

Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust Limited

Newsletter



JUNE 1981

Old Colerston — The Pitfold & Old Factory, Main Street

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Link House, 110 Mansfield Road,
Nottingham, NG1 3HL.

4th/5th April : 16th/17th May : 18th/19th July

Professor M.W. Barley, Chairman

This new venture of the Trust got off to a flying start. Its object was to initiate members into the techniques of recording old houses. The introductory lecture was very well attended, and about 20 members turned up at Flintham. Thanks to Mr. Myles Hildyard, we were welcomed at the houses chosen, and were able to use the old brewhouse (with a roaring log fire!) as a base.

Members were divided into teams of two, one to measure and one to record; they were supervised by one of the technical advisers. The teams quickly learned how to be methodical and accurate, though several return visits to houses were necessary for some teams to pick up forgotten measurements, or to have a second look at a particular feature. The cold was kept at bay by the fire and frequent cups of coffee (brewed by Mrs. Imogen Skirving).

On the Sunday the teams (all of them!) returned to the brewhouse to prepare scale drawings of their houses. Again there were quick trips into the village for yet another look. At the end of the day all but one of the teams had finished and handed their work to one of the technical advisers, Mr. Geof. Turner, who volunteered to take charge of them.

Thus the Trust has made a good start on the business of compiling a proper record of historic houses in the County.

- * The second weekend was equally successful and well attended but we have *
- * not finished with Flintham and a further training session is planned for *
- * 18th and 19th July. I hope that most of those who attended the first *
- * two weekends will turn out again, to acquire more expertise and to help *
- * to complete the record of an exceptionally interesting and unspoilt *
- * village. There will be room for newcomers, so if you missed the first *
- * two make sure to apply for this one. *

The wider object of the scheme is to train members and to give them the confidence to record interesting houses in their own neighbourhood. I look forward to hearing that this is happening, and to seeing the records. We shall have to arrange meetings of members busy in this way, so that they can display their work and discuss their discoveries.

The scope is almost unlimited. For instance, we now have an up-to-date history of Laxton; see "The open-field village of Laxton", being Vol.7 part 6 of The East Midland Geographer for December 1980 (Dept. of Geography, Nottingham University, price £1.00), but the houses in the parish have never been recorded. They are obviously an essential part of the history of the village, and one day that gap must be filled.

TRAINING WEEKEND - UPTON - SEPTEMBER 19th and 20th

The Trust also intends to carry out a survey of another village before the winter sets in and this time we have chosen Upton. The first meeting of the Upton survey will take place on the weekend of September 19th and 20th with a talk-in on Friday evening at 7.30 in the W.E.A. Centre, Shakespeare Street, Nottm.

Flintham members are welcome yet again and it is hoped that more people will come to the Upton weekend so that the village can be covered before the winter sets in. It is hoped that, as with Flintham, research can be carried out during the winter months to put historical facts against the survey information taken.

BUILDINGS

AT RISK

REGISTER

Progress Report by Mike Pringle, Co-ordinator

Since the last report on the Buildings at Risk Register, a further 12 buildings have been added, making a total of 78. At the Technical Advisers Panel meeting in February a start was made on considering the list of buildings on the register and each one was allocated to an Adviser. I have since been receiving a steady stream of reports back, mainly indicating that the fears have been well founded.

After the next meeting of the Technical Advisers I hope that consideration will have been given to all the properties listed, and that I will then be in a position to draw up all those considered to be at risk, with an indication of the gravity of the risk.

One of the most notable features is the large number of dovecotes which are at considerable risk. Mr. Severn has drawn up lists of all the dovecotes in Nottinghamshire that he is aware of. I fully support his project for the recording of these buildings, and possible moves towards assistance with their restoration. Whereas Nottinghamshire has, in common with any county, a stock of valuable, but neglected, buildings which must be brought to the public's attention, we seem to have a particularly rich collection of dovecotes. All efforts to help in the restoration of these particular buildings will not only be to the benefit of the county, but may also be the best way of demonstrating our intentions and of firing the public's imagination.

Unfortunately I am still not in a position to circulate the list of at risk buildings to Trust members, but I hope to do so just as soon as the Technical Advisers have completed their deliberations.

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INTERWAR LISTING

Another 37 buildings of the 1914-1939 period have been listed to add to the 50 buildings of the interwar era already protected. The list includes such London landmarks as Barker's of Kensington, the Dorchester and Savoy hotels, Broadcasting House and Waterloo Bridge. Seven churches throughout the country are added to the list along with offices, shops, houses and hospitals.

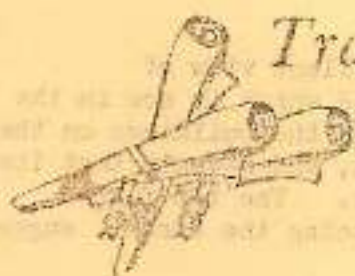
Heritage Outlook March/April 1981.

AWARD FOR NOTTINGHAM ARCHITECTS

Nottingham Architects, Dudding, Middleton & Mutch were the Architects for a building which has been given a major commendation in the 1980 Awards made by the Business & Industry Panel for the Environment. The building is the new area headquarters for the National Coal Board at Edwinstowe.

At a ceremony held at the Royal Society of Arts Mr. Tom King, M.P., Minister for Local Government and Environmental Services, presented the award to the owner of the building and Mr. J.E. Wood, Director of the North Notts. Area, NCB, received it on behalf of the NCB.

The Panel was established in 1974 as a follow-up to European Architectural Heritage Year.



Tracing the History of Your House

The tenth contribution to the series by
Adrian Henstock, the County Archivist, describing basic
documentary sources for tracing the history of smaller
houses in Nottinghamshire built before c.1900.

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To continue the second part of the series describing the history of selected local buildings, this issue's example is of a privately-owned Georgian town house which during the 19th century passed into semi-public hands.

4. COUNTY HOUSE, HIGH PAVEMENT, NOTTINGHAM

(a) Architectural Description

County House, which now houses the Nottinghamshire Record Office, stands on the north side of High Pavement opposite Shire Hall in the heart of the Lace Market area of Nottingham. The old part of the house is 'L' shaped, with large principal rooms on the street frontage and smaller rooms in the rear wing. At the rear is a yard with steps leading to the former terraced garden, now a car park. The house is of three storeys with hipped roofs and a projecting eaves cornice, and the main building comprises eight bays of windows. The exterior is rendered and somewhat plain, offset only by a Georgian doorcase with fanlight and flanked by (reproduction) Georgian railings, surmounted on the first floor by a projecting iron Regency balcony. To the east of the main building is a two-storey extension with a classical pedimented frontage in stone; the very high upper storey with three long windows is supported on two Greek Doric columns.

Inside the main building is a panelled entrance hall, out of which leads a good Georgian open-string staircase of early 18th century style. This gives way after the first floor to an elliptically-curved cantilevered stair of Regency date. The main rooms are on the first floor, and have enormous splayed doorcases in Greek Revival style. The former dining room in the classical extension has a ceiling over 20 feet high. At the rear ground floor is the old kitchen with large fireplace where the original iron spits and jacks are at present being restored.

(b) Documentary History

Printed maps of Nottingham date from 1610, but the earliest to show reasonable house plans is that of 1744, and this records the basic outline of the house as it is today. This map shows a garden on the opposite side of the street, which also appears on a map of 1820 described as 'Mr. Fellows' Vista'. A vista was a formal garden over which a pleasing prospect could be afforded of the distant countryside from the windows of the house, and it is known from other sources that Mr. Fellows was the owner of County House in 1820.

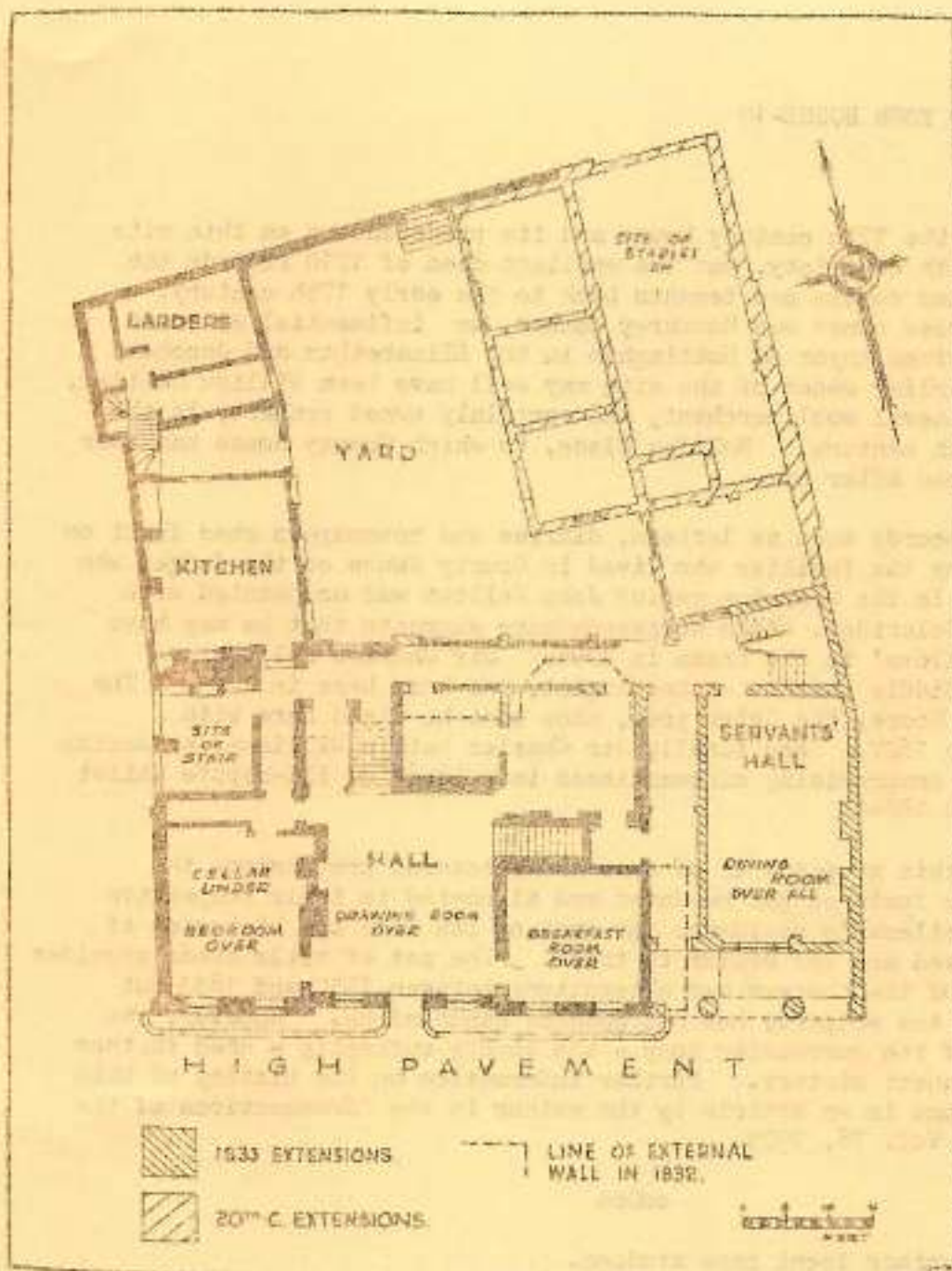
The house is very fortunately depicted on an excellent view of Nottingham from the south by Thomas Sandby in 1742 which is now in the Castle Museum. It can be seen through the gap in the buildings on the south side of High Pavement afforded by the Vista, and reveals that its appearance was very different to what it is today. The top floor comprised a low attic storey with three gables facing the street, suggesting a 17th or very early 18th century date.

Unlike previous examples in this series, County House was originally privately-owned and possesses a set of title deeds dating from 1710 to 1833. In this last year the house was sold to the county magistrates for use as Judges' lodgings for the visiting Shire Hall judges and has remained in county hands ever since, which explains the absence of any subsequent deeds. The deeds show that a family named Hallowes were owner/occupiers from at least that date to 1771 when it was sold to the Fellows family (who had lived in another town house next door). The Fellows' let the house out for periods during the late 18th century but were in residence up to the sale of 1833. From printed genealogical records it appears that the Hallowes were a branch of a minor Derbyshire gentry family and ardent supporters of the High Pavement Presbyterian (later Unitarian) chapel nearly opposite. The Fellows', also Unitarians, were a prosperous merchant family of silk hosiers and later bankers in the town.

The deeds show that in 1728 William Hallowes purchased property to the east of the house (the site of the classical extension) for conversion into stables, etc. and four years later bought the former Castle Inn opposite which he demolished in order to lay out his Vista. This date of c.1730 is consistent with the style of the lower staircase and other early Georgian features which suggest that he extensively remodelled the house and its surroundings at that time. However, the fashion at this period was for flat parapetted frontages, such as were built by the Fellows next door and the Gawthorns in Low Pavement, for example, and the gabled facade would by then have been considered very dated.

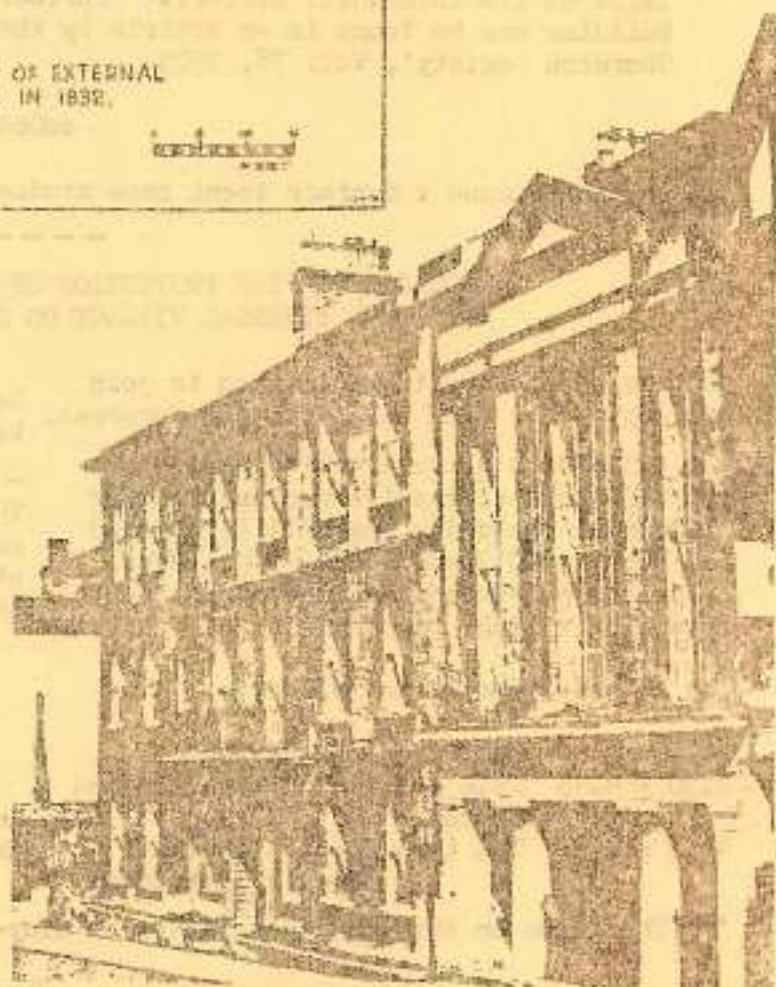
In the Nottinghamshire Record Office is the Will of Samuel Hallowes, William's father, in 1715, who almost certainly lived in this house. Very fortunately there is with it a Probate inventory of his goods and chattels, which include such items as his coach and mares (valued at £15) but which also names 15 rooms. These can be approximately related to the nucleus of the present house and are the hall, great parlour, little parlour, backward parlour, great chamber, little chamber, inward chamber, backward chamber, mens' chamber, maids' chamber, garret, kitchen, pantry, brewhouse and cellar.

Following the sale by the Fellows family to the county magistrates in 1833 the house was extensively converted to fit it for its new role as Judges' lodgings. Some of the accounts relating to the conversion but unfortunately not the plans survive amongst the official county archives. These indicate that this was almost certainly the period when the third storey was raised in height and a straight frontage substituted for the gables, the new classical extension added to the east, and the whole building again remodelled in the then-fashionable Greek Revival style. The architects were Henry Moses Wood and James Nicholson of Nottingham and the principal contractor was Thomas Earnshaw, who was paid nearly £3,000 for the building work, then a substantial sum. Bills survive for many of the fixtures in the building, including one for £74 from the Staveley Iron Works in Derbyshire for supplying the classical columns of the new extension, which although bearing the appearance of stone are in fact of cast iron.



County House:
plan of ground floor

County House:
frontage to High Pavement



The history of the 17th century house and its predecessors on this site is not known with certainty, but the earliest deed of 1710 records the names of previous owners and tenants back to the early 17th century. The first recorded owner was Humphrey Bonner, an influential Alderman who was three times Mayor of Nottingham in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period. An earlier owner of the site may well have been William Halifax, a wealthy mediaeval wool merchant, who certainly owned property in the area in the 15th century. Halifax Place, to which County House has rear access, was named after him.

A variety of records such as letters, diaries and newspapers shed light on the lives led by the families who lived in County House or the Judges who lodged here. In the Georgian period John Fellows was acquainted with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whose correspondence suggests that he may have visited the Fellows' in the house in 1796. Sir Charles Fellows, a distinguished Middle Eastern archaeologist, was born here in 1791. The letters of Tom Moore, the Irish poet, show that he dined here with Mrs. Fellows in 1827. And finally Sir Charles Watkin Williams, an Assize Judge, died in compromising circumstances in a house of ill-repute whilst lodging here in 1884!

In conclusion, as this property is of some architectural pretensions the various fashionable features can be dated and allocated to their respective periods. As a gentleman's residence for much of its life the histories of the families involved are far easier to trace. The set of title deeds provides the basic history of the changes and alterations between 1710 and 1833 but they cease then as the property has not changed hands since. However, the official records of the purchasing body - the county authority - shed further light on its subsequent history. Further information on the history of this building can be found in an article by the author in the 'Transactions of the Thoroton Society', Vol. 78, 1975.

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In the next issue : Further local case studies.

COUNCIL FOR THE PROTECTION OF RURAL ENGLAND (NOTTS. BRANCH)
VISIT TO TEVERSAL VILLAGE ON SATURDAY, 11th JULY, 1981

Members of the Trust are invited to join members of the CPRE on a visit to Teversal.

Teversal is a few miles west of Mansfield between M.1 and A.617.

The village is a conservation Area and contains some attractive and interesting buildings, including the Hall (1767) and the Rectory (C17 and C18). The Church is described by Pevsner as 'one of the most rewarding village churches in the County'.

The cost, including tea, is £1.25 per person and anyone wishing to take part should contact the Secretary of the CPRE:

The programme is as follows:-

- 2.30 p.m. Meet near the Church
- 2.30 - 4.15 Talk and tour of village and Church
- 4.30 p.m. Tea (provided by Teversal Women's Institute)

Miss L.H. Aynsley,
7 Copse Close,
Burton Joyce,
Nottingham.
Telephone: Burton Joyce 2681

as soon as possible please, and not later than 1st July.

*** The guide on this occasion is Mr. W. Clay-Dove, an expert on Teversal village ***

FEES FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Draft regulations to provide for fees for planning applications were laid before Parliament on 17th February by the Secretary of State for the Environment. Powers to do so were contained in the Local Government Planning and Land Act.

Fees for planning applications became chargeable on 1st April, 1981 and must be paid to local planning authorities. The fees are designed to off-set the costs of development control.

Broadly, fees will be charged in relation to the scale of the proposed development and will be for applications for planning permission, for approval of 'reserved matters' where an outline planning permission has already been received, and for consent to display advertisements. Listed building consent applications and appeals against planning decisions will not attract a fee.

Outline applications for buildings will be charged at £40 per .1 hectare, subject to a maximum fee of £1,000. In these cases, subsequent applications on more detailed matters will attract a further fee.

Full applications or applications on detailed matters will cost £40 per residential unit with a maximum of £2,000 or £40 per square metres for non-residential development with a ceiling of £2,000.

Applications for the erection of plant and machinery are charged at the same rate as for residential development. The winning and working of minerals is charged at £20 per .1 hectare subject to a maximum of £3,000.

There are a number of exemptions and special cases. Disabled people are not required to find a fee for applications involving improvement of means of access to their houses or for changes within them to make their lives a bit easier. Anyone who would normally be free to develop without needing planning permission, but which freedom has been curtailed by Order - such as an Article 4 Direction, - will not have to pay for permission to develop. After all, his friend three streets away does not even have to have permission to build a storm porch or a small conservatory at the back of his house.

Fences, shop fronts and buildings of less than 40 square metres will attract a fee of £20 as will house extensions and car parks unless they are permitted development under the General Development Order. A flat fee of £40 will be charged for applications for change of use, playing fields and advertising hoardings.

The Regulations apply to England and Wales only but it is understood that comparable Regulations for Scotland will shortly be laid before Parliament.

Draft Statutory Instrument. The Town & Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) Regulations 1981. £1.70. HMSO. ISBN 0 11 018518 8.

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Heritage Outlook March/April 1981.

MEMORIES OF LAXTON

My Lifetime Memories of Laxton is an illustrated booklet by Frank Moody, who was born in the village and lived there until after his 71st birthday.

Already the work has aroused interest among historians, students, farmers, land agents, country lovers and school children.

Some remarkable photographs are included together with poems about country life.

The booklet is privately published and is available at £1.00 per copy, including post and packing. Telephone Mansfield 642370 for details.

DOVECOTES AT RISK IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

By John Savern

At the last Council of Management Meeting of the Trust a resolution was made to undertake the repair of the dilapidated dovecotes in the County of Nottingham.

The problem with dovecotes is that they are usually of no use to their owners - unless they wish to keep pigeons, and very often their shape and their siting makes for difficulties in finding an alternative use.

However, they have one advantage which could be their salvation and that is their size. Generally, they are simple buildings quite modest in size compared with other buildings at risk, and with some organised effort a body such as the Trust could take the County dovecotes under its wing and organise the repair and restoration of these. Dovecotes seem to fall into two categories in this County. Firstly, the manorial and ecclesiastical group and secondly, the farmstead group.

The first group are robust, round or rectangular, free standing and of stone, they are solidly built and have lasted for centuries without much attention.

The second, in Nottinghamshire, are generally of brick although there are some stone examples, built into the farmstead group usually on first floors although again there are examples of free standing dovecotes on the farmstead. These have usually stood for generations without much attention.

The buildings are at risk because there is always a lack of money on the part of those who own them. Nobody can be entirely delighted to spend money on something which to them is a liability, and because of lack of encouragement from Bodies such as the Trust little gets done to these forgotten buildings.

The structures being very simple in their concept and their finish lend themselves to job creation schemes aimed at opportunities for young people to learn a trade. With proper supervision, a willing workforce of five people and some modest financial assistance with the cost of materials, most of our remaining dovecotes could be put back into an acceptable order within a matter of weeks. One team of workers could repair their way through the County dovecotes and learn a lot about building materials, methods of construction and management of small projects.

A modest repair would ease the pressure on finding a new use. The buildings are perfectly capable of standing for years without use or attention provided they are made sound to start with and are inspected annually to make good weather damage. Vandalism is not a problem on most because of the siting.

This does not of course imply that it is not necessary to find an alternative use, but one has to be realistic about the possibilities. If the building is free standing and in its own grounds, then the difficulty is less than for one that is mixed up with the farmstead or surrounded by other structures.

DOVECOTES AT RISK IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
continued ...

For those buildings capable of re-use let us go all out to put them back into the community again, provided always that their character and detail is not lost in the change.

For those that cannot find another user let them become the guardians of a small and permanent exhibition illustrating the keeping of pigeons through the ages.

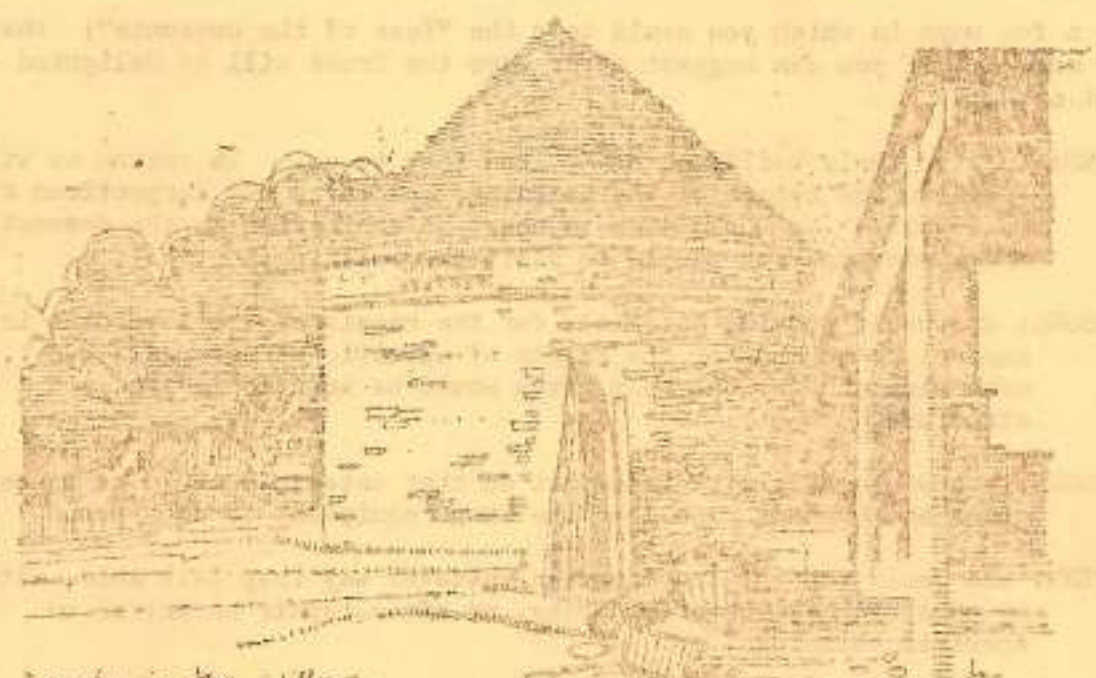
The guardianship of the structure could be vested in the Parish, if the owners are not willing to undertake the task. Someone could agree to hold the key and perhaps during the holidays or tourist season they could make themselves responsible for keeping an eye on the dovecote. Perhaps they may be persuaded to act as keeper and to encourage donations or sponsorship to keep the structure in good repair.

A dovecote trail through the County could not only provide the basis for an enjoyable outing for visitors but would give considerable encouragement to those who do not often get about to see and appreciate the Nottinghamshire countryside. The number of dovecotes in this County could provide the material for half a dozen trails.

These structures could provide educational facilities for small groups of children to visit and record their finds. A piece of history small enough to appreciate in one lesson and a lasting and three dimensional reminder of times long past.



Three nesting boxes are
shown in the bottom
are constructed of clay
samples and bricks



Barley in the willow.

DOVECOTES AT RISK IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
continued ...

The Trust would not wish to acquire these buildings before it became involved in repair. If an owner wished to give the building to the Trust for safe keeping, with a right of access to it at all times for visits and maintenance so much the better. If however, the owner wished to retain the building or the land on which it is situated the Trust would respect this view. All the Trust would ask for, is reasonable access and an understanding that the owner would not deliberately allow the building to be neglected or misused. Indeed it would be hoped that when owners realised the genuine concern of the Trust for the safety of these buildings, one would envisage (and certainly hope) that owners would jointly co-operate with the Trust to ensure the continuity of these dovecotes.

If a project such as this is to get off the ground the Trust needs the help of many people, and it is sure that many people will come forward with ideas and advice on what to do. The Trust also needs people who are prepared to work as well as talk and the support of many organisations could be enlisted to clear out the buildings, cut down grass and nettles and remove rubbish.

Interested volunteers and interested groups would be most welcome for not only could they pave the way for the Youth Opportunities Programmes to contribute effectively but also they might be persuaded to act as guardians of the dovecote afterwards.

Perhaps they might even wish to keep pigeons in it!

Let 1981/1982 be the "Year of the Dovecote" for the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust and let the Trust make a positive contribution to the retention of our Building Heritage. The Trust does not have to buy a building, it can repair someone else's dovecote. The Trust would gain support, credibility and perhaps recognition and a few unemployed youngsters would gain a sense of purpose and a knowledge of part of our domestic history.

IF YOU FEEL YOU COULD SUPPORT THE TRUST IN THIS WORTHWHILE VENTURE, please contact John Severn, who is one of the Trust's technical advisers dedicated to doing something about these buildings, at 11A Villiers Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6FR - a post card or letter please, if at all possible, as his 'phones never seem to stop ringing and he has his office to run.

Here are a few ways in which you could help the "Year of the Dovecote"; there are many more and if you can suggest other ways the Trust will be delighted - the Trust needs:-

- *** OWNERS: to give their buildings or to lend them to us. In return we will organise the repair of the buildings and carry out inspections at intervals. We would like to mount an exhibition in the dovecote and would hope for people to visit the building.
- *** SPONSORS: who would provide materials for the repair of the dovecotes in general or to sponsor the repair of specific structures. An acknowledgment of the help given would be mounted inside each structure.
- *** SPONSORS: who would help with transport so that materials could be taken to sites and perhaps also lend the Trust equipment to do a job.
- *** HELPERS: who would support the cause in whatever way they felt able, either by physical help before, during, or after repair on any or on specific buildings.

- *** HELPERS: who would organise the opening and running of the dovecote when repaired and available for visitors.
- *** HELPERS: who would carry out recording or research to provide a comprehensive record of the dovecotes of Nottinghamshire.
- *** HELPERS: who would design, make up and set up the exhibitions.
- *** DONATIONS: for the purchase of materials and equipment. The Trust will have a separate "Dovecote" account and will keep accurate records of expenditure on each project. If donations are given for work on a specific dovecote then an assurance that the money will be spent on that particular building will be given. Think, if 10 people give 50p that makes £5.00 and this will buy, perhaps, 50 secondhand tiles, enough perhaps to keep the wet out of one dovecote.
- *** INFORMATION: It is vital that we collect information in the form of articles, documents, books and photographs of dovecotes in this County. If you do not wish to give the source of information, please lend it to us to copy and return to you. Think that you may be the only person who has access to the detail of a particular building. Your help could ensure its correct repair.

Please remember what William Morris the founder of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings felt about our Building Heritage. In 1877, he was at pains to point out that we are only guardians of our building heritage. It is up to us to see that which has been handed down to us is passed on by us to our children, in a condition better than that in which we received it. My words, not his, but they relate well to dovecotes. Most are in a pretty poor state today and now we have the opportunity to put them right and hand them on to others in good condition.

To let these buildings go would be a tragedy, we are, perhaps, the last generation able to save them.

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NBPT COACH TOUR - SATURDAY, 5th SEPTEMBER

John Severn

The Trust, having pronounced the year 1981/82 as being the Year of the Dovecote, (members will have read the article above) will hope to make visits, on its coach tour booked for Saturday, 5th September, to some of the more important and interesting dovecotes in the County.

The intention is to book a coach which will leave the County Hall car park at 10 o'clock to visit as many dovecotes as possible, arriving at Thrumpton for tea and finishing back at County Hall between 6 and 7 p.m. in the evening.

In order to ensure sufficient numbers and to make worthwhile not only booking the coach but arranging for tea at Thrumpton Hall the Trust would be grateful if members would indicate on the attached reply slip

whether or not they wish to go on this outing. Replies to Dr. Middleton by 29th June, please.

As will be appreciated from the article, dovecotes are buildings which could be easily repaired and looked after by the Trust, and it is hoped that sufficient support from the membership will allow these interesting yet otherwise neglected buildings to be refurbished and given a new lease of life. The support from members by joining our coach tour and any other practical help given by members and non-members alike will be very much appreciated. Unless organisations like ours can pave the way for the buildings to be repaired very few will be left for our children to appreciate in the future.

THE KIRKBY & DISTRICT CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Annesley Old Church

Sylvia Sinfield, Secretary

The now redundant "All Saints" Church which stands beside Annesley Hall on the A.614 almost certainly has Saxon origins. Until fairly recent times Annesley village surrounded the Church and Hall but there are now no obvious signs of its existence.

The new Church was built at the turn of the century nearer to the new colliery village of Annesley and the old Church was not used thereafter. It gradually decayed after lead was stripped from the roof during the first World War and in 1945 part of the roof collapsed.

Over the years a few historic items such as the Norman font, the marble figure of a Chaworth Knight and the stone effigy of Leonia de Raines, signifying a heart burial, were rescued and removed to the new Church. In 1975 a roof beam fell and damaged the Chaworth Achievement of 1686, so the Kirkby and District Conservation Society contacted the Victoria and Albert Museum for advice. Their representative came and described the piece of plasterwork as unique and a thing of great beauty, but thought that it could not be moved in one piece and that it would certainly cost thousands of pounds to restore it. The Society removed it from the wall themselves and arranged to have it restored for a fraction of that price by a master plasterer, Bill Salter of Leeds, who is often consulted on work at nearby Hardwick Hall. The Achievement is now safe in the new Church.

For many years there have been debates on the future of the building and the ultimate disposal of the churchyard. The Church is designated as an Ancient Monument but, as reported in a previous newsletter, last year the Church Commissioners obtained permission from the Secretary of State for total demolition. The Conservation Society have pressed for retention of at least part of the outline of the Church and for the gravestones to be left as they stand at present and, if possible, the acquisition of the site by Ashfield District Council and a decision is still awaited.

I have seen the Church Commissioners' Architects' plans, and they are saving as much as possible of the building and the result should be a rather 'romantic' outline which is most acceptable if it is passed.

International Byron Society

On April 25th the International Byron Society made their annual pilgrimage to the area. They lunched at Bestwood Lodge and then went on to Newstead Abbey where a talk was given by Nottingham City Council's Art Director, Mr. Brian Loughborough, as it was the 50th anniversary of the County's taking over the Abbey. After touring the Abbey our Chairman guided them to Annesley Hall and Church, although they had to view them at a distance because of the dreadful snowy conditions. They then went to the Acacia Avenue Centre where the Annesley Women's Institute provided tea, and Canon Frank Lyons gave a talk on Annesley Church and its connections with Lord Byron.

It was agreed that our Society should send an annual report on the Church's preservation to the Byron Society.

They then went on to hold a memorial service for Byron at Hucknall Church.

Professor Leslie Merchand of America was on the tour - he is the world's leading authority on Byron and has recently published the 11th Volume of the Definitive Edition of Byron's letters. There were also pilgrims from Japan amongst the group, which included Mrs. Elma Dangerfield, Director of the Byron Society, Mr. Michael Rees, Vice-President, and Miss Lucy Edwards, the Organiser and Secretary.

In spite of the weather this proved to be a most worthwhile and enjoyable occasion.

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The following PRESS NOTICE is reprinted for the information of Trust members:-

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE FISHERIES AND FOOD
Whitehall Place, London, SW1A2HH

April 30, 1981

LAXTON ESTATE

In a Written Reply to a Question by Mr. Richard Alexander M.P., in the House of Commons today, asking whether he has completed the sale of the Laxton Estate and if he would make a statement, Mr. Jerry Wiggin, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said:

"The House will recall that I announced on November 28, 1979 that the Laxton Estate was to be included in the programme of land sales being carried out by this Ministry as provided for in the White Paper on the Government's Expenditure Plans for 1980/81. I made it clear at that time, and subsequently, that the sale was being treated as a special case and the estate would only be offered to those able to give the necessary assurances about the future of the system and the welfare of the tenants.

"I am glad to inform the House that the terms of a sale have now been agreed by this Ministry with the Crown Estate Commissioners for a price of £1 million. This price took into account a number of constraints which are due to the Ministry's policy of management resulting from the unique role and structure of the estate. I feel sure that the House will welcome the transfer of this historic estate to a body of such a high reputation.

"The Crown Estate Commissioners have given me an undertaking that it will be their intention to continue as at present organised, the Open Field System and associated customs which are the principal features of this historic estate, and that reasonable educational facilities will continue to be made available."

ENDS.

Notes:

The Laxton Estate comprises some 1,830 acres in 15 fully equipped farms and six smallholdings. The average size of the farms is about 110 acres. The village hostelry also forms part of the Estate and is for disposal together with four small domestic dwellings.

The land was offered to the Ministry by the late Earl Manvers in 1952 and is the last surviving village with open fields cultivated in the way common to England in the Middle Ages. The Minister of Agriculture is currently Lord of the Manor.

The system is still administered by the Court Leet of the Manor which consists of all the occupiers of land at Laxton. The Bailiff, a Steward and a jury of 12 men have power to inspect the fields and fine any tenant abusing the system.

Half the fines go towards providing refreshment for the Court and half go to the Lord of the Manor.

The tenants of the properties to be sold have been notified. All disposals will be subject to tenancy and the Minister's tenants will have full security of tenure under the Agricultural Holdings Legislation.

The Crown Estate, which includes some 260,000 acres of agricultural land in England and Scotland, forms part of the hereditary possessions of the Crown and is therefore an appropriate environment for the historic Laxton Estate. It is managed in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Estate Act 1961, by a Board of eight Commissioners, who are appointed by Her Majesty the Queen, with the duty of maintaining and developing the Estate. Their Chairman is the Rt.Hon. the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.

MUSEUM OF

FARM BUILDINGS

An early 19th century farmyard complex is beginning to take shape at the Chiltern Open Air Museum, Newlands Park, Chalfont St. Giles. The Museum has saved four ancient farm buildings from destruction and has decided to rebuild them as a farm, adding other appropriate buildings that become threatened plus a small collection of farm implements from the 1800s.

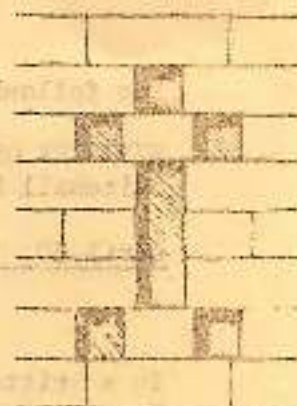
The first building to be reconstructed in the farm complex is a large granary from Rossway Home Farm, Berkhamstead, Herts. Part of the granary dates from the 18th century. An extension was added in a period of agricultural prosperity in the 19th century. Like many specialised farm buildings, it was made redundant by changes in farming techniques. It was given to the Museum by Major Hadden-Paton, who also donated some timber for the reconstruction. During the winter of 1976/7 it was carefully dismantled by volunteers and transported to the Museum site.

Repairs to the granary's timbers have been carried out in the Museum workshop and its complex frame of over 400 timbers has now been erected at Newland Park. The joists at first floor level and some of the internal partitions have also been fitted and the roof structure is now being assembled. Work has continued through the winter to have the granary ready for viewing by the public when the Museum opens in the early Summer.

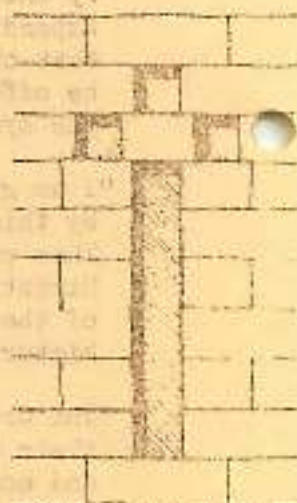
Other buildings awaiting reconstruction in the farm complex are a large barn from Hill Farm, Chalfont St. Peter, Bucks, and two buildings from the early 19th century College Farm, Marsworth, an open fronted cattle shed and a stable for working horses with a cart shed attached.

The Chiltern Open Air Museum is planning to open to the public on Sundays throughout the Summer of 1981. Among the interesting buildings on view will be a replica of an iron age house, a cruck barn from the late 15th or early 16th century, a 19th century cart shed and a 19th century baker's granary. Several other buildings have been saved from demolition, carefully dismantled and are awaiting reconstruction at the Museum.

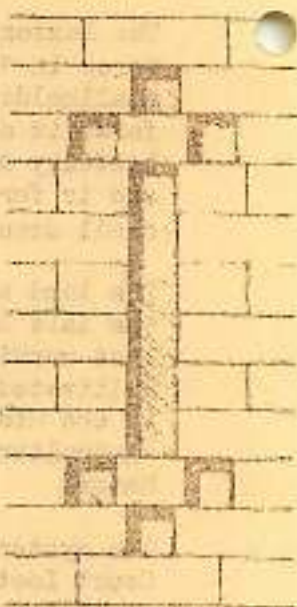
Building Conservation March 1981.



Manor Farm, Rampton



Southwell Road, Causton



Barn at Thurgarton, dated 1790

Barn Ventilation Holes