

Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1979

THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST

by Bob Middleton, Secretary.

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In the last issue we were sorry to report that the Trust had had to withdraw the grant aid which was available for the restoration of buildings in the county. At that time the precise situation with regard to the grant-aid, which we in turn receive from the Nottinghamshire County Council, had yet to be clarified. The situation has now been confirmed as follows:-

Grant-aid:

1978/79 - £6,500, 1979/80 - £2,950 and 1980/81 - £500.

In view of this the Council of Management confirmed their decision, and certainly for the foreseeable future, no further grants will be made.

WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE THE TRUST? Although a major part of our work, grant-aid was only one of the tools which were used in seeking to preserve this county's heritage. Technical advice has always been available and will continue to be available in the future; in many cases this is considered to be of equal value to owners as the grants which we have given. The Trust also acts as 'watchdog' monitoring applications which affect conservation areas and listed buildings and this work too will continue. We intend, also, to look further at our 'Buildings at Risk' register and the follow-up action that can be taken when we are notified of buildings 'at risk'. The other major activity which we hope to expand in the future is the principle of the **REVOLVING FUND**, where a building is purchased, restored and resold so as to regenerate the capital expended on its restoration. We hope in 1980/81 to be able to make a start on 1 LINBY LANE, PAPPLEWICK, as a test case.

It is with optimism that we look to 1980, but the Trust urgently needs more support from individuals, organisations, industry, commerce and the professions. This is worthwhile work and, in the interests of the whole county, **PLEASE SUPPORT IT** by your continued membership and by encouraging others to subscribe.

Reg. Office: 110 Mansfield Road, Nottingham. NG1 3HL.

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*Merry Christmas and all best
wishes for a Happy New Year*

RECENT PUBLIC INQUIRIES

Whilst the role of the Trust may have to change, now that we have no money to give in the form of grants, there is one aspect of the Trust work that must and can go on unimpeded. This is of course our involvement at public inquiries.

Since last November, the Trust has appeared at 6 public inquiries - the details may have been reported before, but here, again, are the facts -

THE BRACEBRIDGE PUMPING STATION CHIMNEY AT WORKSOP is saved but as yet the alternative use proposed for the pumping station has not yet proceeded very far.

POTTER STREET, WORKSOP, was lost even though we pleaded that the building was historically important. The building got its own back however by giving up a wonderful mediaeval roof truss. Unfortunately those that were responsible for its demolition did not realise the importance of the find and only a small portion was saved.

ORCHARD HOUSE, FARNDON ROAD, NEWARK, where we gave evidence, has been decided in favour of retention, and so has No. 11 NOTTINGHAM ROAD, CROPWELL BISHOP.

We await decisions on HARDYOTS at GRINGLEY-ON-THE-HILL, and also in respect of the DOVECOTE at EVERTON, the most recent inquiry on October 26th.

Three out of four, and two results still to come. In all cases the Trust was able to put up a strong objection in an attempt to retain the buildings. Whilst one would not wish to push this point too far it is significant that in a number of

cases the Trust was the major objector and had we not decided to be represented, some of the properties may not have been saved. It is important therefore that where we believe a building should be retained we should also be prepared to say so.

The Ancient Monuments Society was represented at the inquiry at Everton (the Dovecote at Northfield Farm) by Miss Elizabeth Grics who is presently writing a book on the Dovecotes of the British Isles. John Severn has been asked to help check the Nottinghamshire Dovecotes so that the information on those in this county is correct and he would be most grateful for any information, written or photographic of Dovecotes past and present in Nottinghamshire. Please send any information you have, however insignificant you may feel it is, to John Severn, 11a Villiers Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham who, with Graham Beaumont and Phil Ibbotson, will complete as much information as is possible on our county's Dovecotes.

JAS

FIRE! HELP NEEDED

The problems of meeting the requirement of fire legislation when historic buildings undergo change of use are being studied by Alan Parnell who has been commissioned by the Department of the Environment to compile a schedule of case histories. There are 11 categories which include town houses, warehouses, churches, boarding schools etc. with changes of use to tourism, old people's residential homes, sport activities.

Anyone having experience of the effect of fire legislation on historic buildings and would be willing to help should contact Alan Parnell, FRIBA, 6 Welbeck Street, London, W.1.

TRESWELL CHURCH - REPAIRS TO ROOF

In the September newsletter we described the grant-aid that was available from the Department of the Environment for the restoration of historic churches. There is also another possible source of money for these buildings, i.e. The Historic Churches Preservation Trust, based at Fulham Palace, London SW6 6EA.

We recently contacted this Trust to see if an application could be made on behalf of the church at Treswell for repairs to the roof. We were advised that in considering applications the following points were taken into account:

1. the church must be in use;
2. the repairs must be to the essential fabric of the building;
3. the church must be of architectural interest;
4. local efforts must have been made to raise funds for the repairs.

Treswell church appeared to be eligible on all counts - application was made - we await the outcome with interest.

RM

LAXTON FIELDS

by Philip Lyth

The Ministry of Agriculture proposal to sell their Laxton Estate is a most deplorable suggestion, particularly as it was only 1952 that they purchased the estate to preserve its special features for "alltime." Since that date the Ministry have been good landlords for the tenants, whose farming has not been unduly restricted by the ancient customs of the manor court and they have been good custodians for the open fields allowing free access to thousands of visitors and students each year to see this unique remainder of the mediaeval openfield and strip system.

Why then should all this be put at risk? Simply to realise perhaps £2 million capital in the national interest. My recollection of 1952 is that we were in the middle of a financial crisis then, but the ministry had the foresight and initiative to acquire the estate when it came on the market in spite of the credit squeeze.

By the time these notes appear the issue may well be settled for the better or worse, but if it is still in the balance, any interested person or organisation should write to the Minister or to their M.P. for an assurance that the Ministry is considering the case thoroughly. These fields, where the farming system has remained unchanged for over 1000 years, are just as important a monument to agricultural history as a building, bridge or works may be to industrial history.

The Ministry have stated that "the estate will only be offered to those able to give the necessary assurances about the future of the system and the welfare of the tenants." Failing the retention of the estate we must hope that the Ministry consider transferring it to some other public authority such as the National Trust or County Council. It is an estate of small farms, which has often provided the first step on the farming ladder for young people and could well be considered under the County Council Smallholdings scheme, given Ministry approval.

The village is a Conservation Area, so the buildings are reasonably protected, but the open fields are not. Although no buildings are involved I am sure that members of the Building Preservation Trust will do what they can in the interests of conservation as a whole, to see that this special heritage of our county is as well looked after in the future as in the past.

FARM BUILDING SURVEY

by Phil Ibbotson, Supervisor

The survey has almost reached its 25th birthday - weeks rather than years old. After a somewhat hectic start and an eventful series of weeks we are going great guns and there have been moments when the excitement has nearly reached fever-pitch. Requests to view buildings, both on our part and on the part of a number of people and organisations have been plentiful and our requests have been met with a great deal of interest and proffers of help from a varied number of organisations.

The discoveries have been many and varied; as we have progressed more and more unusual things are coming to light. In the early weeks we tended to be very enthusiastic and to treat everything as though it were the be-all and end-all: now it must be said that things are not always as exciting as they might be. The horizon of the survey has broadened to some extent. Requests from people outside the county have been passed on to us. Recently a Public Inquiry was held at Retford regarding the proposal to demolish a set of farm buildings at Everton in the north of the Shire. One of the witnesses (see also John Severn 'Recent Public Inquiries') was Miss Elizabeth Grice, of the 'Times', who specialises in articles on architectural matters. She is writing a definitive history of Dovecotes in Britain and she has asked us to help by noting and, where possible, surveying these buildings. I am sending out a plea for information - will anyone who knows the location of either a dovecote or or a pigeon-loft please let us know? We would also like to borrow any photos or drawings of such things. At the moment, through keeping my eyes open, I have been able to list 53 Dovecotes and lofts.

BEST KEPT VILLAGE HALL COMPETITION

Members will be delighted to learn that this Competition (organised by the Community Council for Nottinghamshire and sponsored by Sir Wm. Starkey & Co. Ltd., has, in this its first year, been won by THE PARISH CENTRE, WARSOP, where, in 1977 and 1978 we held our Annual General Meeting.

In 1973 the Trust gave grant-aid towards the restoration scheme and we offer our heartiest congratulations to The Parochial Church Council.

Please help us to discover the others; don't feel that though the one in question is only a couple of entry holes, that it is not worth bothering with - they are all important because they form part of what, at one time was a common feature, but is now a historical curiosity.

'What have you been up to?' and well may you ask! Country Malt-kilns, model farms, 'Residences', blacksmiths' shops and the smallholder's cowshed have been our lot. A most interesting malting at Cropwell Butler has been drawn which, we think, includes a Horse-gin for driving the early barn machinery. It was also thought that this range included two malt-kilns but we have now discovered that there were three. In East Markham we now have records of two timber-framed barns, two 17th and two 18th Century dovecotes, a malting and an 18th Century cart-shed. Requests from a gentleman at North Leverton for us to visit North and South Leverton have produced a splendid aisled barn, a mediaeval manor house that is sadly dropping to bits and one of the largest ranges of farm buildings so far seen. The only thing that we have not had the opportunity to survey is a mill - either wind or water. Several have been noted but the thing that we are most short of is time. Offers of help would be most gratefully received.

Last, but by no means least, we need to pay attention to the fact that the survey has not been cut-off in its prime so-to-speak. Through the efforts of Dr. Middleton's negotiations with the Manpower Services Commission we have an extension into the New Year. Our thanks are due for this and it should be possible for the survey to complete almost all the parishes that were originally proposed by the Trust.

COLLINGHAM MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Members who joined us on the walk at Collingham during the Summer will be interested to learn that the Museum Committee have now produced a trail leaflet of the tour. Three plaques will be erected at the most interesting places.

BARN AT RANCLIFFE FARM, BRADMORE

Built by Sir Thomas Parkyns c1736

Survey of carpenter's marks
on roof trusses
Graham Beesmont 26 Oct 79

Trusses were made on the ground, joints pegged, & members marked for identification. They were then dismantled & hoisted into position.

Each member was handmade & different from all others. Marks were needed so the right piece could be found. A wrong piece would not fit.

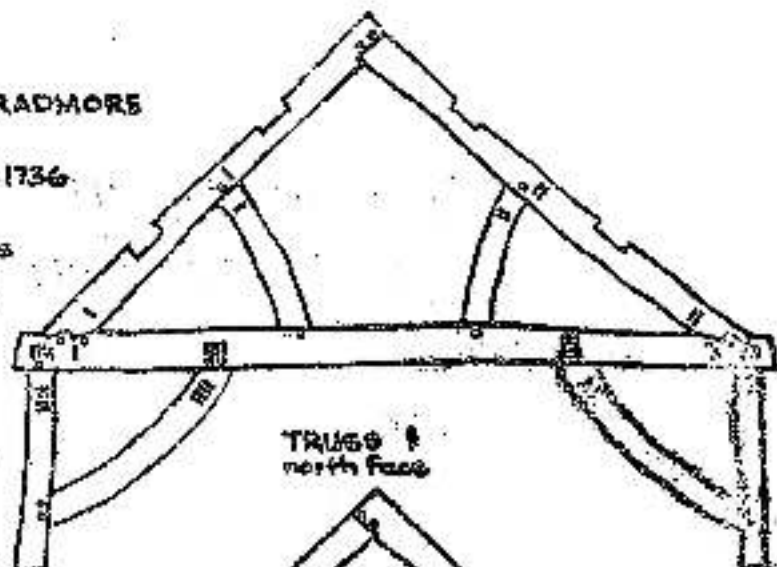
TRUSS 1. Numbering goes clockwise starting with I on left principal, & II on right one. III on right wall post & IIII on left one.

TRUSS 2. Clockwise again. III on left principal, IIII on right one, but I on right post (instead of V) as I has not been used on a post yet, similarly II for left post.

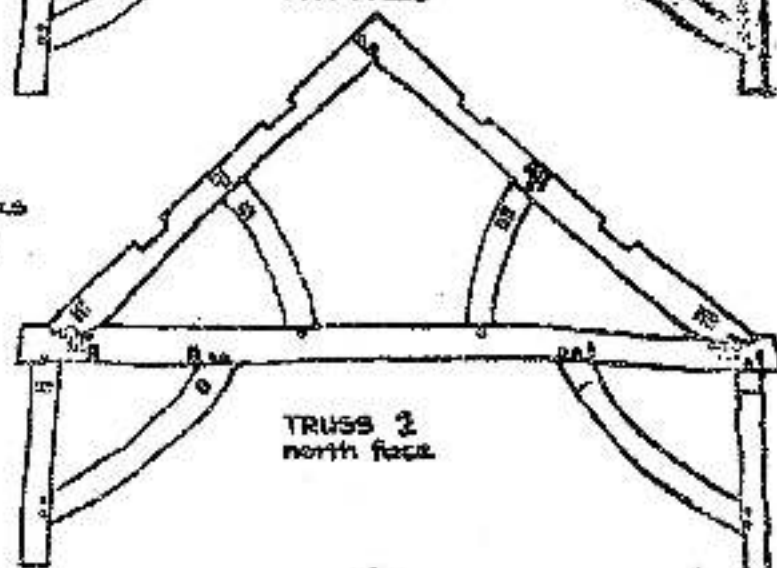
TRUSS 3. Now the numbers are carved on the south face so that they face the central breasting floor in accordance with tradition. Numbering is now anti-clockwise, & also more simple since V is used for the whole right hand side of the truss, & VI for the whole of the left hand side.

TRUSS 4. Similar to truss 3 using VII and VIII.

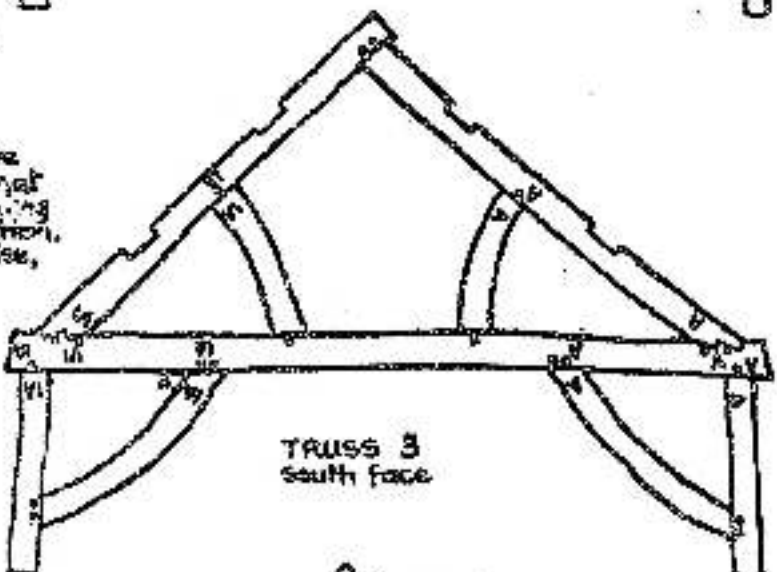
How about recording a barn near you?



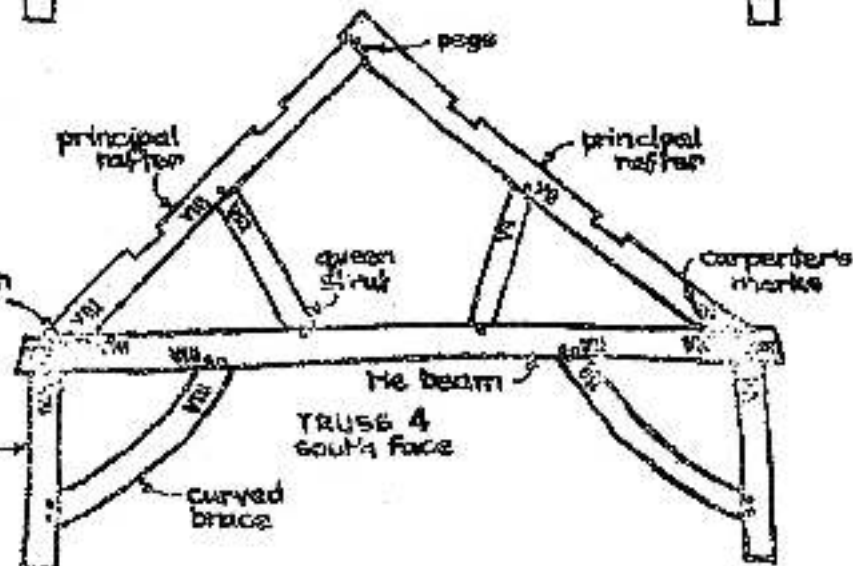
TRUSS 1
north face

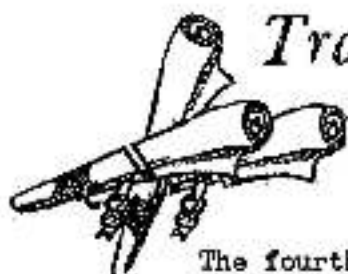


TRUSS 2
north face



TRUSS 3
south face





Tracing the History of Your House

The fourth contribution to a regular 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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E. Probate Records, 16th-20th Centuries

1. Wills and Administrations, 16th-20th Centuries

Most property changes hands by sale or inheritance, and these records cover the latter process. Wills contain details of property bequests, but letters of administration (granted where there was no will) record only the name of the beneficiary. The descriptions of property contained in wills can range from very detailed statements down to vague bequests such as 'all my property in Nottingham' or 'the house in which I now dwell'. Unfortunately exact locations are rarely given before the late 19th century, usually just the name of the parish, occasionally the street name if in a town. The wills of wealthier people frequently contain detailed legal provisions as to who shall inherit, such as entails to the eldest son, etc., but all wills should give the name of the beneficiary and his or her relationship to the testator. In some instances heirlooms such as specified furniture or pictures, etc. will be bequeathed along with the house.

Before 1858 wills were proved in a bewildering variety of church courts, which can make it difficult to trace a person's will. Most of Nottinghamshire fell within the Archdeaconry of Nottingham, whose original records cover the period from c.1500 to 1858. A substantial group of parishes around Southwell and the lower Trent valley fell within the aptly-named 'Peculiar' of Southwell, and some other parishes were within smaller 'peculiarities'. Each of these bodies had power to prove wills within its area, but the records of all of them are now in the Nottinghamshire Record Office, indexed both by name and parish. Some Nottinghamshire wills, however, are to be found at the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research at York. These are either Archdeaconry wills where the original has been lost but a contemporary copy survives at York, or else wills proved in the Prerogative Court of York, chiefly wealthier people. Wills of the very wealthy were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and are now housed at the Public Record Office, London. After 1858 all Nottinghamshire wills have been proved in the Nottingham Probate Registry. The original documents were sent to Somerset House, London, but contemporary copies are available (to 1936) at the Nottinghamshire Record Office.

2. Inventories of Goods and Chattels, 16th-18th Centuries

Inventories, detailed valuation lists of the personal property (not real estate) of deceased persons, were drawn up along with most wills and administrations before about 1750, although not all have survived. They itemise the contents of houses, workshops and farmyards, including all furniture, bedding, crockery, etc. and thus provide a valuable picture of house interiors. In larger houses rooms are frequently named, e.g. the

'house', 'parlour', or 'best chamber', etc. It may be possible to find inventories of contents of existing houses built before 1750, although it is difficult, the major problem being again one of correct identification. In well-documented cases it is possible, for example the Old House at Bleasby appears in the inventory of George Fox, a Bleasby yeoman, in 1631, and the inventory of Samuel Hallows, esq. of Nottingham (1715) relates to County House in High Pavement.

Inventories are found with the wills or administrations to which they relate, and the locations are therefore the same as described in the section above. A very good series of inventories exists for the Peculiar of Southwell from c.1520 to c.1750 but for the Archdeaconry the series only covers the period from c.1690 to c.1750.

F. Manorial Court Rolls, 13th-20th Centuries

Changes of ownership of copyhold (as opposed to freehold) property, were recorded in the past on manorial court rolls (sometimes in book form but still called 'rolls'). Copyhold tenure was more frequent in the distant past but was slowly converted into freehold, although it was not wholly abolished until 1922. It was common in some parishes, e.g. Mansfield and Bulwell, but rare in others. Properties changed hands by being 'surrendered' into the hands of the lord of the manor, and then being regranted to the new owner, who was 'admitted' to the property, each stage being recorded on the court roll. Thus instead of the conventional conveyances and mortgages etc. (see A. Title Deeds) the deeds of the title to a property were 'copies' of the surrenders and admittances on the court roll (hence the name). Wills were also often copied onto the roll. A series of court rolls is thus of considerable value in that the complete history of a particular property can theoretically be traced through from beginning to end, although this will entail considerable research.

Court rolls also record fines for encroachments on waste or common land, such as the erection of a squatter's cottage on a common, or even the erection of pillars on pavements to support the projecting upper floors of houses as occurred around Nottingham's Market Place.

Court rolls exist for only a relatively few places in Nottinghamshire, and before the 17th century, rarely in long runs. Some particularly good series in the Nottinghamshire Record Office are those for Mansfield from 1497 to 1890 (with gaps), various Southwell area manors from the 18th century to 1936, and Bulwell from 1723 to 1925. Also in the office are the rolls of the Nottingham Corporation Mickletown Jury, 1395-1859, which acted as a kind of manorial court for the borough. It did not enrol conveyances, but the records are very full for details of encroachments, etc. Other sets of court rolls for the county are to be found in Nottingham University's Manuscripts Department, the Public Record Office in London, or other local record offices. Some, such as those for Southwell's Burgage manor, are still in the hands of the Solicitor who acts as steward of the manor, whilst others may still be with the present lord of the manor. The Historical Manuscripts Commission in London maintains a Register of Manorial Documents recording whereabouts if known.

G. Estate Records, 16th-20th Centuries

1. Surveys, Valuations and Rentals, 16th-20th Centuries

These are written lists of property rented out by landowners, with descriptions or acreage of the property, the names of the tenants and the annual value or rental. They were sometimes accompanied by maps or plans (see B. 5. Estate Maps) and commonly exist for the estates of great landed

TRACING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOUSE-4
continued from page 7

families as well as other private and corporate owners. Surveys and valuations were usually drawn up for a specific 'one off' purpose at a particular date, but rentals often exist in annual runs, enabling changes of tenancy to be traced throughout. An outstanding survey in the Nottinghamshire Record Office is that of the Stapleton family estate in Bingham in 1586, which describes each building and locates it by reference to its neighbouring properties on all four sides, but this is rare, and most surveys rarely include descriptions of the houses or their locations. There are many such documents in the Portland (Welbeck) and Savile (Rufford) archives in the Nottinghamshire Record Office, or the Middleton (Wollaton) and Newcastle (Clumber) archives in the Nottingham University Manuscripts Department, for example, but others may be held in record offices or private houses outside the county. Records of the Devonshire property at Sutton-in-Ashfield are at Chatsworth House, and of Earl Cowper's estates around Selston at Melbourne Hall, both in Derbyshire. Such records also exist for property owned by corporate towns such as Nottingham, Newark and Retford, or by charitable and scholastic bodies. In Nottingham a good series of rentals exists from c.1520 to c.1900, as well as 19th century printed surveys called 'terriers'. Some of these bodies owned property outside their immediate area, for example Retford Corporation held property at Bleasby, the Magnus Charity of Newark property at Everton, and Trinity College, Cambridge property at Thurgarton, Hoveringham, Flintham and elsewhere.

2. Leases, 16th-20th Centuries

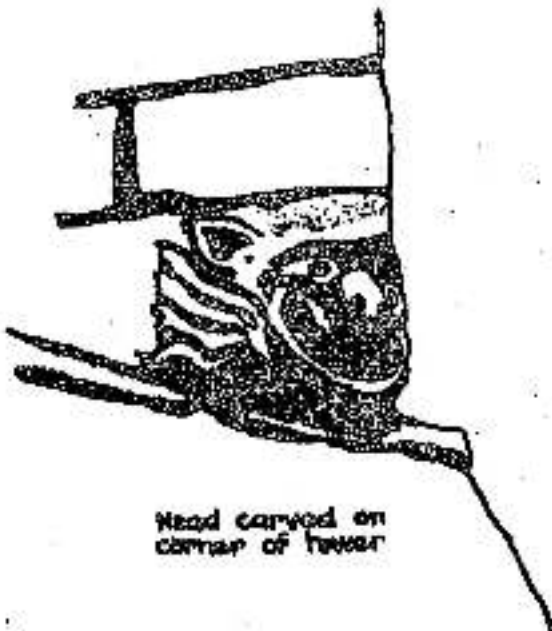
These are the formal deeds leasing property to the tenants who are listed in the surveys and rentals of large estates. The leases were usually made for a specified term of years, e.g. 21 or 99 or for the duration of the lives of certain persons. The documents usually provide brief details of the buildings and land to be let, and often include detailed covenants for repairs, etc. Occasionally they may take the form of a building lease, under which land was let at a favourable rate providing the tenant constructed specified buildings upon it. Because of their ephemeral nature leases were often destroyed after the term had expired, but copies or originals may often be found in large estate or corporate collections whose locations are mentioned in the section above.

ooOoo

In the next issue : Sale Particulars, Fire Insurance Policies, Censuses and other lists.

THE RUINED CHURCH OF ST. MARY COLSTON BASSETT

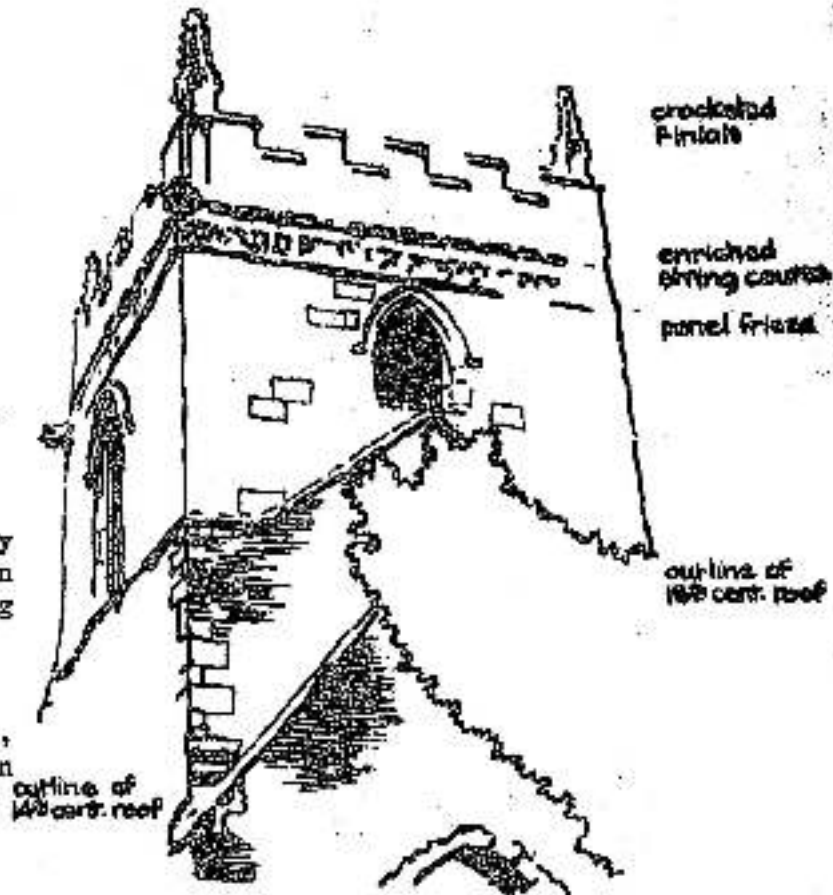
by Graham Beaumont



Head carved on
corner of tower

Growing concern in the village about the future of this building led to a meeting being called to discuss possible courses of action. Many organisations, including the Trust, attended a lively, sometimes slightly heated debate, about the future. In the end it was agreed that a steering group should be established with a view to forming a Trust in whom the future ownership of the building could be vested. Our Vice-Chairman, Mrs. Skirving, was appointed Chairman of the steering group and we look forward to reporting a hopefully successful outcome in a later issue of the newsletter.

R.M.

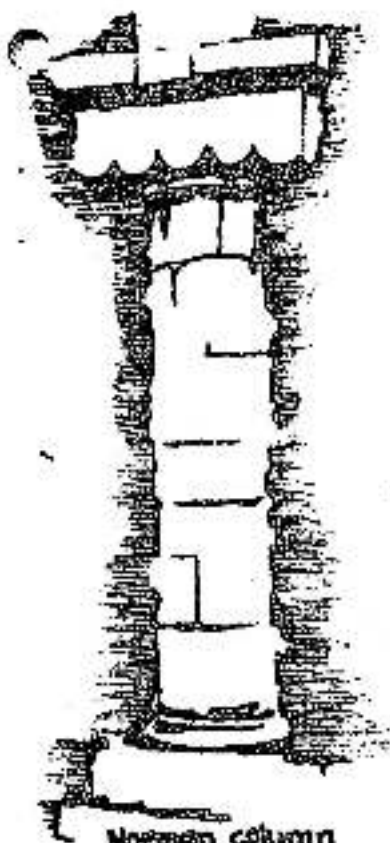


Tower of St. Mary's
church, east face

St. Mary's is a building of special architectural and historic importance, containing a whole history of mediaeval building, from Norman to Perpendicular. The walled-in north arcade has three circular Norman columns with large scalloped capitals, but with pointed arches above.

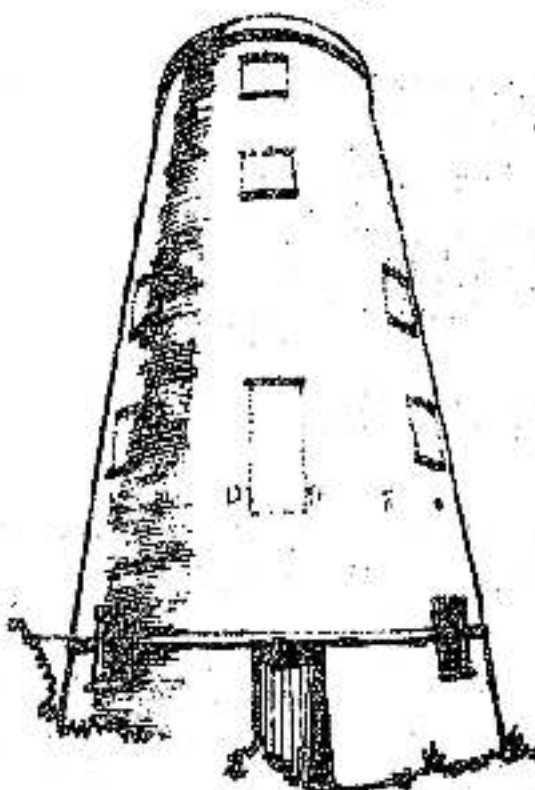
The base of the west tower is 4ft 6ins thick at window sill height and is built of local blue lias limestone. The nave roof was raised in the 15th century to accommodate a clere-storey and the outline of the new roof can be seen on the east face of the tower above the outline of the previous steeply pitched 14th century roof.

The tower is crowned by crocketed corner finials below which are three grotesque stone gargoyles; the grim one on the north side clutches two human figures in its claws. Around the tower below the gargoyles is a broad panel frieze of quatrefoils and shields, and on top of the frieze is a bold string course enriched with well carved tablet flowers and strange heads. On the corner of the tower just above the south west diagonal buttress the mediaeval carver has given us a delightful animal head with a broad smile.



Norman column
north arcade

When the Trust went on its walk around Sneinton recently, at the kind invitation of the Sneinton Environmental Society, the most interesting building to me was Green's windmill, Belvoir Hill. Only the brick tower now remains of this famous mill, but what a tower; fourth highest in the county and with walls thicker than any of the other twenty one mill towers remaining in Nottinghamshire. The giant, sixty feet high, tower at Carlton-on-Trent has walls $13\frac{1}{2}$ " thick but the ground floor walls of Green's mill are twice that thickness. Interestingly neither of the two mills appears ever to have been tarred.



Green's Mill today

Windmills

BY GRAHAM SUMMERS



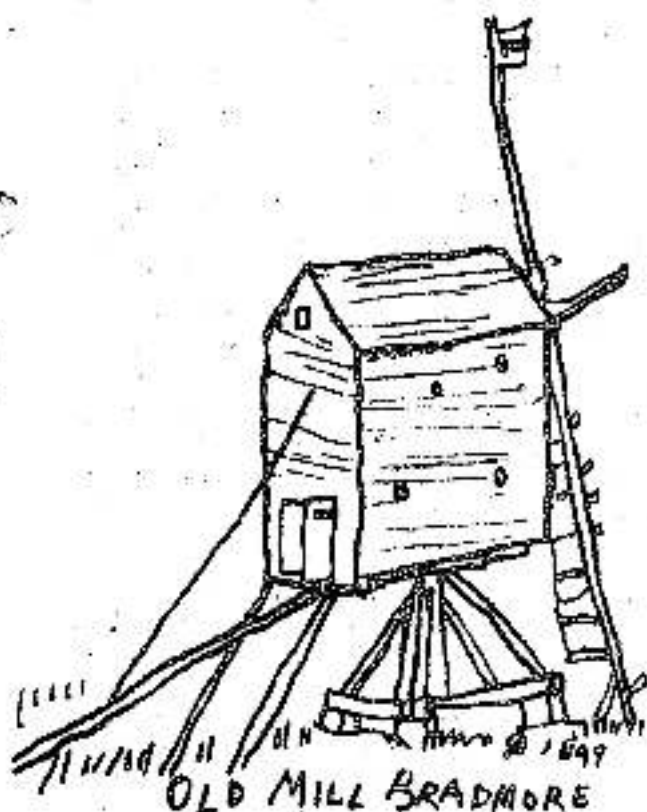
Green's Mill from a photograph of c. 1860

Green's mill was built about 1807 by the father of George Green, Nottinghamshire's most famous physicist and mathematician. The Trust first became involved with the mill several years ago when Dr. Summers gave advice on the structure to Professor Challis of the George Green Memorial Fund. Now we are at the very exciting stage of the launching of a scheme by Nottingham City Council and the other interested bodies to restore the windmill back to full working order.

"Subscription Mill" at North LeVERTon is Nottinghamshire's most famous mill, because it and Pakenham mill in Suffolk are the only two windmills in the whole of the country that still work commercially. Though I hasten to add that many windmills now work as tourist attractions. These include Wrawby post mill, near Brigg, South Humberside, and Dancsey Green post mill now restored and producing wholemeal flour at Avoncroft Museum of buildings, near Bromsgrove.



North LeVERTon windmill



Bradmore post mill from a New Year card of 1899

Post mills were the earliest type of windmill. They were introduced into this country in the 12th century by the Normans. Post mills are designed so that the whole body of the mill can revolve around a central post to keep the sails turned to the wind. Whereas in tower mills, invented a century later, the tower remains stationary and just the cap and sails are turned into the wind. No post mills survive intact in Nottinghamshire, the nearest complete examples are Dale Abbey mill in Derbyshire and Kibworth Harcourt in Leicestershire. Bradmore had a fine post mill at one time; built by Sir Thomas Parkyns about 1700 it worked until 1880 when it was badly damaged by fire. Today only a mound of earth remains to show us where the mill was.

In Defence of the Pot.

By J. A. SIVERN

When we were children, we always drew houses with chimneys. When we grew up and improved our real houses, we took them away. Now why don't we put them back and make our real houses look like proper houses again.

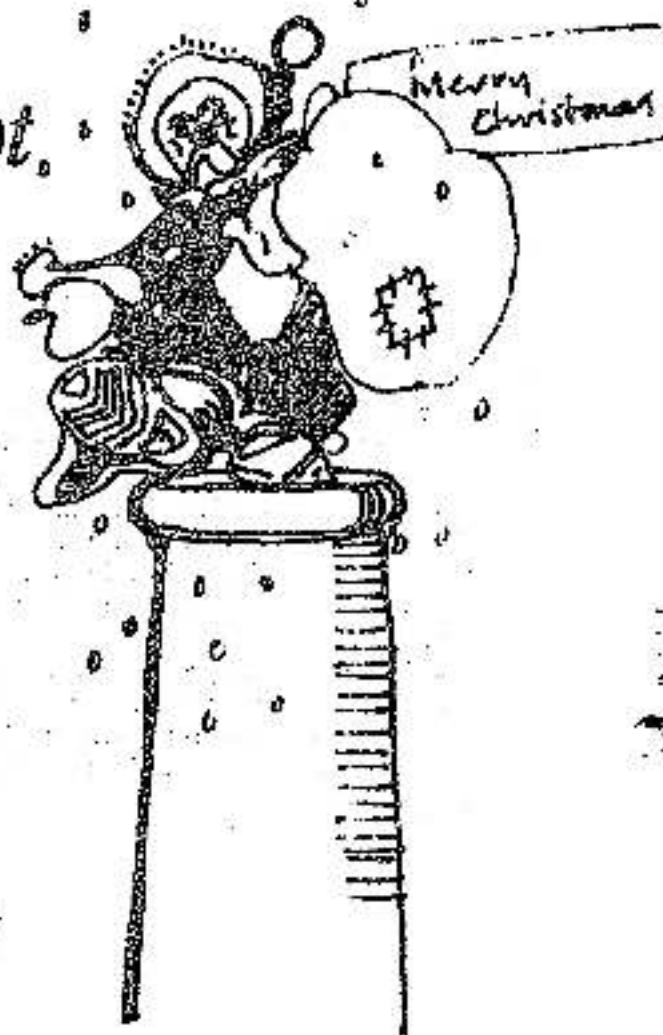
"Trendy chimneys in again." Thus read the caption heading a recent article in the Nottingham Evening Post. "Every home should have one", it went on to say and reported that the absence of a chimney severely restricts the choice of fuel, not only for now, but for the whole of the lifespan of a house. It also said that our gas and oil supplies will run out long before our coal reserves are exhausted. How right they are.

"Trendy chimneys in again" indeed, "every home should have one". Every home did have one once. In the old days, the hearth and home meant one's house. "Long may your chimney smoke" was an expression of goodwill. Nowadays we build our houses without chimneys and those older houses which had chimneys originally, are carelessly shorn of their crowning glory.

When houses were built overnight (usually on common land) to establish a right of tenure, it was required that, whatever else was lacking, a roof and a chimney with smoke coming out, should be seen in the morning. If that be seen, then let no man pull it down. Whether this was law or custom it matters not, if it happened then the house stayed.

Not only do the chimneys play a very important part in the visual appearance of a building, but also they give clues as to the original layout of the property, the way in which it has been altered and possibly the time-scale of such alterations. The location of the chimneys in relation to the roofscape indicates certain aspects of the plan form which are of great help to historians in determining the identity of our building heritage.

Practical consideration had much bearing on the design and location of the chimneys. For example, one running through the ridge was the least exposed to the weather, had the effect of creating maximum warmth internally and was no doubt structurally more stable than those at the eaves. Placed in the centre of the plan form, its heat warmed the interior rather than the outside, as on a gable wall, it allowed more flues to be grouped within one stack and this in turn improved stability and possibly lessened



the risk of damage by fire, because of its more substantial construction.

Chimney stacks were built of the local materials, although brick was the most satisfactory, more durable to heat and weather extremes and more easily worked. Very often a stone building will have brick stacks, some with the bricks exposed, some with these rendered to simulate stone.

The chimney pot is the earthenware or metal pipe on top of a chimney stack or stalk. A chimney stalk, a word not often used now in this context, is that part of a single chimney rising above the roof-line and a stack is two or more chimney stalks grouped together.

In times gone by, the visual impact and status of chimneys were realised and exploited. Often chimneys grew in size for mere show, others were carefully and beautifully decorated, even false chimneys were constructed, either for balance in design or for increased status, for to own a house with many chimneys indicated the wealth of the occupier. To install a guest in a room without a fireplace

continued on page 13

and chimney was considered to be in very bad taste. Charles II took advantage of this to raise money and imposed a chimney tax. Those who could pay, did so. Those who could not, disguised their real chimneys and removed the fake ones.

Although not every house had or needed them, chimney pots have been used from mediaeval times. Most of those seen today, however, date back to the nineteenth century. Generally speaking, plain, straight flues needed no pots, but when flues with several bends were installed and stalks were grouped together pots became necessary to increase the draught. Stacks on buildings close together and with differing roof heights were subject to down draughts and very tall pots were installed to improve the flue draughts in these cases.

It is obvious, therefore, that the skyline of many villages and towns which rely upon the roofscape of the buildings, depend also on chimney stacks and pots to balance the effect. To remove these not

only spoils the original design of the individual house, but removes from the environment a feature essential to the balancing of the whole area. The days of the smoke and smog have gone, thank goodness, but modern fuels with modern appliances, whilst causing none of the earlier pollution, still require the humble chimney to disperse their fumes.

We put out a plea, therefore, to all building owners to think twice about removing these pots and stacks. There are ways and means of retaining the stacks and remember they may need to serve us again before we have done with the building.

ooOoo

With acknowledgment to Nottinghamshire Countryside.

NOW OUR OAKS ARE IN PERIL

COULD OAKS become as decimated as our elms? Probably not. But who predicted that Dutch Elm Disease would become so lethal?

The possibility of Oak Wilt disease entering from North America looms large. Many organisations, including several Tree Council members such as the National Farmers' Union and the Timber Growers' Organisation, have called for a total ban on all imports of oak from North America. Meanwhile, regulations now in force require oak wood from North America to be debarked and fumigated.

But the stark facts of life are that neither ban nor regulation can eradicate this threat. A total ban seems categorical on paper, but how many Customs and Excise Officers are timber experts? Imported North American oak can be incorrectly labelled or re-directed from some other European country: indeed, infected oak could travel in a ship's dunnage.

In addition to their work in North America on the pathology of the disease, the Forestry Commission have surveyed oak imports and conditions at the ports of entry. We understand that they are seeking an increase in their monitoring staff at ports. All members of The Tree Council support this request. There is an urgent need for the monitoring force to be strengthened, to enable efficient and effective scrutiny to be undertaken. If Oak Wilt did somehow manage to enter the country, we would all be asking ourselves what we should have done...but did not.

The good scientific work of the Forestry Commission is to be applauded: let us hope they are given all the support they need.

With acknowledgment to The Tree Council, 35 Selgrave Square, SW1X 8QN.

VOLUNTEERS for oak beam,
brick and tile cleaning always
required - please contact
Graham Beaumont on Nottingham 866555
Ext. 389.

PUBLICATIONS

THE BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND.
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.
SIR NIKOLAUS PEVSNER: 2nd EDITION
Revised by Elizabeth Williamson

This classic work, fully reported upon by Dr. Summers in the March 1979 issue of the Trust's newsletter, is now available. It is full of detail and incisive comment, contains a useful glossary and index, and is magnificently illustrated. Penguin Books, priced £7.95.

DECORATING AND PROTECTION
OF MASONRY
Produced by Blue Circle

This is a 16-page colour booklet describing how deteriorated surfaces can be restored to 'as new' condition. The problem areas are all photographically illustrated.

Obtainable from Sandtex stockists.

THE LITTLE GREEN BOOK
Produced by VOLE for Green Alliance

Who first coined the term ecology?
Which European countries prohibit non-returnable soft-drink bottles?
How do you make a compost heap? When did the lion become extinct in Europe? Who made a plea for gas lamps? The pocket-sized LITTLE GREEN BOOK - and owner's manual to the planet - informs and entertains as it briskly discusses the environmental ills threatening the planet and your locality and suggests what can be done about them. It tells how to save derelict land and conserve

historic buildings and talks of local amenity societies as 'forces to be reckoned with'. Very good for introducing the uninitiated into the conservation world - very informative for those already in it. Recommended for sale at amenity society stands with their own propaganda.

Cover price 95p single copies available from VOLE, 20 Fitzroy Square, London, W1. Special offer to environmental bodies: £15.18 per lot of 24; £13.68 per lot for 4 or more lots of 24 - available from The Green Alliance, 5th Floor, 16 Strutton Ground, London, SW1.

