Nottinghamshire Heritage

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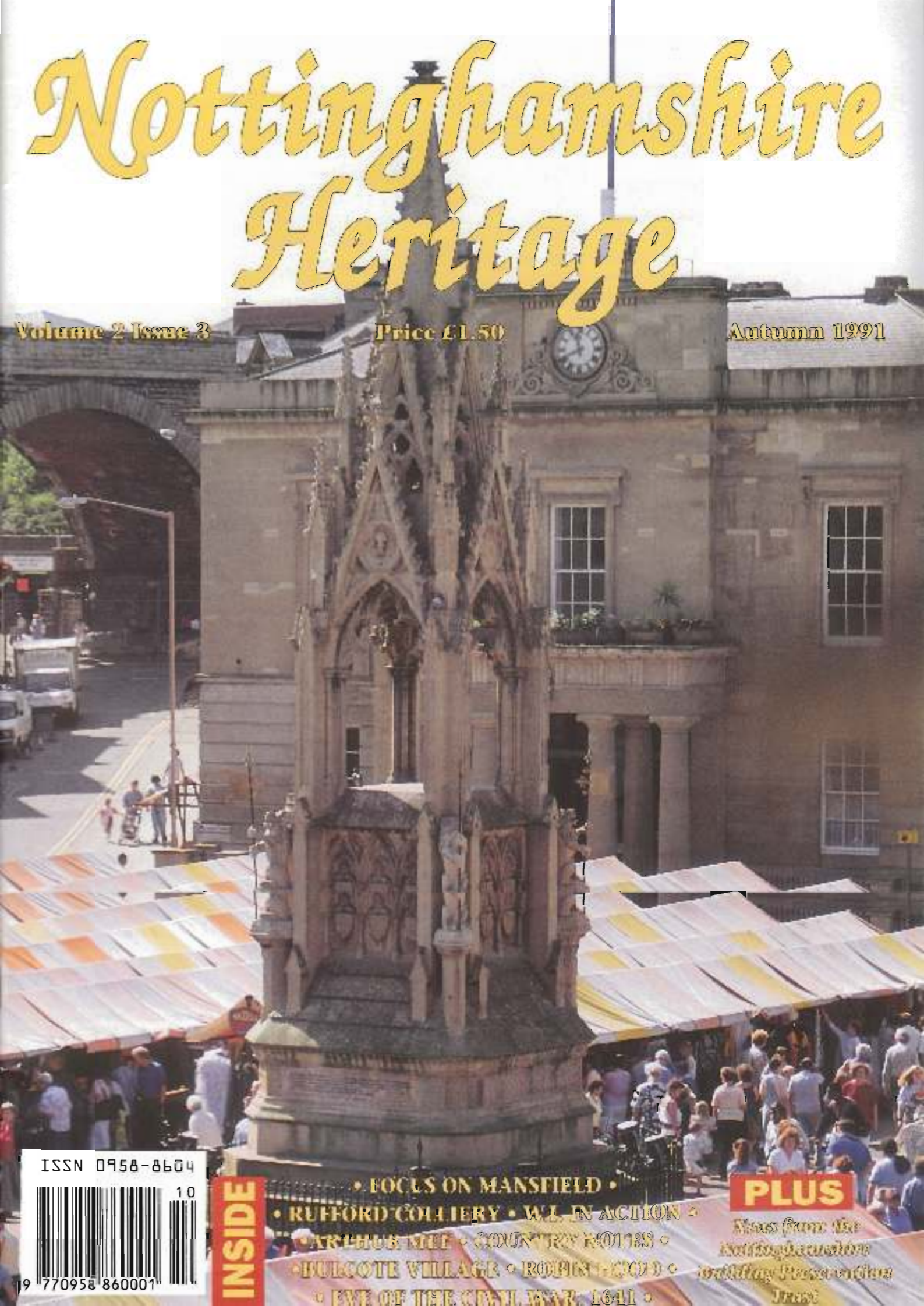

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Nottinghamshire Heritage

Autumn 1991

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Queen's Sconce Restoration

RESTORATION work began this week on Newark's best known relic of the Civil War, the Queen's Sconce. Built in 1645 as part of the final and elaborate Royalist defences of Newark, it was designed as an artillery platform with a cannon mounted on each of its projecting points.

For some time concern has been felt about the erosion of this earthwork, the finest of its type surviving in England, and a joint scheme between Newark and Sherwood District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, grant-aided by English Heritage has now initiated a sympathetic scheme of repairs. The £40,000 scheme will be carried out by Flooknall Limited and will involve the removal of some small bushes and filling-in areas of erosion and re-turfing them. Strict guide-lines have been laid down by English Heritage in consultation with the County Archaeologist, Mike Bishop, and the project will be monitored by local archaeologist Dr. John Samuels. A photographic survey of all repairs will be undertaken and this has begun with a survey by local photographer Roger Mockford using a special telescopic pole which can raise a camera 75' over the site.

The scheme prepared for the District Council's Recreation and Tourism Committee will take about four months and it is hoped to follow this with better signposting and explanatory boards about the importance of this historic monument.

Country Notes

A READER from Nether Headon, Mr L. R. Allen, has sent us his alternative view of the rural scene.

High summer on the frontline. The occasional hot sunny day has made it a pleasure to strip off and bask

High summer on the frontline. The occasional hot sunny day has made it a pleasure to strip off and bask in the garden with a cold can of lager.

The butterfly population has put in a strong appearance lately – a lot of meadow browns and small whites, a good showing of red admirals on the thistles and a few large whites. No peacocks though and only the odd tortoiseshell. But a plague of houseflies now the oil seed rape is rotting down. The stink of decaying cabbages seems to attract these annoying creatures. More than can be said for the seven-spot ladybird this year. Bumble bees of several types seem to have done well, but so have the aphids – green and black.

On the subject of flying – an average time for the Megawatt Valley plane spotters. A GR5 still in desert camouflage scorched the treetops recently. A sizable squadron of American fighters passed at a good height the other day – searching for the T. A. maybe! Only one or two AWs, and then a lot higher than usual. A handful of Provosts have been out to play while the weather has been good, together with a couple of sightings of the new Swedish propeller driven trainer now favoured by the R. A. F. Altogether pretty quiet in the sky – must be getting due for a big N. A. T. O. exercise. I suppose we should make the most of it in the meantime.

exercise. I suppose we should make the most of it in the meantime.

Not so quiet on the ground though. The harvest has begun. The tangled expanse of malodorous oil seed rape next to me has been drenched with fly killer prior to cutting. Combine harvesters, out of hibernation, whine on into the evenings, billowing out their dust clouds. The plague of rabbits will no doubt be on the move, leaving the early morning roads littered with carcasses. I wonder if there would have been so many if the 'hunters' had not turned the foxes into townies.

Talking of townies – some seasonal tips for the uninitiated. How to tell when it is summer in the country – the hedges get flailed. And autumn – plumes of grey smoke fill the sky. Yours in the fall-out – a country boy.

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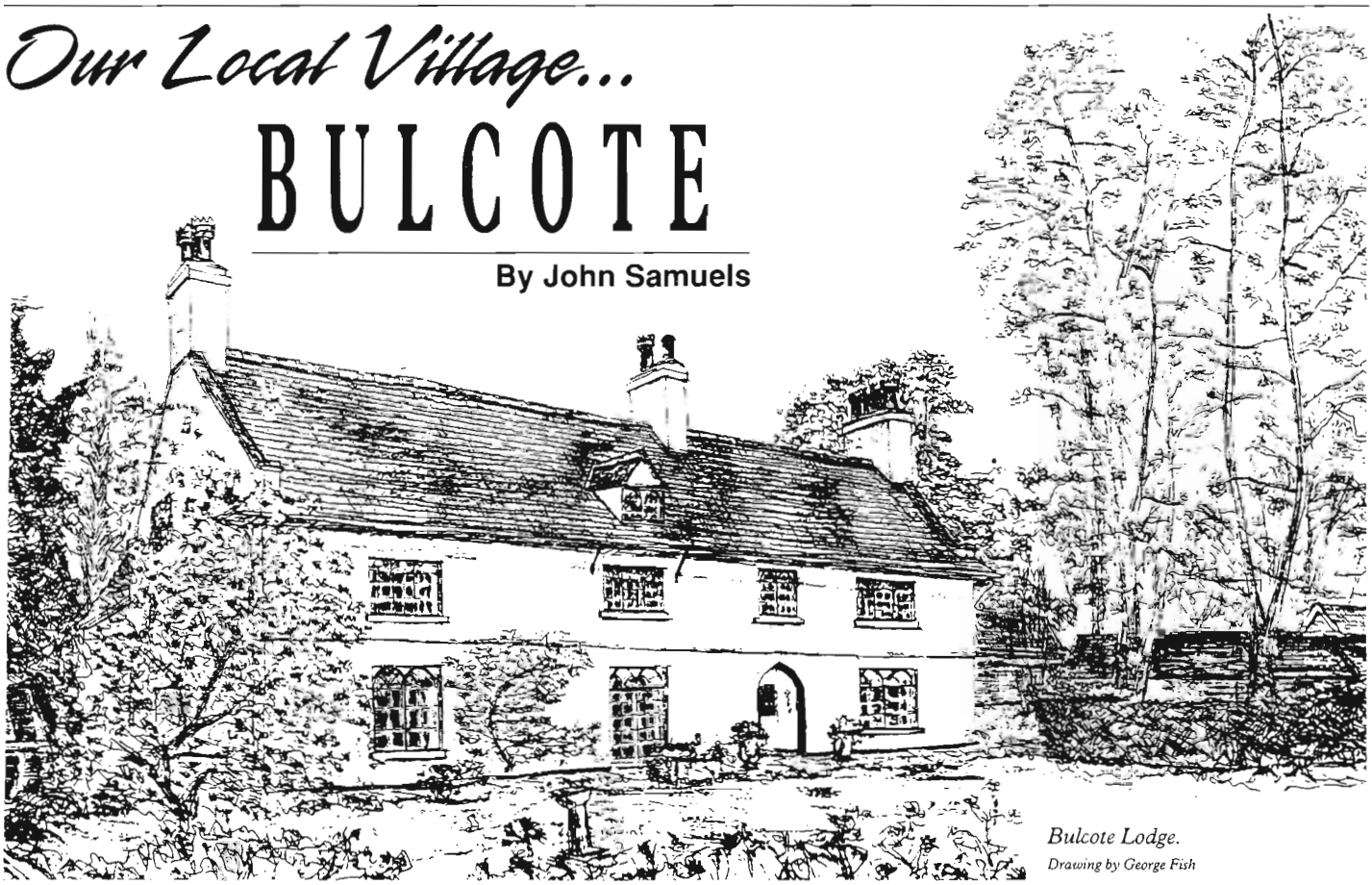
Our Local Village...

BULCOTE

By John Samuels



Bulcote Lodge.
Drawing by George Fish

HOW many people driving along the busy A612 between Burton Joyce and Lowdham realise that tucked away down a country lane and yards from the main road is the small village of Bulcot? No doubt many passers-by seeing the small neat 19th century church perched proudly on the hillside overlooking the main road assume it to be an outlier of Burton Joyce but it is Bulcote's church built after a violent thunderstorm in 1861 when "the electric fluid struck the parish church of Bulcote and the building fell to the ground".

This was viewed by Miss Popplewell from her window at Bulcote Lodge, the small house you can just see between the trees on the main road with its gothic style pointed windows. It was also the same house from which Robert Smith, of the famous Smith banking family, took his title when created Baron Carrington of Bulcote Lodge in 1796. That was an Irish peerage and the following year he was given a British peerage as Baron Carrington of Upton. His son was to drop the surname Smith entirely in 1839 and by Royal Licence assume the name of Carrington. And if names are not always what they seem, neither are houses. For lurking beneath the gothic face of Bulcote Lodge is an older building, perhaps 17th century with the classic hall and parlour arrangement typical of earlier Nottinghamshire houses.

It is worth a walk down the leafy lane into Bulcote village which is strangely rural yet so close to Nottingham. At the crossroad is Ivy House, once the old Unicorn Inn which is said to have lost its licence when someone was seen rolling out drunk on a Sunday as the congregation was leaving the church.

fell to the ground".

Licence assume the name of

There is also the Manor gation was leaving the church.

There is also the Manor House, a modest early 18th century building in red brick with a double pile roof with its characteristic M-shaped profile. This was once part of the large Lenton estate owned by the Gregory family whose most famous, and eccentric member, Gregory Gregory-Williams built the extravagant, if not exotic Harlaxton Manor in Lincolnshire.

Less well-known is Susanna Gregory who in her will dated 1780 left precise instructions for her funeral arrangements:

"Some orders that I do desire may be strictly observed at my decase and it is my earnest request to my Female Friend or Servant that is with me when I depart this life that they will take Care I am not stripd and laid out as is the Common Practicer But I do desire I may be buried in the Shift I die in and when the Breath goes out of my Body I desire to be only laid strait in my bed and the Bed Cloaths laid over me as when I was alive and in that manner to lie it is proper to put me into the Coffin which I desire may be large enough and lined with white worsted Crape quilted And as it will be necessary to put something to fill the Coffin I desire that may be put in first and a Crape Winding Sheet laid over it and then my poor Carcase laid decently therein. I would have a Crape my poor Carcase laid decently therein. I would have a Crape Shroud and Dress for the head such as is used for other People the Shroud laid on over the shift and the Head dress put on if it can be done without disturbing me but I earnestly desire that I may not be pulled and haled about and that no body may see me but those that are obliged to be about me. I desire the Winding Sheet may cover all except my Face which I desire may not be covered till the Coffin lid is fastened and that not till the Corps begins to Change. I imagine a Lead Coffin will be proper and the outside Coffin Covered with black Cloth White Nails and Handles nothing fine but decent.'

As orderly as she was in organising her own funeral, so she was in more mundane matters if she is the same Susanna Gregory who wrote

Bulcote Manor. *Drawing by George Fish*

a note about farming practice in 1752:

"Memorandum that John Wilson the elder and John Wilson the younger bought and paid Mr John Shelton 5 for his dung when he left my farm at Bulcote. Therefore I think it reasonable... that the succeeding tenant shall buy and pay for all the dung made by Wilsons upon the said farm the last year before they leave it... but if it should appear that the dung so made by not worth 5 pounds then do have it valued by two indifferent persons and do pay for it as they shall apprais it according to the quality and quantity of it."

For more detailed history of Bulcote there are several excellent publications by the Burton Joyce Local History Group but it's always interesting how much can be gleaned from parish magazines and the Bulcote Village Newsletter which has been going since 1983 is more lively than most. From parish council meetings, nature notes and one villager dressed in smock and leggings shouting. "Run for your life the Normans are coming", to cricket matches, reminiscences and even archaeological excavations, there is a lot going on. However, Susanna Gregory's concern has also raised its head, although not in quite the same way, over dogs, starting with a complaint in rhyme by I Steptinit, it has been followed by a plea for reasonableness, apparently written by a dog. But good humour has to be a feature of the village that according to the WI's Nottinghamshire Village Handbook could make 4,000 pink paper roses for a production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' to celebrate the Queen's coronation.

Bulcote Church. *Drawing by George Fish*

COMPETITION IN THE W.I.

TO the outsider it may seem strange to think of the women's institute member as a competitive animal but in truth many of our activities, which are held every year, are enjoyable, successful and competitive. The event which probably typifies the W. I. is the competition we hold in conjunction with the Notts County Show each May – this is our shop window! There will generally be over fifty entries from different institutes and our agricultural shows sub-committee will have decided the theme and the items to be entered and judged under that theme. Usually there will be a craft item, a cookery item and perhaps an artistic item – sometimes specific and sometimes free choice. These are judged by experts and will be given marks for each item along with a mark for the way they are presented within the given theme. Trophies are presented and held for twelve months. On a smaller scale a competition for a single specific item is held at the Moorgreen Show on August Bank Holiday each year.

Running along side these typical Women's Institute competitive events are many sporting activities. Our darts tournament each year attracts between sixty and seventy teams of six members. Many ladies who have never held a dart before have been encouraged to 'have a go' and what starts out as a laugh becomes very serious around the quarter-final stage. Most of our teams have been able to find a friendly landlord who is happy to accommodate them in his bar on a less busy night – if he can't sell bitter then bitter lemons will do! The teams entered are formed into small leagues which cuts down travel in the winter months. Running at the same time as the darts are table tennis and badminton which attract less entries but are just as competitive and whist is another very successful and busy tournament, in which players with the highest number of tricks accumulated over a series of whist drives through the winter, qualify for the final.

For many years an outdoor bowls day in June and an indoor bowls day in November have been enjoyed by many Notts lady bowlers and although they are only one-day events they are extremely competitive. In the pipeline is a repeat of the very successful county quiz we held last year when approximately 700 members competed in teams of four, in a general knowledge quiz. When we can organise events which involve so many of our members at one go it gives great satisfaction to the committees concerned. The prize was a bursary for a member of the winning institute, on the last occasion it was Everton W. I., to attend a course of her choice at the Women's Institute College in Oxfordshire.

On the 25th and 26th October this year we will be organising one of our most ambitious projects – again competitive – at the Minster School, Southwell. All exhibits will be on display to the public showing off the expertise in cookery, arts and crafts with which the Women's Institute organisation is synonymous. The whole event will be entitled 'Four Seasons' and every institute entering will choose which of the four seasons they wish to depict. They will however, have to submit a Madiera cake, a jam or preserve, a piece of hand or machine embroidery and a patchwork item along with three of the following:-

a. Soft toy.
b. An item of illustrated calligraphy.
c. A painting (framed).
d. A drawing (framed).
e. A lace item.
f. A piece of jewellery.
g. Pottery item.
h. A child's dress (for under five).
i. Piece of canvas work.

Seven items will constitute an entry and accessories will be acceptable to create the chosen season. There will also be a separate competition for a 'Christmas table decoration' which will be rate competition for a 'Christmas table decoration' which will be open to all W. I. members in Nottinghamshire. It all promises to be a delightful and colourful display involving many 'women-hours' and well worth viewing. It would be very wrong of us to expect all our members to enter everything that is organised, indeed, a large number of our members are content to go along to their monthly meeting and listen and watch and hopefully learn but as you will see competition is alive and well and thriving in the Notts Federation of Women's Institutes and if I have convinced anyone that they are missing out by not being a member, then further information can be obtained by ringing Newark 73550.

Jenny Holmes.

MANSFIELD

THE OLD AND NEW CHARMS OF MANSFIELD

LOOKING to secure the elegance of the past is a vital part of Mansfield District Council's policy to improve the future of its town centre; and two schemes, Facelift Grant and the Town Scheme Grant, are currently being successfully operated to help achieve just that. Combined with environmental improvement and repaving schemes, they are restoring the vitality and appearance of the town.

The Facelift Grant offers money to commercial property owners to clean and restore the street elevations of their buildings and the Town Scheme Grant helps owners to carry out repairs to historic details. In addition to the market place, much of the town centre has been repaved as part of an environmental improvement scheme complemented by Victorian street furniture and tree planting. And, the town's focal points, the Bentinck Memorial and

▲ *Looking through the arches of the railway viaduct towards the church.*

◀ *Four Seasons Centre*

◀ *Water Meadows Swimming and Fitness Centre*

MANSFIELD

THE OLD AND NEW CHARMS OF MANSFIELD

▲ *The new Civic Centre*

▲ *Mansfield Arts Centre*

▲ *The Rock Houses by A. S. Buxton*

Town Hall have been restored to their original splendour with external renovation schemes.

Mansfield's many fine buildings reflect its long history as West Nottinghamshire's main market town. It was granted a Market Charter by Henry III in 1227 and Richard II awarded the town a Fairs Charter in 1337.

As well as restoring its links with the past, a new Mansfield is emerging. Fuelled by an economic turnaround forced by a declining mining industry, new enterprises, including the 50 acres Oakham Business Park, are seen to be its future.

The District Council, based at the prestigious new Civic Centre on Chesterfield Road South, has been rewarded for its go-ahead policy which has encouraged new development and initiatives. Chief Executive, Richard Goad explained: "In just three years the face of Mansfield has undergone a total transformation. And what can be seen now are only the first signs of a continuing successful partnership between the local authority and developers which is set to radically improve not only employment prospects but also revitalise leisure and retail provision."

The new state of the art Water Meadows complex has replaced the old baths and new developments ranging from industrial provision to new housing and leisure facilities abound. Drive in from Sutton in Ashfield and you pass the new £3 million Super Bowl, ten-pin bowling complex; approach from Nottingham and you are greeted by the new Safeway store which joins new B and Q, Halford and MFI developments.

From the Southwell direction, the new 10 acre Oak Tree Business Park is under construction. And Mansfield has just won a major overseas investment coup, a new factory development by one of Japan's leading textile manufacturers, Toray, which could bring as many as 400 new jobs.

Richard Goad added: "All this is happening at a recognised time of deep economic depression. We certainly aim to be one of the first off the blocks to take full advantage of the upturn when it comes".

MANSFIELD

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

SUNDAY July 14th 1991 marked Mansfield's Charter Centenary and the celebrations have provided something for everyone. Many of the events have taken on a charity theme with great prizes and lots of fun into the bargain.

"This is very much a celebration for the community by the Mansfield people and we hope that everyone will join in the spirit. We will be raising money both for my own centenary charity Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Welcome Appeal," said chairman, Coun. Albert Haynes.

On centenary day in July, celebrations kicked off for the young at heart with a Lindisfarne Concert. Town centre shops got into the swing with a competition for best centenary dressed window organised by the Chamber of Trade. Other events have included a competition by the Mansfield Society of Arts and on the eve of Mansfield Show, on Saturday 25th August, there was a charity Centenary Millionaires Night in the marquee at the Berry Hill Showground.

There's also a charity grand prize draw and Greater Nottingham Co-Op Travel have donated a £300 holiday voucher as the first prize and a free family pass to Mansfield's Swimming and Fitness complex the Water Meadows is the second prize.

Water colour greetings cards of Meadows is the second prize.

Water colour greetings cards of bygone Mansfield by the well known local artist, A. S. Buxton will also be on sale with a contribution from each purchase to the Chairman's Centenary Charity, Guide Dogs for the Blind. Special Edition Centenary mugs bearing the old Borough Coat of Arms and Bentinck Memorial are on sale at Cornucopia in the town centre. A green and lasting contribution to the centenary will take place later on in the year with the planting of 100 trees in a special civic ceremony; and, the Old Mansfield Society will shortly launch a book, 'Mansfield, the Last Century'.

The Centenary Story

On 14th July 1891, Mansfield Borough was born, when amid much pomp and circumstance and boundless civic pride, the Charter of Incorporation arrived from London establishing the Borough Council and Mayor, the forerunner of local government as we know it today.

Before the 1830s Mansfield was governed by the vestry committee of St Peters Church, representing about 5,000 inhabitants. But, as it grew, better arrangements were necessary for the expanding town and a number of Commissioners for the improvement of Mansfield were appointed. The town hall was built in 1836 and the market place cleared, and in the 1870s an electoral process was introduced.

But, the commissioner system proved unwieldy and unsatisfactory and in 1891 the structure of the town's government was completely overhauled and the modern system of local government introduced.

The Charter of Incorporation obtained from Parliament established a fully elected corporation which was the forerunner of today's system of Local Government. Mansfield has now been incorporated in the District of Mansfield and the Mayor has been superceded by the District's Chairman.

Looking down Toothill Lane, Mansfield by A. S. Buxton. One of several cards produced to celebrate Mansfield's Centenary.

MANSFIELD PAVES THE WAY TO 2010

by Dr Brian Harvey

by Dr Brian Harvey

In 1984, I wrote a book with the sub-title 'Private Solutions to Public Problems?'. It was a study of the way in which private companies participated in the affairs of their local communities. In the USA, the term 'corporate responsibility' had been coined to describe the wide range of possible issues involved – job creation, environmental impact, product safety and so on.

Since the early 1980s, governments in Britain have stressed the positive social role which business can play. Nationally, an organisation, Business in the Community has been formed to involve business more widely in the community, and at local level Enterprise Agencies have made a positive contribution to stimulating employment.

Having spoken at business management conferences around the world on corporate responsibility, I was especially proud to learn of "Mansfield 2010 – A Partnership for the Future".

In an interview with the Mansfield Chronicle Advertiser, Richard Goad, Chief Executive of the District Council described the initiative: "It was decided at the outset that the partnership's ideals should encompass far more than economic regeneration, but also social and quality of life issues. Operating within the status of a registered Enterprise Agency, control will be through a supervisory board with voting weighted 60 to 40 in favour of the private sector".

The reported aims of the 2010 partnership are to create 10,000 new jobs over the next 10 years; attract new people to Mansfield from all walks of life from manual to professional and commercial; exploit the potential for leisure and tourism; boost the economy to provide increased revenue to the council for use in social and welfare schemes; build good communications links by road, rail, sea and air; create a new technology business base; encourage new hotels, leisure parks and sporting and cultural venues.

A similar approach has been bringing results for Mansfield's twin city in Ohio, and we can look forward to future progress reports on the success of Mansfield 2010.

MANSFIELD

TOWARDS A TOURIST STRATEGY

NOT too many years ago, it would have been unheard of for a town like Mansfield to be considering its tourist potential and a tourist strategy.

by Geoff Waller,
Head of Leisure Services, Mansfield District Council

Indeed, it is only recently that the potential of inland towns, with some notable exceptions, has received the recognition and support of the Tourist Trade. Afterall, who would have thought of Bradford, Wigan and Glasgow as tourist towns? But, Britain has an in-built attraction – its history and heritage.

Some towns have capitalised on this and most local authorities are eager to explore all means of tourist potential, especially with the decline of traditional industries; Mansfield is no exception. Yet, despite being very close to the centre of Sherwood Forest, indeed a plaque on West Gate in the town centre marks the spot of what is reputed to be the central oak tree, it has not exploited the vast potential that the legend of Robin Hood and Sherwood Forest have to offer.

Like many towns, Mansfield has made, and continues to make, every effort to promote itself. Although tourism has not been specifically in mind, the need to create a more favourable image and to depict a dynamic go ahead community has coloured the thinking and background to much development, and the promotion of the District. To date the major thrust has been trying to 'get the product right'.

A number of initiatives towards making the town more attractive to visitors and residents alike have been made in the past year or two. Major developmens, including the building of the Water Meadows Swimming and Fitness Complex, which is on target to attract three-quarters of a million users in its first year, and the pedestrianisation of the shopping centre and market place have greatly improved the image of the town. Similarly, the recent success in the East Midlands England in Bloom Competition, which Mansfield has won for a third year, have not only increased civic pride but transformed many corners of the district into floral areas.
not only increased civic pride but transformed many corners of the district into floral areas.

Mansfield is traditionally a shopping and cultural centre for the many small villages in the mid-Nottinghamshire region. The museum in Leeming Street attracted over 34,000 visitors last year alone and the market is one of the largest open markets in the country. A new 'Ten Pin Bowling Complex' has been opened in the last year and developers are moving into the town in a big way with new retail outlets.

There are, on the other hand, many things yet to be done. Hotel accommodation is barely adequate and is a basic requirement if the town is to promote new initiatives and attractions. Many of the towns natural resources (Robin Hood!) are under utilised and uder exploited. The town's heritage will doubtlessly be of great interest to future generations; Pleasley Mills, the coal mines, the textile factories are all significant monuments to the past.

The potential contribution of tourism to the local economy is not inconsiderable; there is ample evidence of the benefits tourism can bring, not just through the cash tills of local shops, eating places or creating markets for small businesses, but also in promoting the town and creating a favourable image. Mansfield cannot compete with established coastal or historic holiday destinations but the tourist sector is very broad and the scope for the town lies in selected areas of the market.

A tourist strategy is a package of actions and policies designed to seek out and secure various opportunities and advantages within that market. The economic benefits lie in the increased trade, increased markets and new jobs. These benefits are reaped for the local economy by private companies and individuals. A tourist strategy must therefore be seen as a collective venture with all sections of the community involved.

The Council along with Ashfield, Newark and Bassetlaw Councils recently commissioned the Consultant, John Brown, to examine the Tourist Potential of North Nottinghamshire. A report completed in 1990 made various recommendations to Mansfield relevant to its future policy and along with the Council's own Tourism Working Party proposals, a draft strategy with a framework of basic policies and practical steps aimed at developing the appropriate sectors of the tourist market has been drawn up. The sectors with the most potential and which form the basic framework for action are:

- Creating the conditions – by increasing awareness, promoting and encouraging suitable
- Creating the conditions – by increasing awareness, promoting and encouraging suitable initiatives, consulting and liaising with local and regional organisations.
- Accommodation – a prerequisite to the development of tourism and a source of employment and economic benefit.
- Development of visitor facilities – to ensure that the town is 'visitor conscious'. Everything from the provision of a Tourist Information Centre to clean toilets and a tidy well maintained environment.
- Development of visitor attrations – the promotion of cultural and sporting events, the Mansfield Show and shopping facilities etc. Mansfield is also the central point to some of the areas' most visited and attractive tourist facilities including Newstead Abbey, Hardwick Hall and the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre.
- Development of Business and Leisure Tourism – Promotion of industrial exhibitions and small scale conferences, increasing the share of the leisure tourism market for the day visitor and for short break activity and theme related stays.

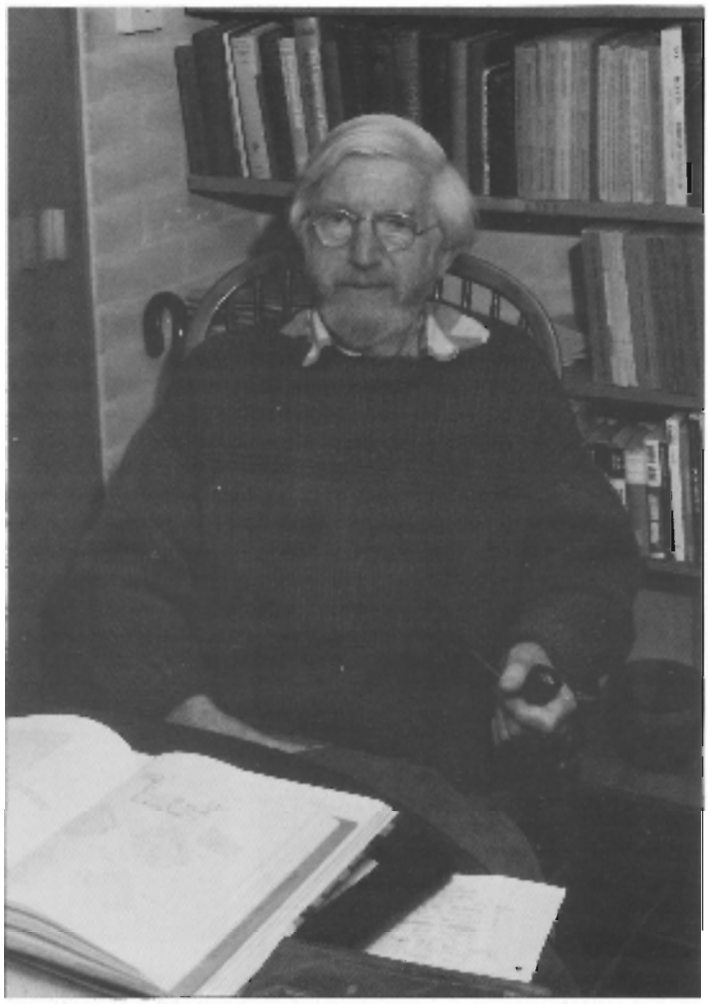
The Council has drawn up its draft strategy covering these main priority areas with objectives for the short-term, medium-term and longer-term. Additionally, it has set up a Tourist Action Group made up from local businesses in the tourist industry to act as an advisory body to its draft strategy. The group, only recently formed, has an important part to play in promoting and developing tourism as well as guiding the Council's own policy for the future and already major initiatives are getting off the ground including getting off the ground including the production of a mini-guide to promote Mansfield to a national audience.

Photo: Glynn Jones

Mansfield Market Place

MAURICE WILLMORE BARLEY

by John Samuels



Professor Maurice Barley who died on Sunday 23 June at the age of eighty-one had been known to many adult education students, University undergraduates and members of various local history and archaeology groups throughout the East Midlands, as well as nationally, for his stimulating approach to local history, archaeology and the study of traditional buildings.

Moving to North Muskham, near Newark in 1946 to take up a lectureship in the extra-mural department of University College, Nottingham after serving in the Ministry of Information during the war, he quickly established a reputation for involving students attending evening classes in all aspects of local history and archaeology. Students learnt that they could read original documents, organise archaeological fieldwork and publish the results. Today you will still come across people in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire towns and villages who had their eyes opened to the fascination of the past by Maurice Barley.

Locally he was the driving force behind the regional group of the Council for British Archaeology and through the University organised major excavations on the Roman fort and town at Great Casterton, Rutland, the medieval borough at Torksey as well as smaller scale excavations in Nottingham and Newark.

smaller scale excavations in Nottingham and Newark.

Out of all this came not only a whole army of enthusiasts for local history and archaeology but a host of books and articles on subjects as diverse as Nottinghamshire Slate headstones, Plough plays and numerous medieval buildings. Indeed, it is for his work on traditional buildings that he is perhaps best known with the publication in 1961 "The English Farmhouse and Cottage" followed by several others but more notably, at a time when most retired people would have been taking life more slowly, by "Houses and History" in 1986.

His enthusiasm was not limited to only an academic approach but was also practical through various organisations such as the Nottingham Civic Society and the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust, giving advice and encouraging good conservation. An example of this recently was his campaign to persuade the local authority to instigate a positive planning policy at Laxton, England's last open-field village.

Maurice Barley also achieved a national reputation as secretary and President of the Council for British Archaeology, a Commissioner of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments and Chairman of numerous trusts and committees including most notably the York Archaeological Trust from its conception in 1971 to 1990 when he retired. In his honour they have named their new interpretation centre, Barley Hall and his work on historical buildings was marked with honorary membership of the RIBA.

But more than anything, all who knew him will remember his untiring energy, determination and also kindness to all who shared his enthusiasm. Last year, clambering over a fence at Cuckney when we were taking photographs for a collection of his articles to be published shortly, he commented that he wasn't doing too badly for an 80 year old. Few people could match his energy and even a few days before his death he was still correcting the proofs of articles and looking forward to the publication of his autobiography. He has been a great inspiration to many and much loved by his family and many friends to whom his publications, organisations and friendship will be a lasting memorial.

Maurice Willmore Barley, b. 19.8.1909, d. 23.6.1991.

To commemorate Maurice's life and work there will be a celebration on Saturday 19 October 1991 at 2.00pm in the Great Hall at Nottingham University.

All welcome

ing energy, determination and also a great inspiration to many and ***All welcome***

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST

Locko Park

DERBY

IN July, a party from the Building Trust visited Locko Park on the outskirts of Derby, the home of Capt. Drury-Lowe. Although it is now close to the city of Derby, the House itself is isolated. This situation arose because there was originally a leper house on the site which demanded isolation and, when a Manor House was built, there was no dependent village nearby.

The main facade of the House was designed and built by Francis Smith of Warwick in 1730 and the elevation is balanced by two matching wings, one the Chapel completed in 1673 and the other the later Dining Room.

Internally, the House retains a human scale and the Boudoir and Upper Hall are still very much 1730 interiors.

An outstanding feature of the House is the Picture Gallery, a top-lit room built in 1860 at the same time as the Dining Room. The Gallery contains a varied collection of paintings of exceptional quality, established by William Drury-Lowe who owned the House from 1849 until his death in 1877. William spent many years in Italy and acquired many Italian paintings, including Van Lints and Gasper Poussins.

The character of Locko Park was changed at this time, when Henry Stevens of Derby was called in to give the House the then fashionable Italianate look. He built the dominant tower feature in 1856, in addition to the Gallery, the Dining Room and other internal decorations.

Like many country houses, Locko can be said to reflect the character of its owners and the historical context of their lives.

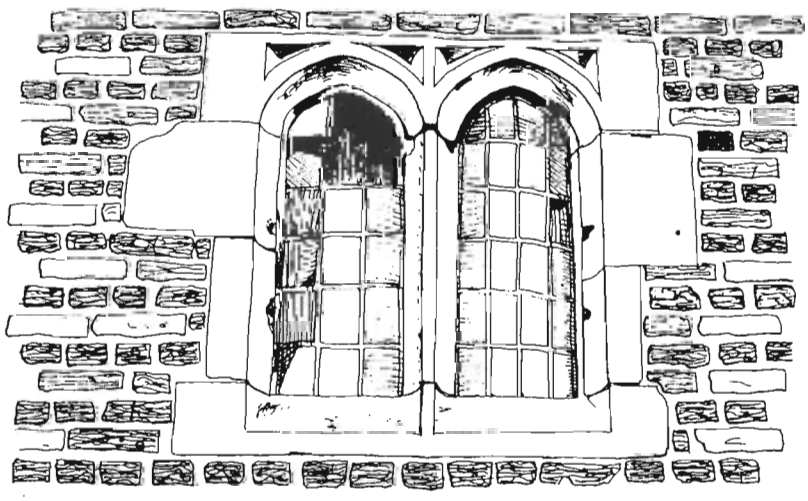
Top and Above: Locko Park

▲ *Picture Gallery*

The Manor House, Scrooby

by Graham Beaumont

by Graham Beaumont



Tudor window of Scrooby Manor House, & Tudor brickwork laid in English bond (alternate courses of headers & stretchers).

PEVSNER'S "Nottinghamshire" makes no mention of the former Archbishop of York's palace at Scrooby; a notable omission. The Shell Guide to Notts does little better with only the briefest reference to "the former archiepiscopal manor house". Arthur Mee's guide (1938) is top scorer with just six lines about the site of the palace and visits by Margaret Tudor, Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Sandys.

of the palace and visits by Margaret Tudor, Henry VIII, Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Sandys.

The DOE listed building description revised in 1984 describes the remaining building on the site as "pair of cottages, formerly farmhouse, formerly part of the moated palace which was one of the principal seats of successive Archbishops of York. C16 and C17 alterations, C18 additions and C20 alterations". It goes on to describe two C16 windows and some moulded beams in ground floor rooms and then gives a little more history. "A building existed C1300, in 1538 Leland described it as being built of timber except for the front of the hall which was of brick. On July 4th 1558 Nicholas Heath, Archbishop of York, gave instructions for the following parts to be demolished: gatehouse, building adjoining the hall, gallery from hall to chapel, pantry and kitchen".

The building now has structural and other problems and we do not yet really know whether it was a lodgings wing or had some other function. Charlie and Graham from the County Council have done some measuring and photography and on 1st August the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments visited to do further recording and we hope interpretation.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST

QUEEN'S CHAMBERS REFURBISHMENT

FACING Nottingham's Old Market Square is one of Watson Fothergill's masterpieces, the Queen's Chambers. Built in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's jubilee and hence its name, it displays the contemporary flamboyant love of the past with fine craftsmanship and modern material. Bonded brick and stonework, a frieze of armorial bearings, oriel style windows with decorative tracery and an elaborate projecting tower supported by a column on the corner with wild beasts leering out from beneath its roof and a timber-framed top storey, ensure that the building is anything but dull.

Interestingly the timber-framing reflects the earlier building which stood on the site and this may have been the source for the internal panelling on the first floor. All of this is to be preserved in a major and sympathetic refurbishment of the interior by William Fish to provide suitable office accommodation for today's standards. Not surprisingly the building has a Grade II listing and although in a good structural condition, it is in a poor state internally but its refurbishment should ensure its well-being for the future.

FRAMING OPTION

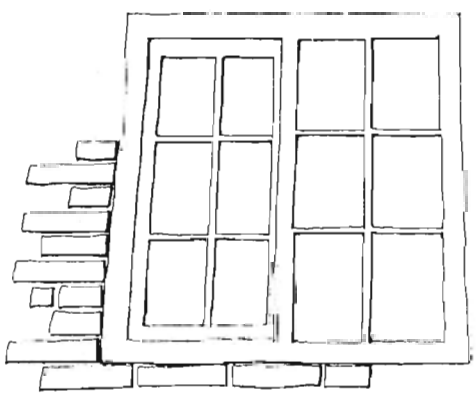
By Graham Beaumont

A NATIONAL campaign to protect our heritage of traditional windows and doors was launched by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, chairman of English Heritage on the 16th April 1991 in London. The concern is that the character of our historic towns and villages is being damaged by misguided home improvements and the campaign aims to increase awareness of the qualities of traditional joinery.

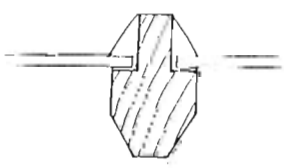
Windows are the eyes of a building and we should not disfigure the faces of our homes with ill-proportioned, poorly detailed components made in the wrong materials. Traditional doors and windows give British settlements much of their unique sense of

Traditional doors and windows give British settlements much of their unique sense of place.

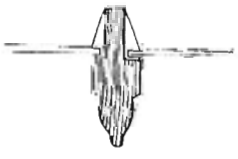
Steven Parissien has produced a wonderful guide to the history and repair of windows available from the Georgian Group, 37 Spital Square, London E1 6DY and Michael Thornton (alias Michael Hurst of Newark) has written 3 detailed articles on how to repair sash windows in "Traditional Homes" May, June, July 1991.



A Yorkshire sliding sash repaired instead of replaced, at St. Leonard's Almshouses, Newark.



a typical modern replacement; clumsy, 1991



a glazing bar from a cottage at Colston Bassett; slender, early 19th century.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HISTORIC CHURCHES TRUST

THE DEAD BENEATH OUR FEET

By Julian Litten

This article is an abridged version of the annual lecture of the Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust at Holme Pierrepont Hall on a more unusual aspect of church archaeology.

MAKE no bones about it: whether you like it or not, we all die. Death is, without doubt, the zenith experience - that's why it's saved up until last. The memory of one may live after them, yet human beings are biodegradable and the process of decay begins as soon as death has taken place. In short, we go off; therefore the corpse is disposed of fairly quickly, although in a decent and reverent manner. We have over the last five hundred years developed an elaborate funerary ritual and, as most 'events' common to all stratas of society, each social level has established its own intimate nuances - and not even Death, the Great Leveller, has been able to extinguish such arrogance or subdue that particularly English habit whereby the lesser classes unwittingly perpetuate social distinction through openly displaying a pathetic emulation of the panoply exhibited by those encapsulated within the title of 'one's betters'. Nowhere is this sycophancy more evident than in the funeral, as proven by recent research.

We are all aware of the basic style of up-market post-medieval obsequies for illustrations abound of processions, lyings-in-state and catafalques. But what of the coffins themselves and, indeed, the treatment meted out to the corpses? For this we have to descend to the vaults and, indeed, the treatment meted out to the corpses? For this we have to descend to the vaults beneath the tombs: dark and dismal chambers, unpeopled but for the dead, containing artefacts alien to this world. Here, in these, the Last Untapped Source of research, can be found ample food for the archaeologist, the paleoanthropologist and the social historian.

"Beneath are deposited ...", "Here lies interr'd ..." and "In a Vault near this place ..." are but three of the more familiar preambles to sepulchral inscriptions found on numerous mural monuments in town and country churches. Yet how many have pondered further on these seemingly unimportant geographical directives and imagined the form such intermural burials take?

The three ecclesiastical "Rs" - Re-ordering, Restoration and Redundancy - have opened new avenues for the church archaeologist and historian. The comparatively recent introduction of archaeology within churches in use, together with the increase in the appointment of diocesan archaeologist (often coupled with an ex-officio seat on the Diocesan Advisory Committee) is something to be both welcomed and encouraged. Our knowledge of burial practices and undertaking techniques has been further due to practical vault examinations as a direct result of required liturgical rearrangements, restoration programmes and redundancy schemes - though the latter usually involves bulk clearances prior to the building being handed over to an alternative use.

The private burial vault gained in popularity during the third and fourth quarters of the 16th century and remained the recognised mode of intramural burial until about 1680/1690 when the brick-lined shaft became more acceptable. Although intramural burial practically ceased nationwide in 1852 as a result of the Burial Board Act, the practice continues where space permits in those vaults constructed prior to the passing of the Act.

The earlier vaults tended to be constructed of stone blocks, occasionally internally rendered and whitewashed, with purpose-built entrance steps and stone-flagged floors whereas the later examples, (those from 1580 onwards) are usually of brick, again internally whitewashed, and with brick or unglazed tile floors - rarely does one come across beaten earth. The provision of shelves or loculi were not standard and were only available as 'optional extras' - mortuary tables shelves or loculi were not standard and were only available as 'optional extras' - mortuary tables are rarer. Entrance is usually gained via the west elevation and from either inside or outside the church, depending on the position of the vault. Custom dictates that coffins are positioned with the feet facing east - entering a vault from the west end allows a body to be so positioned without having to turn the coffin. Most vaults have clearly defined entrances such as the classic stone slab with lifting rings in front of the chancel screen at Lydiard Tregoze, Wiltshire or this more obvious marker at South Creake, Norfolk which seems to be actively encouraging body-snatching. With brick-lined shafts, one just rolls away the leger stone.

It would be misleading to infer that vaults of particular periods are structurally the same; required size, availability of building materials and site restrictions all have to be considered and rarely will one meet two examples the same.

Our knowledge of coffin types and coffin furniture has been greatly increased in the past decade due to the involvement of archaeologists and social historians in the systematic clearances of the vaults beneath St. Marylebone Parish Church and Christ Church, Spitalfields as well as through opportunities for vault examinations elsewhere in the country, the direct result of reordering and restoration schemes. To date, no distinct regional trends have emerged in regard to undertaking techniques and gable-lidded coffins, for example, are no more restricted to any one area of the country than anthropomorphic ones might be. The earlier vaults will not necessarily contain extant coffins contemporary to its construction for the majority of 16th and 17th century vaults were provided with their own charnel pits or cisterns into which were periodically deposited the more decayed shells to make room for others at a later date.

Vaults are excellent places for examining post-medieval bricklaying techniques, mortars and bondings. From the coffins we can learn much of woodworking skills, plumbing techniques, the imported cloth trade and base metalwork designs.

In 1747 R. Campbell said of the trade: "I do not know, that they take Apprentices in their Capacity as Undertakers, for they are generally Carpenters, or Herald-Painters besides; and they only employ, as Journeymen, a set of Men whom they have picked up, possessed of sober Countenance, and a solemn melancholy Face, they have picked up, possessed of sober Countenance, and a solemn melancholy Face, whom they pay at so much a Jobb." That may be so, yet much manufactured by them survived and funerary archaeology is in the ascendancy.

An Afternoon at Staunton

The Nottinghamshire Historic Churches Trust has organised another of its popular meetings at Staunton on Saturday 12th October 1991 at 2.30pm when Dr Chris Brooke will explain the history and architecture of the church. Tea will be provided afterwards at Staunton Hall. If you wish to attend tickets priced £5 are available from Zibby Garnett, The Grange, Norwell, Newark, Notts NG23 6JN, telephone Caunton 288.

Inventories with Photographs

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To find out more about the service, contact Zibby Garnett, The Grange, Norwell, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 **6JN.** Telephone 0636 86 288.

THE HEWETT ARMS

Shireoaks

NEXT time you're looking for somewhere different for a meal why not try the Hewett Arms at Shireoaks near Worksop? Just outside the small village of Shireoaks in the grounds of Shireoaks Hall, it's a converted early 18th century coach house and stables offering a good selection of beer, wines, and excellent food at very reasonable prices.

Leo Godlewski, whose family own Shireoaks Hall is an architect and he designed the Hewett Arms. "We have many visitors to the Hall and first of all we laid on teas for them in the old coach house and stables. Then we re-organised part of the Baroque watergardens into fishing lakes and everything was so popular we thought we would go one stage further and open a restaurant and winebar".

It has taken seven years to develop the Hewett Arms into its present form which has involved re-instating window mullions and roof, and incorporating an interesting design of brick arches necessary because of mining subsidence. With its relaxed atmosphere, good quality food and friendly service, it's somewhere all the family will enjoy.

A • Yeoman • of Nottinghamshire

John Hemsley 1823-1888

by Philip Lyth

WITHOUT doubt the most important part of the heritage handed down to us by our ancestors is the land. The stewardship of the land by farmers since time immemorial has, more than anything else, made the productivity of our soil what it is, and the English landscape our most cherished heritage. In recent history it was the small yeoman farmer of the 18th and 19th centuries who created the agriculture landscape much as we find it today. By good husbandry and disciplined farming they handed on their heritage in good heart and usually better than they found it.

One of these steadfast and industrious farming worthies was John Hemsley of Hall Farm, Shelton near Newark. He entered Hall Farm as a tenant of his uncle, William Hemsley in May 1850 at a rent of 39 shillings per acre for 95 acres of arable and 81 acres of grass, including tithes and land tax. In 1852 he rented further land adjacent to Hall Farm making 349 acres of arable and grass, beside the River Smite, a tributary of the Trent. The land was farmed on a regular six course rotation which maintained a high state of fertility and productivity. From the first day he kept a detailed Field Book which has survived, with all his farm records, yields, accounts, prices, valuations and balance sheets.

Although at the commencement of the period generally known as "The Golden Age of English Farming" in agricultural history John Hemsley's figures indicate that the times were not so golden for the tenant farmer as history books suggest. What is clear is that it was a time of stability and security for the farmer. Hemsley's turnover was steadily about £3,300 pa. His largest profit over ten years was £791 in 1860-61 and he only once made a loss, £28 in 1857-8. This he describes as "the year of the terrible harvest flood. Many of the stooks were down in the flood for several days", he wrote, "and the stench from drowned hares and stagnant water was terrible!". His landlord allowed him a rebate of £25 and the following year tile drainage was put in hand, the landlord providing the tiles and the tenant carrying out the work which was charged to the farm account.

His average profit 1853-63 was £512 pa which showed a return on working capital, ie. average valuation £1974 of more than 25% pa. Rent, rates and taxes were 30% of his annual outgoings, a much larger proportion of overheads than we are accustomed to today. Tithes, Land Tax, Poor Rates, Constable Rate, Church Rate and Highway Rate were all charged to the farm account.

His accounts reflect what was already becoming a market shift in British agriculture from arable to livestock, as the demand from the growing industrial population moved from bread and meat to meat and dairy and other livestock products. In 1853 his returns from crops were £1662 and from livestock £1123. Ten years later his crop sales were down to £1463 and livestock to £1972, of which £1121 was fat cattle sales. He noted in his Field Book for 1860 that "The farm during the last year has produced 3,031 stones of meat (1st 14lbs or 2st 10lbs per acre off the whole farm, grass and plough, ie. 340 acres."

John Hemsley was a progressive farmer for his time and his subscription to the Royal Agricultural Society (founded 1838) figures in the accounts each year and his expenses for attendance at shows. He was an elected member of Council for Nottinghamshire in 1874 and made Chairman of the Implements ber of Council for Nottinghamshire in 1874 and made Chairman of the Implements Committee a few years later. His obituary in the Journal of the RASE for 1889 shows the high respect with which he was regarded by his fellow farmers. It describes him as "a typical specimen of an English farmer, calm, quiet, unobtrusive but firm, courteous, upright and just. His courtesy and urbanity as Senior Steward (of the Implements Ring) at Nottingham (Royal Show 1888) would be remembered by all who came in contact with him". At a time of growing mechanisation in agriculture he was a pioneer of steam cultivation trials at the Royal Shows at Leicestershire 1868 and Wolverhampton 1871. "He was constantly in requisition by the Society as a judge of different descriptions of implements", particularly the new reaping and mowing machines, as well as the steam plough for heavy and and double furrow ploughs for the lighter soils.

HOW'S THE FARM?

by Edmund Staunton

WHEN asked the question, "How's the farm?", it is tempting to reply, "Times are hard these days", but farmers have had a reputation for complaining for such a long time that this answer is unlikely to convince many people.

Compared to farmers in other parts of the world, such as Australia and of course Third World countries we cannot complain in the country. Nor can we plead poverty compared to underprivileged sections of society in parts of Britain today.

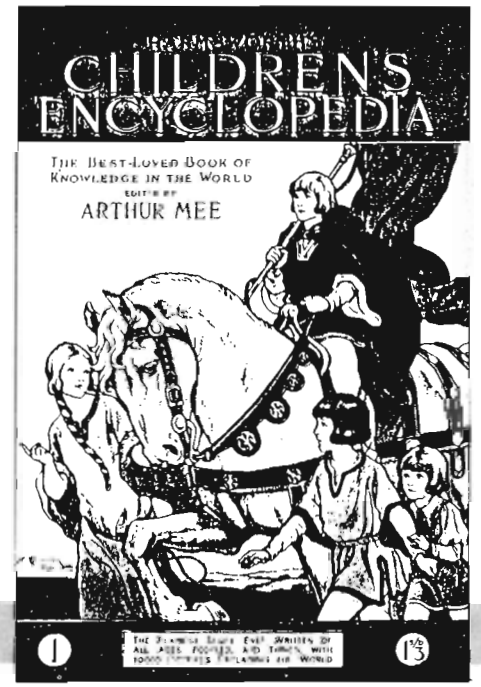
There is no denying however that we do face problems and, in common with most other businesses and professions, we are finding it difficult to make ends meet. Every farmer in the land is looking for ways of reducing his costs and for alternative means of bringing in income. Rigorous examination of costs can sometimes lead to useful results, and in the case of our farm we have saved money by changing to a different insurance company for all the farm policies and different suppliers of seed and spray chemicals. In some cases this has meant parting company from people who have provided decent service for many years, but whose services are no longer acceptable.

whose services are no longer acceptable.

When we wanted to trade-in two tractors recently for one larger tractor (also second-hand), we were not satisfied with the trade-in price offered by the local dealer, so we decided to buy the big one at a discount and sell the two smaller ones privately. In the end we saved over £2000 in this way but found it is a slow job trying to find buyers. After advertising we eventually found a farmer in Norfolk and a dealer in Ulster, but as we did not know either of them it seemed prudent to insist on the money being deposited in our bank account before collection of the machines.

This was a far cry from doing deals with a local company we have used for twenty-one years and trust completely, but nowadays dare I say it, we live in hard times.

ARTHUR MEE JOURNALIST AND EDITOR



by David Lazell

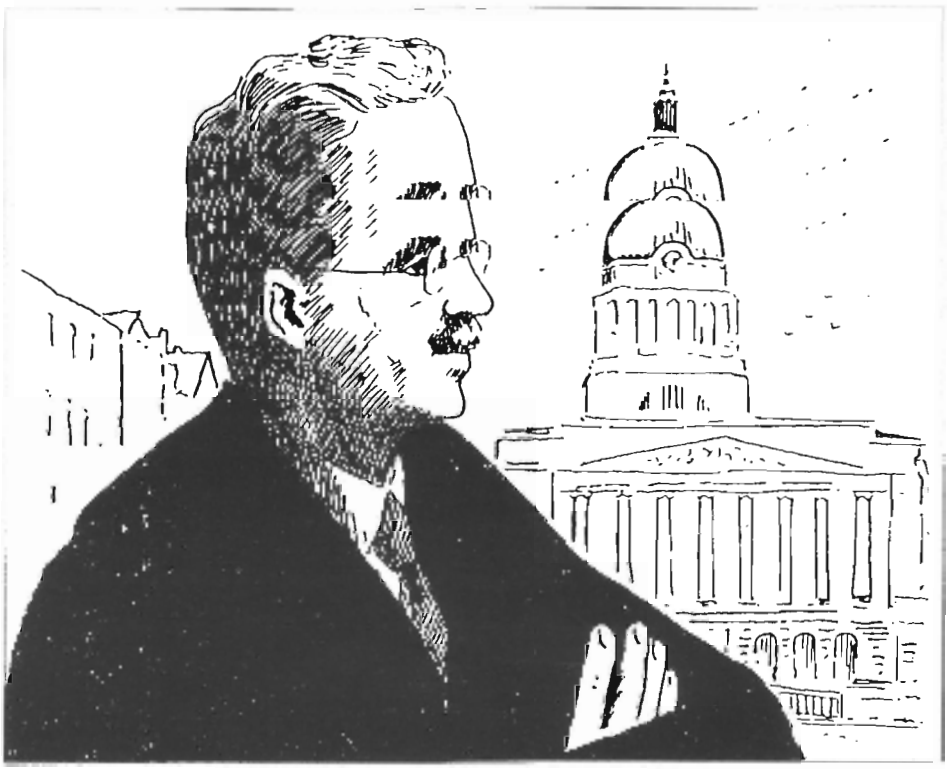
MEN of action come in many guises, and the bespectacled, studious Arthur Mee deserves attention for his links with this county and because, at a time when the education of children is a topic of fervent debate, his ideas seem very up-to-date.

'The Children's Newspaper' is probably the best known fruit of Arthur Mee's ever active pen, and the 'newspapers for juniors' launched in the 1980s surely owe something to his original pattern, launched some seventy years ago. His handsome county interest books, bound in red cloth boards and well illustrated with sepia photographs, 'The King's England', are avidly collected today, and a collectors' club was formed in the 1980s. Sets of 'The Children's Encyclopaedia', one of his major literary projects, not infrequently appear at bric-a-brac markets and in the Sale lists in bookdealing magazines. Nostalgia value? Certainly – but Arthur Mee was probably the most stimulating educationalist that Nottinghamshire has ever produced.

He was born in Stapleford on July 21st 1875, the second of ten children and He was born in Stapleford on July 21st 1875, the second of ten children and seems to have shown an inclination for writing almost from childhood. His father, Henry Mee, was a Baptist and Radical – which may help account for Arthur's lively interest in current affairs. There is a delightful passage in the biography written by his friend, Sir John Hammerton in 1946, 'Child of Wonder', recalling his friendship with Henry Mellows, a Methodist and baker, somewhat older than Arthur, then in his mid teens. "Mellows had the happy thought of getting the schoolboy to come each night to the bakery, and while he kneaded the flour and fired his bread and cakes, Arthur could read aloud to him the full parliamentary news of the previous day."

Another early influence, following the Mee family's move to Nottingham in 1889, was that of the minister of the Woodborough Road Baptist Church, Rev. G. Howard James. Henry Mee, a railwayman, was a deacon of the church until his death in 1930, by which time Arthur had become something of a national figure. Perhaps the clergyman encouraged Arthur to develop his writing skills – certainly, Arthur Mee taught himself shorthand, a discipline which many ministers followed in those days (helping account perhaps for methodical sermon delivery). It certainly seems likely that Rev. G. Howard James helped young Arthur take his first steps into journalism, when in 1891, at the age of sixteen, he became an apprentice journalist at The Nottingham Daily Express. Pay was modest, to say the least – the articles of apprenticeship appear to indicate sixteen shillings per week – but Arthur took to journalism at once. Sir John Hammerton notes that as junior reporter he was able to secure membership of the Nottingham Mechanics Institute, 'where a twopenny pork pie and a cup of coffee with his friend, Bryant, seemed to be the food of the gods'.

The Nottingham Daily Express, and its stable mate, the Evening News, were highly regarded as a training ground for journalists, and writing in the early 1920's, Harry Simonis, in his review of journalism, 'The Street of Ink' (Cassell) was able to mention several who, at that time, were well known graduates of Nottingham journalism – including John Foster Fraser, J. B. Firth of 'The Daily Telegraph', George Renwick of 'The Daily Chronicle', as well as Arthur Mee and Sir John Hammerton. Simonis adds, that it was with the Nottingham Journal, later amalgamated



Arthur Mee from an original drawing by Bryan Brown, Bristol

with the Express, that Sir James Barrie 'spent a period of his early career in bashful solitude'. Sir James caught the flavour of those years in 'When A Man's Single' published in 1888, 'The Silchester Mirror' of that work being in effect a mirror image of the paper he had known in Nottingham.

Arthur Mee recalled the 'Barrie connection' in an issue of The Children's Newspaper, published on February 25th 1933:

"It is just fifty years since Sir James Barrie became a journalist in the office of the second oldest newspaper in England, The Nottingham Journal. In due course, the Editor of The Children's Newspaper (i.e. Arthur Mee himself) became a journalist in the same office, as one of those who followed Sir James Barrie in his old office, he has been asked to join the rest of the group in sending Sir James felicitations on his jubilee." Mee referred to the Nottingham Journal as 'one of the best workshops of journalism, the cradle of more good journalists than any other office in the kingdom', praise indeed from a writer who had worked with Sir George Newnes, Lord Northcliffe, and as literary editor of 'The Daily Mail'. Mee added, 'I cannot resist a touch of pride that the journalism that led to Peter Pan, and the journalism that led to The Children's Encyclopaedia, came from the same cradle at Nottingham'.

Arthur Mee's success was remarkable, and he was editor of The Nottingham Evening News at the age of twenty. Many stories relate to his determination to learn as much as he could, and in this, as in much else, he offers a practical model for teenagers of the 1990s. Once, for example, the editor of his newspaper thrust a typewriter into the editorial office, this machine having been taken in settlement of a long overdue payment for advertising. In effect, the editor challenged his editorial personnel to learn how to use it but the scribes remained tied to their pencils. Young Arthur, though, decided to tackle the keyboard, and eventually found that typewriters – even in their somewhat cumbersome and clattering format – could help him increase his output.

Married in 1897 to Amy Fratson, of East Cottingwith, Yorkshire, Arthur

Married in 1897 to Amy Fratson, of East Cottingwith, Yorkshire, Arthur

decided to try his luck in London, and joined the Newnes publishing house when in his early twenties. He remained in close touch with friends and relations in Nottingham, and it is significant that he not infrequently referred to the city and its traditions in his work. An obituary notice published in the early 1940s notes that he 'never forgot his old school, and left a bequest, the income to be awarded each year to the boy leaving with the best record'.

This bequest was, he explained, 'an expression of my goodwill on my journey through the world that I have found so friendly and so wonderful'. Some reference to young Arthur's scholarship was found some years ago, by the manager of the Turf Tavern, Parliament Street, Nottingham, in the form of a framed certificate, issued by the Stapleford School Board, and showing that at the age of seven, Arthur had passed examination in the first standard.

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The CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER

AND CHILDREN PICTORIAL

The Story of the World Today for the Men and Women of Tomorrow

EDITED BY ARTHUR MEE

A DEED TO RING AROUND THE LAND

THE CLERK'S LOVE SONG

BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT

Discovery After Four Centuries in the Record Office

MUSIC FROM THE TIME OF BANNOCKBURN

How Jolly School Life Is

ALFRED SMITH, ENGLISH GENTLEMAN

THESE GAVE THE WORLD AWAY

Fourteenth Death in a Band of Eighteen Gallant Fellows

LIFE FOR KNOWLEDGE

An Example to Every Boy

HOW MUCH RADIUM IS THERE?

In those busy years of pictorial and educational publishing prior to the outbreak of the first world war, Arthur Mee was involved

cational publishing prior to the outbreak

of the first world war, Arthur Mee was involved in launching and editing new titles. He started new kinds of newspaper and magazine features, like those in The St James' Gazette – 'Obiter Scripta' and 'Men and Women' – and was editor of Black and White, a pictorial publication in 1901-1903, also serving as Literary Editor of The Daily Mail. But it was his years with Alfred Harmsworth, the future Lord Northcliffe, that shaped his best work. Alfred Harmsworth – though Comic Cuts was one of his first titles – was keenly interested in well-presented, popular educational material, and when Arthur Mee hitched his wagon to that particular media star, he had in effect found his perfect niche. He edited Harmsworth's Self Educator, launched in 1906, followed by the Harmsworth History of the World in the following year, and in 1907 also began work on the publication that was to become the world-famous Children's Encyclopaedia. When one looks at the list of publications written and/or edited by this son of Stapleford, it is quite astonishing that a single man was able to achieve so much. Whilst working on magazine

astonishing that a single man was able to achieve so much. Whilst working on magazine

and part-work projects for Sir George Newnes and later the future Lord Northcliffe, Arthur Mee also took on book projects, including studies of historical figures, including Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Salisbury and members of the royal family. His knowledge of literature was reflected in the series, The World's Great Books (1909), this being quickly followed by the Harmsworth Natural History (1911) and Harmsworth Popular Science (1912).

But if any single publication could be said to represent Arthur Mee's philosophy, that would surely be The Children's Newspaper, launched in 1919 and offering a world view of current affairs in a way that children and young people could understand. It is strange that he once confided to a friend that he really understood little about children – but then many parents feel that way from time to time, and even a few teachers might occasionally. Arthur Mee had one child, a daugh-

ter, Marjorie, but he wrote as if children were able to make up their own minds on issues. In one sense, any local celebration of Arthur Mee could embrace much in children's educational literature, since, as he pointed out, The Children's Newspaper itself was part of a well-established tradition. Thus in 1933, he wrote, in that publication:

"One of our letters, as we write, is from a lady of 89, who was taken to Australia in 1852, yet even she is too young to remember the first copies of The Child's Own Magazine, which has lived longer than any other existing children's paper, having appeared each month since it was first published." He clearly had copies in his extensive library at Eynsford Hill, his home near Sevenoaks in Kent, for he refers to the 'crude woodcuts' (of stagecoaches, paddle-steamers, postmen in tall hats, etc) illustrating 'the first dumpy little yearly volumes'. Originally produced by a jobbing printer to entertain and instruct local children, The Child's Own Book became The Children's Own Magazine, being eventually taken over by a publisher specialising in educational materials. Indeed, this company still engaged as its editor, a Mr Horace Groser, who had done that job for 47 years, succeeding two grandfathers who had filled the editorial chair for 38 years previously. The 1834 volume was the oldest extant, though The Child's Own Book had first been published in 1832, the year of the Reform Act (which had itself generated much local debate in the county).

Coming from a city of printers, as Nottingham was and remains, it is hardly surprising that Arthur Mee took a keen interest in layout and typography.

'The Children's Newspaper', however, had none of the colour printing and pictorial emphasis found in some of his other work. It was, to be blunt, somewhat plain and unadorned, and its page size, originally some 14" by 11" was divided up into four columns, carrying short but not trivialised reports. Front page headlines sometimes led into a detailed report inside, as in the case of the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the US Presidency. Column length reports referring to issues of tariffs, say, world trade, elections, inventions, etc. compare well to much in journalism today, certainly in terms of a basic popular explanation. Some of the material, as in the press today, was about matters of general interest, everything from astronomy to life at London Zoo. A centre page, two column feature, 'The Editor's Page' offered light relief in the form of short comments, quips, brief verse and other items suited to reading aloud to parents with not too much time to spare. Sometimes, a serial story was included, by Gunby Hadath, for example – a popular writer of the earlier part of this century, excelling in school yarns, whilst 'Jacko', a monkey attired in a school cap and bow tie, offered humorous comment, in a single line drawing and an extended caption. Although eyebrows are sometimes raised today at the inclusion of 'Peace Studies' in schools, a topic on which this article offers no opinions, it is worth noting that The Children's Newspaper aligned itself to the work of The League of Nations Pioneers

Arthur Mee at his desk

(LNP). Some schools had branches of LNP, and it is indeed interesting to note that Peace News today has editorial links with the city that originally nurtured Arthur Mee's talents.

During the second world war, when I was an eager student of The Children's Newspaper, the publication was considerably curtailed by newsprint rationing, and appeared only fortnightly. Its founder did not survive the war, dying on 27 May 1943 but Arthur Mee's output had continued unabated by the war, and there were several patriotic titles, on the whole free from that jingoism that has so often gone by the name of patriotism in past decades. One of his friends and assistants, Sydney Warner, took on the work of The King's England series, which was finally completed in 1953, by which time the series covered some ten thousand towns and villages.

The legend of Arthur Mee's work continues, and not so long ago, I spoke to a magazine editor who had heard that Arthur Mee's filing system was no more. Working long before computers and instant access to databases, Arthur Mee had developed a filing system which collected facts on almost everything, so that he had a sort of paste-and-paper database to aid him in his writing. It must have been a remarkable collection, and would today be something of a showpiece. Yet it was apparently thrown away being thought of no more value. Facts are overtaken by new knowledge, of course, but as an example of Arthur Mee's approach, this would have been a treasure indeed. Still ours is an age when much of value has been consigned to the waste bin and rubbish skip, as researchers well know. One could say that Arthur Mee was above all eager to show that a traditional 'value system' helped establishe the growing child in the School Life. He sought to extend what might be termed Christian values, many of these of course being shared by members of other faiths. But above all, his work showed that professionalism which the world of Nottingham journalism gave him in his formative years. Arthur Mee's regard for the poets of Nottinghamshire may in part be due to the fact that he was a distant relation of Kirke White of Clifton, but that must await comment on another occasion. At a time when Nottinghamshire is celebrating many of its cultural and historic achievements, the example of Arthur Mee is surely a glowing one. As someone put it, 'Once you had read something written by Arthur Mee, you always felt more optimistic about the world'.

"Arthur Mee was probably the most stimulating educationalist that Nottinghamshire has ever produced"

Book Review

The Tuesday Boys
by Rozelle Raynes
Published by Thomas Lyster £10.95.
Available now from bookshops

THIS book is the fourth to be written by Lady Rozelle Raynes, daughter of Marie-Louise Pierrepont, Countess Manvers of Thoresby. Lady Raynes has published many articles and is a member of the Society of Authors and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. A holder of a Merchant Navy Lifeboatman's Certificate and Yachtmaster's (Offshore) Certificate she is well qualified to write about sailing matters but this book is about far more than just sailing. It is reviewed by Trish Taylor.

The Tuesday Boys

"I knew virtually nothing about children in care, or care orders or council homes" admits Rozelle Raynes as she describes her first encounter with a group of boys living in a London children's home in 1975. She does, however, know about the magic of children's joy and vitality and she conveys it well against the atmospheric background of an old, but much loved, wooden sailing boat in the Royal Albert Dock Basin.

The Tuesday Boys is a true account of how the author, in an attempt to put the "Martha McGilda" to a useful retirement, develops a project to work with disadvantaged children. It is at times very moving especially when a young boy is so engrossed in what he is doing his usual haunted expression is replaced by a broad grin and sometimes hilarious particularly when the boys morbid curiosity is aroused by the discovery of a body in a nearby pontoon.

The book is cleverly woven and brings alive the experiences of the boys, however, its real strength is the sensitive insight into the individual characters of the boys as they gel as a group, grow up and come to terms with moving away from the home. The final chapters reveal how the boys' developed and it is extremely interesting to discover what they are doing now.

A Tuesday afternoon sailing the "Martha" may not change the world but it certainly enriched the lives of the Tuesday Boys and by the enthusiasm of the author, hers as well. It is a pleasure to read and is a very strong case for the development of a similar scheme.

Trisha Taylor.

Thoresby Park

CENTRED round the picturesque Victorian stable block, Thoresby Park Exhibition Centre provides a versatile and lively centre for the Arts, business and leisure in appealing historic surroundings amongs some of Nottinghamshire's most beautiful countryside.

The new Pierrepont Gallery opens on September 20th and will have a permanent exhibition of the works of Marie-Louise Pierrepont, Countess Manvers (1889-1984). A second gallery, which is available for hire, will begin with an exhibition of works by Druie Bowett. This exhibition runs for a month.

The Pierrepont Gallery is open from Friday to Monday 2-5pm April to October. The Bowett exhibition is open Friday to Monday 11am-5pm, admission is free and facilities are provided for disabled visitors.