

Conservation SPRING 1996 in Nottinghamshire

The Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust Ltd.



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THE KEY TO THE PROBLEM

Part 4: Barbed Spring Locks

PRIMITIVE LOCKS were all of the heavy fixed type. But it was not long before the need was felt for portable locks which could be used to secure baggage in transit, especially along the great trade routes. Because of their use on these routes there is some dispute about whether the Romans or the Chinese invented the padlock. The mechanism was like the native type used almost universally in China, but is found also in Roman and Viking contexts and in a version known as the *Basian* padlock. The latter were shaped as small animals, birds, or fishes.

The lock consists of two parts: the body and the barbed locking piece. The principle is that the barb has sprung tines; it moves forward easily into the body of the lock but once it is fully in the springs snap apart without the use of a key. To open it again a suitable key must be used. There are several different types. Most common is the push key. This enters the lock from the end opposite to the locking piece, slides along to compress the springs and push the locking piece out. (Fig 1.) Another type, the slide key, has a similar action but the key enters from the side or bottom of the lock.

A more familiar type of key is used on a variant of the same type of mechanism. This has a curved removable shackle; The key for this operates with a rotary motion to compress the springs. (Fig 2.)

This type of lock, being low-tech, is familiar from many centuries and countries. Fig 3 is the Roman type, Fig 4 shows the brass box type usually known as the *Chinese* padlock.

—Val Olifent

Figure 1



Figure 2

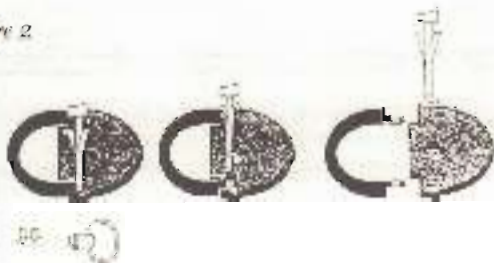


Figure 4



VISITS TO HISTORIC BUILDINGS

DURING 1995, THE TRUST arranged visits to three interesting buildings: Thrumpton Hall, Gainsborough Old Hall and Brodsworth Hall near Doncaster.

All the visits were well-supported; well-informed guides for each visit made them especially enjoyable.

Brodsworth Hall had been the subject of two television programmes showing the last owner in residence. The present Hall is Victorian, replacing an earlier building. Photographs showed that this was in good condition when demolished, and rather better detailed than the one which replaced it. The new house, however, was furnished and landscaped to the highest standards in the fashion then prevailing. Sadly, failing fortunes led to a decline in the upkeep of the building and its contents; the sophisticated range of gardens was left to the tender mercies of nature.

English Heritage now manage the Hall and its demesne. They have restored the building to a high standard without losing its character, and are finishing restoring the gardens to their spectacular glory (these alone make a visit worthwhile). The quality of the work has now been marked by a Civic Trust Award.

Besides being interesting and informative, all these visits are most enjoyable and give members opportunity to socialise in pleasant surroundings.

A further visit has been arranged for Friday, 7th June 1996. This is a conducted tour of *Renishaw Hall* near Sheffield, the home of Sir Reresby and Lady Sitwell.

Renishaw was built as a small manor house by George Sitwell in 1625 but has been much extended over the years. The visitor now can see an Italianate garden, a landscaped park with lake, and Sir Reresby's latest venture, the Sitwell Museum, created in the Georgian stable block. This contains much Sitwelliana, especially relating to the celebrated Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell Sitwell. In the house is an Adam-designed, Chippendale-made satinwood commode which Sacheverell Sitwell considered 'one of the supreme masterpieces of English cabinet-making'.

This should be an enjoyable event and we look forward to a good attendance.

This should be an enjoyable event and we look forward to a good attendance.

—G.A.T.

THE NATIONAL LOTTERY

(And the Building Trust)

THE THOUGHT OF THE MILLIONS of pounds being received and expended by the National Lottery has changed many people's conception of true wealth.

The Trust has been looking into the availability of all the grants on offer and has discussed the matter with officers of the Architectural Heritage Fund and the Association of Preservation Trusts.

It now appears that the most likely source of funding would be the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) which has been empowered to support the work of bodies such as Building Preservation Trusts which operate on the revolving fund principle.

Normally, recipients of a grant from the fund must retain ownership of the item or, in our case, building, acquired. Building Trusts are exempted from this requirement but any large profit, made by a subsequent sale, might require some repayment of the grant, presumably for recycling by the Lottery Fund.

The following types of project are eligible:

- 1 Acquisition, repair, conservation or restoration of buildings, land and objects or collections of importance to the heritage;
- 2 New buildings or improvements to existing buildings designed to house museums or archive collections;
- 3 The improvement of public access to such buildings, land, objects or collections;
- 4 Normally, projects must cost more than £10,000 and must receive "a significant element" of funding from other sources; the Lottery Fund will not provide all the funding required.

The principle of what they call "additionality" has been established. This unnecessary new word means that lottery funds must be an addition not an alternative to existing public funds. So our first step remains, as before, looking for funds locally.

Carrying on the lottery theme, each application for a grant is given a unique number. The Trust was advised to apply for a number even before a scheme had been fully prepared and costed.

The full application will require a great deal of research to provide evidence that the chosen scheme will be socially and financially viable. It must include the eventual running and maintenance costs.

The Trust has tentatively suggested an application for the proposed restoration of Bath Mill, Mansfield, in the hope that this ambitious project, in collaboration with Mansfield District Council, can eventually be programmed.

—G.A.T.

THE SECURITY ISSUE

Solutions for Historic Buildings

EACH WEEK THE TRUST IS INVITED to comment on a number of planning applications which affect listed buildings or the character of conservation areas. A large number of these applications involve small extensions or minor additions of various sorts which, although perhaps of no great significance individually, when viewed collectively can affect the character of the whole area.

One recurring problem is the balance between security of the property and the effect of security measures on the visual environment. The shopkeeper in urban areas is today forced to secure his premises against ransackers, and the householder chooses to display very obvious burglar alarm boxes and bright security lighting.

After a great amount of discussion and research, Basselaw District Council has now come up with an acceptable form of roller shutter for shopkeepers in Conservation areas. This shutter is visually accept-

able, with some visibility through the grille, whilst retaining its deterrent qualities.

In respect of burglar alarms and security lighting on historic buildings, the owner wishes these to be as visually obvious and brightly coloured as possible. The Planners wish them to be invisible.

Recently, there was an application to retain burglar alarms attached to the external walls of Newstead Abbey, and it has since been observed that many of our famous historic buildings are so affected.

The Trust's view is that, whilst burglar alarms are now inevitable, they should be sited and coloured in an inconspicuous manner, so as not to conflict with any architectural feature. The boxes are already fixed with a strobe light in order to advertise their presence.

It is felt that burglars are generally better informed than the public on how and when security measures are taken and do not need such obvious visual statements to be made on the building.

—G.A.T.

Tuxford Lock-up

Cover Picture: drawing by Graham Beaumont

They were once to be found in every village along with the piefold and the stocks. But now only two parish lock-ups are left in the County: a small unisex building at Farnsfield, and this much more splendid example at Tuxford with round-arched windows to reflect the interior arrangement of two rooms, and an elegant 1823 date-stone. It is solidly built of brick and pantiles with an iron door.

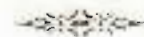
Parish gaols were not intended as penitentiaries, for punishment, but were the forerunners of the cell in the police-station, for temporary restraint. They were owned by the parish through the manorial court or its equivalent, or through the church vestry meeting, and accordingly came under the control of the parish constable or the churchwardens.

References:

Reference:

Philip Lyle: THE PIEFOLDS OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: A HISTORY (1992)

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KINGSHAUGH



Kingshaugh House in 1988

KINGSHAUGH MEANS King's Enclosure, and at this site (near Darlton, Retford) it is no misnomer. Two ancient features are prominent. One is Kingshaugh House itself. The other is an earthwork, the remains of a fortification built probably in the early 13th century around or near a hunting lodge belonging to King John.

The VCH describes the earthworks as 'embracing an area of about 7 acres'. A report of a Thoroton Society visit in August 1962 describes them as 'complex'. Neither description quite fits today, as a large part of this Scheduled Ancient Monument was levelled by a previous owner during the 1970s. However, much is still left, including part of the moat. This is not the usual stagnant pond, but a stream, with fish, which flows into the Trent two miles away.

There is no direct evidence of the exact date of erection of either the fortification or the house. First mention in the Pipe Rolls is for 1194, and there is an entry for 1214 in which Kingshaugh is described as a *castrum*; the fortification therefore was almost certainly put up during this 20-year period. It is not possible to be more accurate, for here, as usual, the surviving documents are concerned with land rather than buildings.

But at Kingshaugh there are some extra clues to possible building dates. One is given by accounts presented to the King in 1211 when £550 4s 7d was spent on building the King's houses and enclosing the park. This sum would have been enough to pay for a complete stone *donjon*. As the park also had to be paid for, the money would have been less, but still enough for something quite substantial: for enlarging the buildings which Thoroton says Count John had put up before he became king in 1199, or for building a new

stone house, or for erecting new or strengthening old fortifications. (In *Thoroton Trans. vol 66, 1962* is a suggestion that the earthworks date from John's rebellion in 1196 against his brother Richard, and were originally put up by his supporters).

More money was spent in the following two years, and in the Close Rolls is found an order dated April 1st 1215 ordering the exchequer to pay one mark for a chalice and vestments for the chapel at Kingshaugh.

Let us now look at the house. It is thought that here was originally a hunting-lodge for servicing the South Clay Division of Sherwood Forest. (Used as such until 1217 when South Clay was deforested). A house solely for this purpose would not have been substantial and it is unlikely that any of it has survived. Yet there are several anomalies in the existing house, and we need to account for the *castrum* with chapel in 1215, and all the money spent in 1211.

What we have at present looks like a fairly large double-pile house, (5 bays in each wing; 15 rooms all told). The date range for this plan-type is approx. 1600 to late C18 (Maurice Barley suggested 1660 - 1725 as more appropriate in the East Midlands). The upper storey has brick walling with simulated quoins in projecting bricks, and cambered brick arches; the brick bond approximates to Flemish, but workmanship is rather variable. The ground floor is similar, except that the main walling is, mostly, coursed rubble stone, a mixture of skerry and ~~limestone~~ rubble stone, a mixture of skerry and lias, with brick dressings. Some areas of wall are ashlar in large blocks of what looks like a fine-grained sandstone similar to White Mansfield. (Local tradition speaks of a quarry in Darlton. The geology makes this unlikely, but it needs investigation).

The chimneys are unexpected. They are all slender stacks set diagonally (presumably single-flue), of brick with ashlar caps. A row of six in two groups in the valley, and one on each gable of the north wing.

Inside, the staircase has splat balusters and looks early C17, but it appears to have been moved or altered. The biggest surprise is the spine wall (containing the fireplaces and supporting the six chimneys) which is an inch thick and apparently of ashlar similar to that visible outside. In some places the masons' surface finish is well-preserved: it has diagonal tooling as would be expected on Norman work, but this is

"It has become clear that occupation of Kingshaugh did not start with the Plantagenets..."

equally consistent with an early C13 date.

It seems safe to say that what is visible now is a house built anew to the fashionable double-pile plan in approximately 1660-1700. Not much later, because of the chimneys and the brick quoins; not much earlier, because of the Flemish bond.

The house may be on the site of or incorporate parts of a previous building: staircase, rubble stone, roof timbers, and perhaps the thick spine wall. This may be revealed after more investigation. It would be very exciting to discover that part of the works done by King John in 1211-1215 still remains. But there is no evidence either way at present. It is possible that some at least of the stone came from the king's works, if that was a stone structure. However, from 1215 to 1660 is a long time. Kingshaugh House would have been rebuilt four or five times during that period.

Meanwhile, we have a house of the Stuart period standing on a moated site known to have been fortified by King John and occupied by him from time to time, with a list of owners and lessees complete from 1594 to the present day. That should be enough historical interest for anyone. But it is far from the end of the interest and importance of this site.

One of the first jobs the present owner wanted to do after purchase in 1988 was install a new water supply. Four archaeologists supplied by Notts County Council assisted with the excavation within the Ancient Monument. Much medieval and post-medieval pottery was discovered, not unexpectedly. The big surprise was the appearance in large quantity of C1 to C2 Roman pottery, Samian, Colour-coat, and Dales Ware; also glass and other Roman artefacts. And also iron-age and bronze-age pottery and tools, and neolithic worked flints.

So it has become clear that occupation of Kingshaugh did not start with the Plantagenets, but several thousand years before they got there.

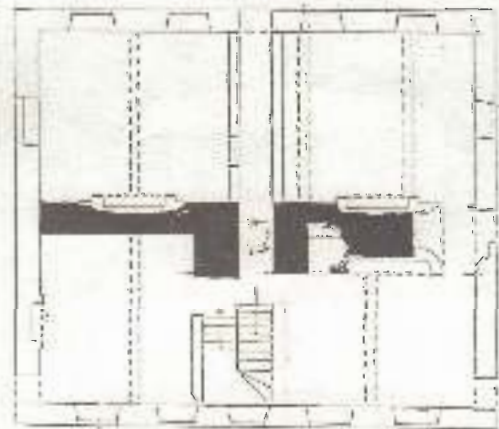
Much of the Roman pottery is of high quality, so the settlement was clearly not just a marching camp or smallholding, but a substantial homestead occupied for three centuries. The detailed topography must provide reasons why this site has been so attractive as a dwelling place for such a long time. Presumably the water supply is part of it.

Acknowledgments:

Much of this article is based on unpublished material in the possession of Mr Elliot, especially a letter from Mr Mark Bennett, dated 14/2/89, and on personal observation. See also:

Thornton Soc. Trans. Vols 26 (1922) and 66 (1962), and the usual standard works.

Special thanks to Mr & Mrs Audrey Elliot, the present owners of Kingshaugh.



Kingshaugh House: ground floor plan

Kingshaugh House today, after eight years of work.



HOUSE AT CHILWELL REVISITED

FEW PEOPLE who live in Chilwell have heard of the unusual house built by Myerscough Walker in 1937 and even fewer have ever seen it.

The house recently went on the market and a number of media people, including *The Independent* on Sunday, were asking for permission to reproduce a part of the article written by Michael Eaton in our Newsletter of Summer 1987.

The house was designed by the eccentric architect Raymond Myerscough Walker, for a local lace manufacturer. In the 1930s, architects could afford to be bohemian and enjoy their creativity without the oppressive influence of bureaucracy and business plans. It is unlikely that today the house would receive either planning permission or building regulations approval.



The flat-roofed building appears to be constructed in reinforced concrete but, in fact, has conventional brick cavity walls rendered to match the concrete roof. The main living area is expressed as a single space, divided by partitions and sliding doors. The first floor has one wall of curved glass and the concrete canopy is pierced by eight circular rooflights.

The house has been listed as a rare example of the Modern Movement in Britain but there was no suggestion that the Trust should purchase it as part of the Revolving Fund Programme.

— G.A.T

THE HARRY JOHNSON AWARD 1995

THE HARRY JOHNSON AWARD 1995

THE HARRY JOHNSON AWARD, now in its sixth year, has been copied by several other groups and authorities. The Award is for the best restoration of an old building, or the best new building, within a village setting. It is sponsored by the Trust and the CRRG (Notts Branch).

This year the Award went to the Boughton Village Hall Committee for the restoration of Boughton Village Hall next to the Parish Church.

Apart from being an excellent piece of restoration, this project also makes a contribution to the social life of the community, maximising the use of the building.

The runners-up award, in the form of a Commendation, went to 'The Old Shop, Low Street, Harby, which had been restored and converted to a dwelling by the owners, Paul and Linda Kirk, using the right materials and detailing.

— G.A.T

MOOR END FARM

North Moor Road, Walkeringham

THE TRUST IS ENGAGED in a package deal involving the purchase of Moor End Farmhouse and part of the adjoining site. The object is to restore the farmhouse and sell the surplus land as a building site for one dwelling in order to finance the restoration work.

The Trust is very grateful to the owner, Mrs E. Wright, for offering the Trust first refusal on the purchase and for cooperating in the design work.

The farmhouse has a lobby-entrance plan, built in about 1750. The interior is largely unchanged, having a kitchen with sunken ladder and a living room the other side of the large central fireplace divided into two. The staircase across the rear of the central stack leads to two separate bedrooms, the larger split by a stud partition.



The walls are of local bricks, the roof is covered with clay pantiles, and there are coggled eaves and tumbled coped gables. There is a matching outbuilding to the rear, of later date but containing remains of an earlier timber-framed building.

The Trust plans to restore the house to a high standard whilst retaining its character and historical integrity. The agreement for sale will ensure that the Trust retains some control over the design of the adjoining new house.

— G.A.T

UJAMOPT

UJAMOPT

MANY THANKS TO THE MEMBERS who sent in their comments on the last issue's article. Fewer than hoped for, but making some very good points. There is not sufficient room this time for an adequate follow-up: next issue, perhaps.

Meanwhile, may I ask for comment on one very specific point made in the article? I reprint the paragraph:

"No-one was ever allotted the job of teaching schoolchildren about the appearance of buildings. There are specialists to teach English Literature the aesthetics of the language. There are music teachers, art teachers, drama teachers - all aesthetic specialists. But somehow architecture and civic design, the most important of the lot, got left out."

Am I alone in thinking this omission disastrous?

— M.C.H.

'THE ARTIST AND THE COUNTRY HOUSE'

SOTHEBY'S, LONDON, held an exhibition on 8-27 January 1996 to benefit The Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture. This brought together 144 oil paintings of country houses in their settings, the earliest from the 15th Century, and as many as 107 from before 1870. The excellent catalogue (184 pp, price £15) was well illustrated, and the compiler, John Harris, and his associates must be congratulated.

Our county was represented by four properties (given here in order of the date of the painting):

Wollaton Park, seen in elevated prospect, c1697, by Jan Siberechts (1627-1697).

This painter was much used by Sir Thomas Willoughby. Three similar views of the Hall are known: one dated 1697 in the Yale Center for British Art, and one dated 1695 in Lord Middleton's collection. All show the new formal gardens, notably the huge bowling green ending in an exedra of trees. The two dated versions show orchard to the far left, but in this version it has been replaced by formal parterres. (The catalogue's cover uses another Siberechts painting of a Robert Smithson house: a 1675 view of Longleat).

Avonham Park, the east prospect, viewed from the deer park, late 1720s, an unidentified Flemish painter.

The house was built after 1691. Two views are known, linked in style with Pieter Andreas Rysbrack, and this is probably the later. The house is in the centre of the composition 'but the eye is really drawn to the palisaded lawn with its activities' (humans, birds and peacocks) 'and the foreground frieze of grazing deer' (with their keeper). The original was difficult to see as it was hung on the stairs. But there was a good reproduction in the catalogue which clearly showed the spire of St Mary Magdalene, Newark, through the central passage of the house.

Serlby Hall, from the North axis, 1758, and from the South axis with the Cascade house and Fly-catcher, 1758, both by John Frost (possibly J. 1766-82).

The 2nd Viscount Galway commissioned James Paine to build the house in 1754 and it was by no means complete in 1758. '[Possibly] these two somewhat primitive-style views were made of the house while it was under construction' primitive-style views were made of the house while it was under construction'.

Worsbop Manor, view of the North Front, 1777, by William Hodges (1744-1797).

Hodges, a pupil of Richard Wilson, was the artist on Cook's second voyage. Here he shows the house as it would have been if James Paine's vast 1763 'ducal palace' design had been completed. (Only the north wing of 23 bays was built: it was demolished 1843).

The catalogue's introduction makes the point that Hollar, Kniff and other topographical illustrators reduced the visual importance of the house in the picture to the benefit of the garden. Views of Pierrepont House, Nottingham (Yale Centre...) are cited as evidence.

All most valuable. But it was a pity that such an important exhibition was open for only 20 days.

— H.E.R.

LOST HOUSE DISCOVERED

IN THE LAST ISSUE was an appeal from Neville Hoskins for identification of an unknown house from a sketchbook by an unknown artist. Both house and artist were identified very rapidly (by Adrian Henstock). Although it turns out that the house is nowhere near Nottinghamshire, it and the drawing both have strong local associations, and so the results of the search are printed here; for that, and to answer the original question for the curiosity of posterity.

The house was built in 1796 on the outskirts of Shrewsbury: the large river seen in the drawing is therefore the Severn. Originally named The Mount, it has been renamed Darwin House because it was the place of birth, in 1809, of Charles Darwin the naturalist, author of *The Origin of Species*. The house still stands, used as the District Valuer's office; apart from the addition of ugly downpipes it appears little changed in 150 years. Even the steps shown on the drawing are still there.

The artist was Emma Elizabeth Wilmott (née Darwin). Her husband at the time the drawing was made was agent to the fourth Duke of Newcastle, of Clumber. That is one Nottinghamshire connection. Another is that both Emma Wilmott and Charles Darwin were grandchildren, although through different grandmothers, of Erasmus Darwin, born at Elston Hall, the family seat.



Darwin House, Shrewsbury

CAPTION COMPETITION

CAPTION COMPETITION

VERNON RADCLIFFE's photograph of the Gorgonzola crowd at Serlby Hall (taken on the Trust's visit there) attracted a fair number of promising attempts at giving it a caption.

After deep thought the Projects Sub-Committee decided to award it to:

"It's always the same at these open days — 500 visitors and one Joe between 'em."

Congratulations to Marilyn Tippet. We hope she is enjoying the prize, which was a set of the County Council's first-rate leaflet books on the county's buildings.

Plus ça change...

THE LAYOUT of *Conservation in Notts* is approaching stability. This time the proportions of the page have reverted from logical but dull A4 to the more elegant and traditional golden section, and the main typeface has been changed from Caslon Old Face to Baskerville; temporarily I hope, but it became necessary owing to technical problems.

With that sorted, we can, so to speak, carve the layout in stone for the foreseeable future. Please let me know if

there is anything you don't like: otherwise I must assume that members are all happy that their newsletter looks good and fits the Trust's character.

But the content is more important than the layout, and that can't be carved in stone: it has to be new each time. The copy for all but one of the eight pages here was written by committee members. That is not really the idea. It's your newsletter. It would be nice to have more in it from you.

Please telephone me on (Newark) 01 628 77 824, *five*, please, before preparing your contributions. — M.G.H.

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The N.B.P.T. was founded in 1967, which was also the year in which Conservation Areas were established by the Civic Amenities Act. It was not entirely fortuitous that the two births coincided: it was the beginning of the groundswell for conservation - at a time when the word had not yet lost any of its resonance, as now through misuse it so often has.

The Trust was originally a grant-giving body. The grants, though small, were looked upon as an essential complement to and reinforcement of the Trust's other main job, the giving of technical and aesthetic advice. This advice then as now was given freely and generously by the Trust's technical advisers, working to preserve the historic buildings of the County.

Today, the Trust's main thrust is through the Revolving Fund Committee. This Committee has produced a 'Buildings at risk' list: a list, intended to be comprehensive, of buildings of architectural or historic merit which are threatened by neglect or over-development.

The Trust then investigates how best to save those buildings. The preferred method is to encourage the owners to take the right action, making the best use of grants and other finance available for historic buildings. But when all else fails the Trust will acquire the building and do the necessary work itself, sell it on again at a profit. But when all else fails the Trust will acquire the building and do the necessary work itself, sell it on again at a profit if one is available, and plough the money back into the Revolving Fund in order to save other buildings.

The Trust is frequently invited to comment on planning applications which affect listed buildings and Conservation Areas. It often also comments on applications even when not invited to do so. The Trust's comments are based solely on its own evaluation of the building and of how the proposals would affect the building. Its viewpoint is therefore always independent, even if not always welcome.

For the membership, the Trust organizes slide evenings and an annual coach trip and other outings to places of architectural interest. It is also customary to invite an interesting speaker to the Annual General Meeting. The Trust publishes a Newsletter and News Bulletin, often with original and unpublished material.

New Members are very welcome, and the subscription is modest. To join, please complete the application form and send it to the secretary.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

(Please delete parts that don't apply; use block letters.)

Minimum Annual Subscriptions:

Ordinary member: £6 (Couples £9)
Life member: £60 (Couples £90)
Corporate membership (for associations): £8
I/We apply to become an

Ordinary Member/Life Member/Corporate Member of the Trust.

I/We enclose my/our first annual subscription of

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If you have a bank account, please use the Banker's Order form below. It really does simplify our book-keeping. Thank you.

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