to live in the pleasant yet convenient environment of Dunham Massey.

The book traces the several stages in the building of mansions for the wealthy, their families and servants. The identities of the new arrivals are established as are their businesses and professions, their households, their cultural attainments and their religious affiliations. The architecture of their mansions is assessed. Their dependence on cheap labour, both in factories and houses, is explained. Finally, the beginnings of social conscience, particularly among the most wealthy, are revealed. Copies are available from the author at 9 Malvern Drive, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4NQ, price £5.95.

LOCAL HISTORIANS IN THE MUSEUMS WORLD

Much Wenlock and Beyond

Having been more than once importuned to contribute to the Newsletter of the Friends of the Department of English Local History, not least by subscribing, Harold Fox has finally persuaded me to

put pen to paper on what he described in his letter as my 'rise to fame and fortune'. Or, 'perhaps less satisfactorily, could you do something on your present post?' (Fox, H. *Collected Letters*, L.U.P. forthcoming, £48.95).

Graduating in 1978 during the golden age of Museum Studies, when such lesser mortals were still permitted to bathe in the vigorous depths of the English Local History Department, my interest was in the application and communication of local history. Besides, museums offered 'paid' employment and so I found myself in 1978 as Curator of Much Wenlock, a chartered borough since 1468, consisting of 3,000 souls, a rich heritage of late medieval timber-framed buildings, a wonderful pub, the 'George and Dragon' opposite the Museum, and a remarkable and now substantiated claim to be the home of the Modern Olympic Games. Unbelievers must read my *British Olympians: William Brookes and the Wenlock Games*, published by the British Olympic Association in 1986. My job was to create a proper museum in Wenlock. This involved wide-ranging research from work on the Roman structure which underlay Milburga's double monastery and the Saxon abbey of Leofric, through Barrie Trinder's probate inventory project to the oral recording of the town's equally remarkable heritage of senior citizens. As the only historian in a small county museum service, I also became involved in exhibition work at Acton Scott Working Farm Museum and for Ludlow Museum. By this time Diana Kingham of Museum Studies had become Mrs Mullins, mother to Edward and later Kate, now (in 1991) aged nine and six respectively.

After four years in Shropshire, I found myself back in Leicestershire, as the founding Keeper of the Harborough Museum. Many past students will doubtless remember Alan Everitt and latterly Harold Fox disappearing up burgage plots into hidden yards and striving more fully to expound the intricacies of the development of Market Harborough against a background of heavy traffic. To set up a new museum from scratch, with the resources of Leicestershire Museums Service behind me, was a great privilege. My brief to the designer was both simple and familiar to readers of these pages: 'What type of place is Market Harborough and how has it come to be like it is?' Being a new museum, the Harborough Museum was not initially burdened with significant collections of artifacts. Once opened to the public this community museum needed to prove itself by being both of, and about, the place. My chosen means to this objective was to collect the recent past, the town in the twentieth century, and central to this was the recording of oral evidence. Over the three years of collecting projects, more than 250 hours of reminiscence were amassed and the results incorporated in three books: a history of the town's burgage plots from medieval town planning to 1930s slum clearance, an oral history of the domestic servants of both town houses and hunting boxes and a (still forthcoming) volume on shops, shopping and shopkeeping in the last hundred years. The first two are *Hidden Harborough* (with an ex-student of the Department, Michael Glasson) and *Cap and Apron* (with Gareth Griffiths), both available from Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service.

A move to St Albans in 1987 offered me the exciting prospect of leading a very different museums service, a long-established and well-supported organization taking in two museums and with a predominantly archaeological pedigree. High quality collections, twenty-odd staff and excellent facilities were fronted by tired and dull displays and accompanied by declining visitor numbers. Nearly four years later the Museum of St Albans has been refurbished to tell the story of the city (noticeably Harborough Mk II) while the Verulamium Museum is well on the way to re-opening new displays which will break new ground in public accessibility. Running a medium-sized service such as that at St Albans makes for an immensely satisfying job. I am involved in marketing, collections management, finance, sponsorship, scholarship, planning and environmental issues. The organization is large enough to keep me very fully occupied but small enough to allow hands-on involvement where necessary and tactical delegation with strategic interference. Local history opportunities have been severely limited, however, although a probate inventory group and some work on commuters in the twentieth century are in slow progress.

Diana is now the proprietor of 'Glorious Gardens', specializing in period garden creation and restoration. A number of her designs have been realized including a Jacobean knot garden for the Hertford Museum and a cottage garden for Much Hadham Forge. All enquiries and communications from long-lost colleagues should be addressed to 7 Holly Bush Lane, Harpenden, Herts. (0582 766541).
Sam Mullins

Man, Mutiny and Motorcycles

I have now completed four-and-a-half years of self-imposed exile out in the middle of the Irish Sea and I must admit I am still enjoying it thoroughly. After leaving the Department of English Local History in 1984, I trod the well-worn path to the Museum Studies Department with a year's sojourn at Newarke Houses Museum in between. Following several months at Brewhouse Yard Museum, Nottingham, I finally at 25 achieved my life's ambition of a full-time paid job. I am not so sure I would have chosen to work in a museum if I had known that at 14! I am now fully immersed in Manx local history as one of the two Social History Assistant Keepers at Manx

National Heritage, formerly the Manx Museum and National Trust. Regardless of the rumours spread by the British media there is more to Manx history and culture than tailless cats, the birch and the T.T. races. Recent exhibition work has ranged from Manx samplers to a bicentennial exhibition commemorating the Mutiny on the Bounty. The latter was entitled 'The Mutiny on the Bounty: fact, film and fiction' and highlighted the Manx connections of William Bligh, Fletcher Christian and Peter Haywood. It also examined the ways in which films and books have portrayed the Mutiny and have subsequently influenced our view of the historical event, with the need to create heroes and villains.

A major element of my work for the past two-and-a-half years has recently reached completion with the opening of two new social history galleries which chart the island's history from 1650 to the present day. Rather than taking a chronological approach to the island's history, they take a thematic approach, the first gallery being based on the life of a Manx crofter and the second following a week in the life of a tourist in the Isle of Man. The display on the crofter begins with the internal influences of folk beliefs and the Manx language, while an introductory video is shown in a reconstruction of a Manx cottage interior entitled 'Hearth and home'. From here the visitor moves out like the 'crofter' to view the external influences of church and chapel and then to childhood and education. From here the visitor/'crofter' is finally met by a series of economic choices - to work on a neighbour's farm, to go down the mines, to go to the fishing or, the final choice (for both visitor and crofter), to emigrate - and leave the gallery. The visitor then moves into the second gallery as a 'tourist' and is met as he or she walks down the ship's gangplank by, among many things, a double-decker horsetram. There is a reconstruction of a bathing hut (which houses the introductory video) surrounded by sand and complete with deckchairs in which to sit and watch the video.

Work in the past four years has ranged from negotiating with Hollywood studios for the free use of the Mutiny on the Bounty film epics and with Honda for Joey Dunlop's ex-T.T. motorbike, to dredging through skips and recording derelict buildings prior to demolition - and all of it has been thoroughly enjoyable. I hope this has whetted some people's appetites to visit the island (and I have not mentioned the two castles, Cregneash which was Britain's first open-air folk museum and Laxey Wheel, at one time the world's largest water-wheel). If anyone is inspired to brave the journey and visit the Isle of Man, I hope they will pop into the Museum to see me.

Yvonne Cresswell, Manx Museum, Douglas, Isle of Man

NEWS FROM OTHER CENTRES FOR LOCAL HISTORY

The Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia

The Centre's main role is to research, and to encourage the research of others into, all aspects of the history and archaeology of East Anglia. But, as with all such institutions, the focus of our research is always changing, partly as a result of changes in the make-up of our academic staff. This year there have been two important developments. First, A. Hassell Smith retired, after many years as the Centre's Director. He has been replaced by Richard Wilson, a social and economic historian whose main research interests lie in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He spends half his time in the School of Economic and Social Studies, for the Director is always a half-time post, shared with another school. Second, the Centre gained another full-time appointment, Roberta Gilchrist, a medieval archaeologist with a particular interest in nunneries. She joins the two other permanent members of staff, Tom Williamson (Lecturer in landscape history and material culture) and David Cleveland (Curator of the East Anglian Film Archive).

Apart from our two secretaries, all the other members of the Centre's staff are on short-term, and in many cases part-time, appointments. They work in the film archive, or on one of the many and varied research projects, funded in a bewildering variety of ways, which are based at the Centre. The publication of the papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey, and the study of the community in which he lived, continue under the direction of Hassell Smith. Other current projects include the study of: parks and gardens in Norfolk (Tom Williamson and Anthea Taigel); field systems, settlement, and territorial organisation from late prehistoric to the medieval period (Tom Williamson and Kate Skipper); the post-medieval farming landscape and its buildings (Susanah Wade Martins); and the medieval textile industry of East Anglia (B. A. Holderness and Kay Lacey). An oral history project has recently been started (Alec Douet). In addition to these long-term academic research projects, the Centre also carries out shorter programmes of commissioned research, funded by the County Councils and by public and private institutions like the Forestry Commission. Peter Murphy, an environmental archaeologist who services the principal archaeological units in eastern England, is also based permanently at the Centre.

The Centre publishes numerous books and pamphlets, ranging from academic aids like the *Norfolk Bibliography* (the second volume of which appeared this year) to 'popular' volumes which seek to make available to a wider audience the results of the Centre's research projects. This is one of the many

ways in which the Centre is involved in encouraging an interest in the history and archaeology of East Anglia. To this end it also has a large body of Associate Members, holds regular public lectures and seminars, and runs a number of research projects in collaboration with amateur bodies, most notably the nonconformist chapels survey, a joint initiative with the Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group.

Academic staff of the Centre are involved in undergraduate teaching, mainly in the provision of a minor in Landscape Archaeology for the School of English and American Studies. Our own students, however, are all postgraduates. The Centre runs, jointly with the School of English and American Studies, two M.A. courses: in Local and Regional History and in Film Archiving. This year we have an intake of twenty students, over half of whom are full-time. We also have a large number of full-time and part-time Ph.D. students studying a wide range of subjects: from deer parks, chantries and medieval settlement to vernacular buildings, church monuments, early-modern social networks and the development of small towns and consumerism in the eighteenth century. In short, we continue to thrive and to survive, in spite of the hard times.
Tom Williamson

The Centre for South-Western Historical Studies, University of Exeter

Launched as recently as 1986, the Centre for South-Western Historical Studies has had a most successful first five years. Essentially it is a body whose slightly intangible 'centre' comprises hard-working officers drawn largely but not wholly from the University of Exeter and whose life-blood is an academic and non-academic membership (including many institutions) scattered throughout the South West. Its up-market coloured flier summarizes its aims: 'to encourage communication between individuals and institutions involved in the study of all aspects of the past in the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset' and to embrace 'a wide range of people, both professional and amateur, working within the region as a whole and beyond'.

The Centre's annual symposium (and A.G.M.) is the set-piece of the year. The momentum of the first symposium, energetically organised by Bob Higham on 'Security and defence in the South West', has been sustained at subsequent meetings: Bob's second on 'Landscape and townscape', Jonathan Barry's 'Social change in southern England, 1600-1850', Nicholas Orme's 'The church in the South West from 1050 to the present day' and Roger Kain's 'Economic activity in the South West'. The symposium on November 16th 1991 will have a maritime theme. These are lively and friendly meetings under the benign chairmanship of a Christopher Holdsworth, a Joyce Youings, a Michael Havinden or a Bill Ravenhill. They are always timed for a Saturday, which ensures a large turn-out; a location close to the University's Northcote Theatre, with its bar and cafeteria, ensures (as I well know as a speaker at two of these symposia) a good deal of contact and conviviality behind the scenes.

There have also been a number of additional seminars at which the Centre often moves to a peripheral location in the South West; one held in Dorset, on historical maps, was particularly successful. The Centre has sponsored projects such as CAREW (Cornish Archive Retrieval, named after the Tudor historian), a computerized assemblage of local historical material for use in schools. An M.A. in Local and Regional History is mooted. But the Centre's greatest triumph has been its publication programme. Each year members receive two Newsletters, edited with flair by Jonathan Barry (keep it up Jonathan: I know that you read this one, because you regularly pirate it). Many of the symposia have resulted in published proceedings attractively produced in coloured soft covers by Exeter University Press: they are indispensable to students of the region. An ambitious *Register of Current Research* has been compiled by Mike Dobson. The crowning achievement has been an award of a large grant from the British Academy to finance the cartography for an *Historical Atlas of South-West England*, sponsored by the Centre and conceived and edited by Roger Kain and Bill Ravenhill. Said to have over fifty contributors, it will be the most ambitious regional atlas ever produced in England, putting all other counties to shame. With a page size of 300x300mm, text set in three columns and maps drawn to a variety of uniform scales by the patient Helen Jones (who still awaits some of my roughs) this is a splendid as well as an innovative venture, typical of the Centre's activities at large.
Harold Fox

NEWS OF RESEARCH TEAMS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

What is the L.P.S.S.?

Back in 1983, as a 52 year-old Open University student, I attended a weekend workshop organized in Abergavenny for present and future students on the D301 course entitled 'Historical sources and the social scientist'. After the normal welcome to old students we nervous freshers were made welcome and were told: 'You will of course become free members of L.P.S.S. for the year and receive the L.P.S. journal.' I thought, what on earth is this mysterious organization? I was soon to learn that L.P.S.S. stood for The Local Population Studies Society.

The Society was founded in 1973 to promote the study of local historical demography and the social structure of past societies. It grew out of the

upsurge of interest in population studies which had been spearheaded by the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. It exists to enable discussion between local historians, demographers, family historians and all those with an interest in population history at all levels of expertise. It runs a book club which allows members to purchase academic books at a good discount. It organizes regular conferences and day schools at venues throughout Britain.

In line with modern academic trends the society caters for a wide spectrum of interest and thus helps to create inter-disciplinary linkages. Through the distribution of the twice-yearly journal *Local Population Studies* both advanced students and beginners are encouraged to contribute to the debate on a variety of subjects. A glance through past journals demonstrates that there is a far wider coverage than simple population statistics alone. For example, 'The impact of the Commonwealth Act on Yorkshire parish registers' (1975), 'A lost seventeenth-century demographic crisis' (1982), 'Parish registers and the study of labour mobility' (1984), 'Will-making on the deathbed' (1988), 'The gentry of Huntingdonshire' (1990) are just a few of the fascinating subjects covered. Early in its life the L.P.S.S. set out to encourage the educational use of local population studies in schools, colleges and other institutions. Without a doubt one of its greatest impacts was made by the firm link forged with the Open University D301 course. From that course there are many ex-students who contribute articles to the journal and take part in the day schools and weekend conferences.

As a society the membership is not large; in 1990 it was just under 500. It is estimated that a current population of 300,000 family historians are at work in Britain and many towns and villages contain local history groups or classes. With the demise of the Open University D301 course, a result of government cuts, the flow of potential members of L.P.S.S. was reduced and the society set out to tap what appears to be a vast reserve of potential interest in the subject of population studies. In order to seek out the smaller bodies and to establish contact with their members, regional L.P.S.S. organizers were appointed and are now at work trying to promote interest. As one of the organizers my initial contacts have already led to lecture appointments and a chance to spread the message. The strong link with the Open University is still maintained: the East Midland Area organizer is Dennis Mills (once D301 course team member) and the West Midland Area is shared between myself and Bob Field (another former D301 student). Our membership is creeping upwards and we are hopeful that our personal contacts will encourage new members from areas which are, as yet, untapped.

Any reader of the Newsletter who is interested in obtaining more details of the society or its current conference programme should contact Mrs Grace Wyatt, 302 Prescot Road, Aughton, Ormskirk, Lancs. L39 6RR.

Trevor G. Hill

The Toronto Regional Data Bank

The Regional Data Bank was established by Professor J. Ambrose Raftis, with major funding provided by the Social Science Research Division of the Canada Council, in 1973 at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto. It is a hand-written, 3x5 card-index file of personal information on men and women appearing in the court rolls and other related records of a select group of villages and small towns located in the counties of Huntingdon and Cambridge from the end of the thirteenth century to the end of the fifteenth century. The communities included are: Holywell-cum-Needingworth (1288-1496), Abbot's Ripton (1274-1492), Broughton (1288-1496), Burwell (1294-1490), Ellington (1278-1513), Ellsworth (1278-1375), Elton (1278-1473), Graveley (1290-1339), Hemmingford Abbots (1279-1458), Houghton (1274-1487), King's Ripton (1279-1493), Little Stukeley (1278-1496), Ramsey (with Hepmangrove and Bury) (1268-1491), St Ives (1270-1343), Slepe (1291-1496), Upwood (1278-1497), Warboys (1290-1496) and Wistow (1278-1488). The bulk of the information, drawn primarily from manor court rolls, consists of entries dealing with the exercise of positions of responsibility (manorial and village, e.g. reeve, bailiff, juror, ale-taster), inter-peasant economic activities (land-transfers, debts, employment relationships), mobility, marriage licences, sexual misconduct, petty crime (assaults, housebreakings, defamations), surety relationships (i.e. personal pledging), local 'industries' (brewing, baking, leather-working, weaving, victualling, tailoring, carpentry, masonry, inn-keeping), local environmental concerns (flooding, narrowing of ditches, cleanliness of streams, ditches, roads), and the use and abuse of local natural resources (fen grasses, peat, sedge, common lands, trees). Although court rolls are the basic source of such information, the material recorded on the cards has sometimes been supplemented with information from ancillary records, such as subsidy rolls, account rolls and charters - depending on the degree of comprehensiveness of the original data bases, compiled by graduate students and assistants of the Institute, which form the raw material of the Regional Data Bank.

The Regional Data Bank is open to any scholars wishing to exploit the information contained therein and has been so used in the past by Dr Barbara Hanawalt, Dr Ellen Wedemeyer Moore, Dr Judith Bennett, Dr Anne Reiber DeWindt, Dr James Masschaele and, of course, Professor Raftis himself. A word of caution must be sounded, however: because the Regional Data Bank was put together by a variety

of men and women working over an extended period of time, from 1973 to the present, there is a lack of standardization to the notation systems employed in recording information on the cards. Keys are available, but care and concentration are required when searching through the Data Bank. Finally, as must be apparent from the foregoing description, the Data Bank has not been computerized, so that it can only really be consulted *in situ*.
Edwin DeWindt

Dating the Medieval Peasant House

New ways of dating hitherto undateable 'cruck' cottages, the home of a good proportion of the medieval peasantry, have been funded by the Leverhulme Trust. A two-year project on dating the medieval peasant house has received £54,900 for research being carried out by Dr N. W. Alcock of the University of Warwick and Drs R. R. Laxton and C. D. Litton of the University of Nottingham. Until very recently historians and students of architecture believed that the houses of everyday people in the Middle Ages could only be discovered by excavation. All surviving medieval buildings seemed to have belonged to prosperous yeoman, gentry or merchants. It has now been discovered that the Midlands contain several hundred much simpler medieval houses which belonged to ordinary villagers - genuine medieval peasants. These are the 'cruck' houses which are the earliest standing structures (apart from the church) in many Midland villages.

Cruck houses are built with four or five pairs of large timbers, sometimes almost whole trees, that reach from ground to ridge, supporting the walls and roof. These are the crucks. About 3,000 cruck buildings have been discovered in England and Wales. Those in Midland and southern England are believed to be mainly of medieval date but in northern England many were built in the seventeenth century. Unfortunately, because cruck houses are so plain, it has hitherto been impossible to study their dating and architectural development, so as to gather new evidence of how our peasant forebears really lived. A relatively new technique, that of dendrochronology (tree-ring dating), allows for the first time the dating of plain and simple buildings that lack the elegant decoration of grander medieval houses. Dendrochronology is now the most important technique in architectural dating, especially of small houses (which lack such features as mouldings whose date is known). It depends on measuring the widths of the annual rings of the house timbers. These are affected by the weather during a growth year (e.g. drought leading to a very narrow ring). The measured widths for a beam of unknown date are then matched against a 'master sequence', built up of ring widths for timber grown in the same region, whose dates are known.

This project has now recorded the architecture of and has obtained dates for some 110 cruck houses in the Midlands (Warwickshire, Buckinghamshire, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire). For about two-thirds of these it has been possible to assign dates with a reasonable degree of confidence. The earliest one is from *c.* 1270, the latest from the 1550s, with a peak around 1450. The forthcoming project report will transform our knowledge of the life of the medieval Midland peasant.
Nat Alcock

The Muniment Rooms of Melbourne and Renishaw

Those who visit county record offices may not be aware that there are significant historical documents in private hands. Although record offices are aware of their existence, these papers languish in private muniment rooms, mainly unlisted, so that the public can only have a very general idea of their contents. Prior to 1984, only Howard Colvin had been privileged to see the massive archive at Calke Abbey and then only under conditions of secrecy. When Calke was taken over by the National Trust, the documents were transferred to Matlock Record Office, where they have been catalogued and are available for study, providing much new information on the Harpur-Crewe estates in Derbyshire. My wife and myself have been fortunate to have been involved in two private archive collections. At the time of the Calke Abbey fiasco, the Marquess of Lothian realised that his property at Melbourne could be subject to crippling death duties. In order to avoid this, Melbourne Hall was made over to his younger son, Lord Ralph Kerr, and two Heritage Trusts were set up, for Melbourne Hall and for the gardens. In order for the trusts to be valid, funds of £1.5m had to be raised for the Hall and £1.0m for the gardens. Much was raised by donations and by the sale of land, but it was eventually decided also to sell some of the archive.

The Muniment Room at Melbourne is a hexagonal stone building, constructed originally by Sir John Coke in 1629 as a dovecote and converted by Thomas Coke in 1709 into a library; all the family papers were transferred there in the nineteenth century. Some of the correspondence was listed by the Historical Manuscript Commission in three volumes in 1889. The County Record Office has been working there intermittently for over twenty years, and had carried out a rough sorting of the papers into 256 archive boxes. There were also over 400 maps and plans. At this stage, we were asked to sort through the archive and select papers for sale to raise cash for the trust funds. Sir John Coke, who bought Melbourne Hall in 1628, had been Deputy Treasurer of the Navy under Queen Elizabeth, Master of Requests under James I and Principal Secretary of State under Charles I. When he retired to Melbourne in 1640, he brought

all his papers with him, so there were large numbers referring to the state of the navy, ships, ports and coasts, quantities of petitions to the King and other state papers including details of the Scottish expeditions and the Virginian and Irish plantations. Our brief was to sort out Sir John Coke's papers of national interest covering the period *c.* 1560 to 1660; all the local and manorial papers were to be retained at Melbourne. The collection was to be auctioned at Sotheby's in 1987, but at the last minute a deal was struck with the British Library which purchased the complete collection, enabling the gardens trust fund to be completed. These papers have now been fully mounted by the British Library and are on the Library shelves as B.L. Add. MSS 69868-69935.

Money was still required for the trust funds and our next task was to sort the national papers of Thomas Coke's period, roughly between 1660 and 1750. Thomas had been Vice-Chamberlain to Queen Anne and George I. Many of his papers referred to Melbourne Hall gardens and these were retained. The collection for sale included accounts of the day-to-day running of the households at Windsor, Kensington and Hampton Court and correspondence with notable national figures. Documents concerned with the Glorious Revolution of 1688 were included. The British Library purchased this collection at an agreed price in 1989. The third collection we have made covered the period between 1750 and 1870, including the correspondence of the three Lords Melbourne and Lady Palmerston, with associated Lamb family papers. This is now awaiting sale.

In spite of these disposals, the Melbourne archive is still very extensive and contains deeds, leases, sales, accounts of building works, rentals and surveys, some of which go back to the fourteenth century. The main estates covered are Melbourne, Kings Newton, Barrow-on-Trent, Bakewell and Over Haddon in Derbyshire; Castle Donington, Baggrave, Melton Mowbray and Sysonby in Leicestershire; Greasley and Selston in Nottinghamshire; Duston in Northamptonshire and Boothby Graffoe and Wilsford in Lincolnshire. One wonders why we possess a 1576 grant of Swans in Lincoln or seventeenth-century rentals of Oadby, Leicestershire and Histon, Cambridgeshire. The archive has been enlarged by the addition of eight boxes of deed from the London solicitors and a sweep through draws and tea-chests in the house.

Lord Ralph Kerr is happy for the archive to be used by *bona-fide* students. Visitors have been looking for information on railways, postal history or lead mines at Over Haddon. Margery Tranter has studied the extra-parochial liberty of Derby Hills. Sheffield students have investigated the story of Melbourne Hall gardens and one student came from Amsterdam to look at the John Nost statuary. Celia Swainson's study of the Trent and Derwent Navigations has been augmented by information from Melbourne. We had frequent visits from three enthusiasts from Duston, who produced a photographic history of their village and a copy of the 1722 maps of Duston preserved at Melbourne. Production and sale of these items was strongly supported by the Northampton Record Office at Delapre Abbey and has been a successful enterprise. Nottingham University has located useful information on the Hospital at Burton Lazars and a Mr Leivers has been researching Haggs Farm, Selston (shades of D. H. Lawrence!)

Meanwhile, up in North Derbyshire, problems were occurring at Renishaw Hall, the home of the Sitwell family. The Matlock Record Office had been sorting their archive somewhat intermittently for over twenty years, but this had been stopped as part of a cost cutting exercise. Sir Rearsby Sitwell was keen for sorting to continue and we were approached to see if we could help. The Muniment Room at Renishaw is in complete contrast to that at Melbourne. It is known as 'The Duke's Room' and is a pleasant, sunny room overlooking the gardens, with cupboards from floor to ceiling, containing the archive. Over 200 archive boxes had already been created and many more were in process of preparation. However, we found seventeenth-century deeds rolled up in cigar boxes, nineteenth-century accounts tied up with rusty clips and if one peeps into some of the rooms, there are piles of books, papers and rolled maps that have never been looked at. It is quite a daunting task. However, we continued the sorting that had been started by the Record Office. Much of this is the correspondence of Sir Obert Sitwell (1892-1969). The estates are mostly local in Eckington, Whiston (Rotherham), Wickersley, Brampton-en-le-Morthen and Scarborough, all in Yorkshire. There are papers on a far-flung estate at Long Itchington, Warwickshire. Sir Rearsby had had queries which he was unable to answer and hoped that we would be able to help. These were requests for the notebooks of Francis Sitwell and information on the sale of land for the Chesterfield Canal. We may be able to answer these in time but meanwhile the sorting must continue.

Howard Usher

W. G. HOSKINS AND THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The contribution of Professor W. G. Hoskins to the study of local history, and in particular to the establishment of the Department of English Local History at Leicester University, has been widely recognised. Perhaps less familiar is his close association with the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. All his main areas of research are represented in the 16 articles he published in the Society's *Transactions* between 1936 and 1950, many of

which had first been delivered as lectures to the members. They included his studies of Leicestershire yeoman families, sixteenth-century parsons, deserted villages and a series of essays on Wigston Magna which culminated in the publication of his *Midland Peasant*. Many were reprinted in his two collections of essays, *Provincial England* and *Essays in Leicestershire History*.

Nonetheless, if the Society was fortunate to be the focus of this pioneering work, Prof. Hoskins himself also derived much benefit from this association. Not only were a number of his most important (as well as some of his earliest) articles first published in *Transactions*, but during the 1930s the Society was served by an extraordinary group of historians who did much to develop a more scholarly approach to the study of the local history of Leicestershire. Indeed, George Farnham and his much admired *Medieval Village Notes*, Prof. Hamilton Thompson, the medieval historian, and the Society's secretary, S. H. Skillington, were to place the Society in the forefront of local research during this period. Not the least of their contributions was the remodelling of *Transactions*.

No member of the English Local History Department has published as much in *Transactions*, or indeed on the county, since Hoskins. One obvious explanation is the great increase in the number of specialist journals available to historians today. Moreover, the Department has always been anxious to stress that it is a department of *English* local history, and not just a centre for the study of the locality or region. The research interests of subsequent members of the teaching staff have in general focussed on other parts of the country; as a result rather less has been published on the county by members of the Department, though in the past fifteen years there have been a number of important studies on Leicestershire topics: Cicely Howell's study of Kibworth Harcourt, the work of Charles Phythian-Adams on Claybrooke and on the Leicestershire Domesday survey, and most recently Keith Snell's Occasional Paper on the 1851 Religious Census for the North Midlands which included Leicestershire. The English Surnames Survey is currently concentrating upon Leicestershire; a volume on the county will soon be published. If the research interests of staff tend to lie beyond the county, a significant level of work relating to Leicestershire continues to be undertaken by the Department's students in dissertations and theses. Unfortunately, very little is published.

The Society's *Transactions* provide one important medium in which to publish research on the history and archaeology of Leicestershire. The Editors seek contributions which open new areas of research as well as those that provide a summary of the present state of knowledge. In addition to full length articles, we would welcome short notes, suggestions for review articles, and surveys covering themes of relevance to the history and archaeology of the county. We would particularly welcome historical articles relating to the period before the nineteenth century, since a majority of the contributions submitted for publication cover Victorian and later periods. Please send contributions to, or ask advice from, Dr David Wykes, Department of History, University of Leicester (Tel. 522818). All papers which are considered for publication are independently refereed. We are always happy to advise intending contributors, particularly those who have not previously published.

David L. Wykes

AN ARCHIVIST WRITES . . .

My original intention in this piece had been to give a serious account of life in a busy county archives office (Lincolnshire), concentrating particularly on the behind-the-scenes aspects of the job which may not be obvious to people whose only contact with a record office is as a researcher - such as the acquisition, sorting, listing and indexing of documents, rescue work and a multitude of tasks summed up by the word 'administration'. On reflection, however, and smarting from a recent accusation from a former E.L.H. colleague that I had 'gone native', I thought that the Friends might, in the true Burns spirit, like to know how they are viewed from the other side of the counter, by someone who has been an archivist long enough to have lost her initial ingenuous enthusiasm, but not long enough to have become an irredeemably jaundiced hag.

No indeed, I would like to stress firmly that I do not have a pathological dislike of our readers, many of whom I regard as friends, nor (contrary to popular supposition) do archivists reserve a particular loathing for genealogists. They are normally pleasant people who get on with their work quietly and efficiently once they have familiarised themselves with the system. Nor are professional academics generally troublesome - Friends may take a collective bow - and they earn my admiration for carrying out detailed and demanding research in what is often a lamentably noisy search room.

No, the real blights tend to be the pseudo-serious researchers, who comprise several distinct types. There is the *Know-All*, for instance, who is convinced that the office is overflowing with documents relating to his particular subject of research, and that your attempts to persuade him otherwise are part of a conspiracy to deceive. Know-Alls never believe anything you tell them, preferring their own interpretations of final concords, the census, quarter sessions procedure and palaeographical problems; in the end one just lets them get on with it.

Rather more annoying is their habit of telling you how you should be doing your job.

The *Fusspot* invariably insists that his microfiche is illegible, and can he have the originals, please? He more or less appropriates the ultra-violet lamp for his own use, and he will complain about the new book cushions and demand a wooden rest instead. The room is always too hot or too cold, and if someone has taken his favourite desk he sulks for the rest of the day. Then we have the *Nit Picker*, who delights in finding slip-ups in lists, illegible card-index entries and documents with the wrong reference number written on them. He wants to know exactly which official would have dealt with probate matters in the Archdeaconry of Stow in 1547 and why there is a slight deviation from the norm in the apprenticeship indenture of one of his ancestors. Failure to answer any of his bizarre and unreasonable questions is met with a pitying smile and a condescending shake of the head.

One's heart sinks, too, at the approach of *Hopeless Misery*. This is often a school pupil hoping to do a project on the Black Death (or Reformation or Civil War or Wimmin) 'using original documents'. These scholars are frequently only semi-literate in their own language, and are clearly incapable of tackling medieval Latin or the English of the Tudor Age, but we can, thank goodness, usually pass them on to the teacher attached to the office. The adult Hopeless Misery wanders round vaguely as though he has arrived from a different planet and, in the words of another archivist, 'doesn't know what he wants, can't read it when he gets it, and doesn't understand it when it's read to him'. He takes about a day to learn how to use the card indexes and document request slips - heaven help us all when these systems are computerized. For sheer unpleasantness, however, nothing can beat the *Bully*. Upon the slightest provocation the Bully announces, in venomous tones, that as a local tax-payer he expects a better ruddy service than this, and what d'you mean, he has to show some proof of identity before getting a reader's ticket? A polite attempt to explain that the new security measures are the result of an increasing level of theft is unfortunately taken as a personal insult, and elicits more abuse. The Bully resents having to use a pencil, and leave his briefcase in a locker, and hand in his documents while he goes for lunch, and look at microfiche because the original is falling to bits . . . and he makes it quite clear that he considers you an incompetent idiot. A final point: if anyone thinks my use of the masculine pronoun has been sexist, I can only say that in general our most unpleasant readers, few in number they fortunately are, do seem to be male.

A word, too, about postal enquiries . . . having had it drummed into me by Professor Everitt *et al.* that on no account was I to expect record office staff to do my dirty work for me, I can only wonder what advice other university departments are handing out when I read the requests or demands for extensive and time-consuming research which some students - and lecturers - seem to think we will meet (free of charge, of course). Well, we do the best we can, but people expecting a long-distance research service are disappointed.

Thank goodness most of our readers are agreeable and friendly, and indeed they frequently comment that our search room is a good deal more welcoming and pleasant than many others. We do try to provide the public with as good a service as possible, given the inevitable financial constraints (which they usually understand) and the fact that our first priority has to be the security and well-being of the documents (which they do not always appreciate). Readers are also sometimes unaware that we do not own most of the archives in our care, and that they do not have a 'right' to consult and photocopy them, necessarily - they are only available at all because of the goodwill of their owners.

By the time you read this Lincolnshire Archives will have moved to new premises, which will include a large, airy search room, much superior to the present one, and incorporating several facilities specifically requested by our readers (in response to a questionnaire we issued on the subject). There will be room for nearly seventy people, more microform readers, and improved opening hours for the benefit of people who work during the week, or have to travel from places like Crowland or Barton-upon-Humber. If you're passing, why not drop in and see the new building for yourself . . . I'd be delighted to see you.

Amanda Goode