This has been a vital and important year for the Society. Not only has our membership reached 1,275, but also we have broken the deadlock in publications. This long time without new volumes—the only reason for keeping the subscription at its present rate—has ended. 1968 has seen the reception by members in January of the reprint of Vol. XIII, *The Foundation of Peterborough Cathedral*, the publication in June of the *Luffield Priory Charters*, Part I, in collaboration with the Buckinghamshire Record Society, and in October, *The Royal Forests of Northamptonshire* by Dr. P. A. J. Pettit. We congratulate all who have made this possible and are delighted that volumes are again coming into your hands.

We welcome Mr. Michael Hurst of St. John's College, Oxford, elected in May to be the new General Editor. He has an interesting programme of forthcoming volumes and we look forward eagerly to their publication. It is a pleasure to have the Earl Compton as one of our Vice Presidents and to add Captain Peter Wake and Mr. Owen M. Jones to our Council.

It is a pleasure to receive and read new volumes, yet many members have wondered how it has been possible to produce these and to maintain in 1968 the subscription of £1. 1. 0d., which was initiated with the Society in 1920. We might compare the 1d. post, now 5d., and a 1d. daily paper, now 6d., so your Council has decided reluctantly to raise the subscription to £2. 2. 0d. for individual members and £3. 3. 0d. for institutions, leaving that for students at 10s., as at present. The Council has discretion to remit the excess fee in individual cases on application. We hope that all members will appreciate the necessity for the increase. The price of 2/6d. for *Northamptonshire Past and Present* remains unchanged. This would not be possible without the assistance of our advertisers, to whom we are much indebted.

During the year we have lost several valued members, including Sir Richard Elwes, Mr. J. T. H. Pettit and Mr. R. T. Payne, whose interest and help to the Society have done much to further our work. Mr. Payne left us a legacy of £200, subject to a life interest for his widow. Mr. Pettit at the Annual General Meeting on May 25th seconded the vote of thanks proposed by Mrs. L. M. Gee to Dr. Roger Highfield for his inspiring lecture on the History of Spain in the 15th century.

The Autumn lecture on October 19th by Dr. St. Joseph of Cambridge gave us an aerial view of our countryside and it was fascinating to trace with him the movements of people so long ago from the lines and shapes on the ground as seen from the air.

The recent severance of the Soke of Peterborough from its historic parent county of Northamptonshire, and its merging with Huntingdonshire has meant a careful consideration of the position of the records in the custody of the Northamptonshire Archives Committee. As a result, a new agreement has been negotiated between Huntingdonshire and Peterborough County Council, Northamptonshire County Council and Northampton Corporation, and henceforth there will be a joint Archives Committee on which these three authorities are represented.

R.M.M.

Notable among even the many spires of Northamptonshire is the very graceful 15th century spire of the church of Saints Peter and Paul at Easton Mauduit. The church itself is a good example of the decorated period of Gothic architecture, and there are fine monuments to the Yelverton family and other fittings of interest. It is a tiny parish with only ninety inhabitants, but they have shouldered with courage the heavy burden of church restoration, which is much needed to preserve the structure. Despite a generous grant from the Historic Churches Preservation Trust, the parish need all the help that they can get, and the Northamptonshire Record Society is publishing a substantial booklet *Easton Mauduit and Its Parish Church*, written by Sir Gyles Isham and plentifully illustrated by photographs. The section on Thomas Percy, who was vicar in the 18th century, and his friend Samuel Johnson...
appears as a separate article in this year's *Northamptonshire Past and Present*. The Marc Fitch Trustees are most generously paying for the publication. This will be available to members of the Record Society at a reduced price. All the proceeds of the sale will be devoted to the Church Restoration Fund.

Our readers will not have forgotten the article by Miss Joan Wake on the destruction of Faxton Church (*Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. II, No. 6). It will be some satisfaction to our readers to know that the monument to the Judge, Sir Augustine Nicholls, has been salvaged by the Victoria and Albert Museum, restored and erected by them in their new gallery of British Sculpture. Other Faxton monuments will later find a place there. The work of restoration has been a difficult one, and has been accomplished with the assistance of a hundred pieces, and the restoration reflects all the more credit on the Museum. What happened at Faxton, and the publicity given to it, has had one good result, an increasing interest in historic churches, and determination that they should be preserved as part of the National Heritage. Unfortunately, at the recent Diocesan conference, views were expressed which show that there is not the same realisation that church furniture and plate are equally part of this heritage, and some would gladly sell these gifts of past generations for cash, regardless of the fact that they may be subjected to uses which the pious donors would find horrifying. Specious pleas that the church is not an antiquarian, society will find no hearing with our members, nor, we are happy to say, with the Historic Churches Preservation Trust, whose grants are given to those who preserve the heritage of past generations intact.

The generous action of Lady Hesketh in depositing the Baker MSS. that she acquired at Delapre has already proved of value to students, and Mrs. Belgian has made use of it to record a parson/squire controversy in the year of Charles II's Restoration. The majority of this year's contributors are already known to our readers, but Mr. Jeffrey Porter of the University of Liverpool contributes for the first time; a valuable article on a dispute in the shoe industry in Northampton in 1887. We are also pleased to print a short poem by Mr. Trevor Hold, Lecturer in music at Liverpool University. Mr. John K. Gruenfelder, assistant professor at the University of Wyoming, has written a most interesting article on the Northamptonshire Elections of 1626. Aristocratic patrons are more usually associated with the 18th century, and there is considerable literature on the subject, but less has been said about the early 17th century. Of the protagonists in the dispute, Lord Montagu and the son of Lord Spencer were both Royalists, although the Earl of Sunderland, Spencer's son, was by no means a supporter of some of Charles I's policies. He fell at the battle of Newbury. Sir Lewis Watson was accused of letting Rockingham fall too easily into the hands of Parliament, although he vindicated himself, and was made a Peer. Sir John Pickering was the father of Sir Gilbert, an unequivocal opponent of the King, of whose later doings we read in Mrs. Belgian's article. The Earl of Westmorland died soon after the events described, but his son, the 2nd Earl, deserted the King's cause for the Parliament's. However, at the Restoration, he became a King's man again, and was made Lord Lieutenant in 1660. Mr. Gruenfelder's article shows that in Northamptonshire these future actors in the Civil War were, in 1626, far more concerned with their local quarrels, and all of them had a Puritan streak.

We are also indebted to Sir Michael Culme-Seymour for letting us have a photograph of a portrait in his possession of Sir Lewis Watson. We have previously published photographs of two pictures of the other protagonists: Lord Spencer (Vol. I, No. 2), and Lord Montagu (Vol. I, No. 4).

Mr. Anscomb contributes an article on an 18th century inclosure at West Haddon. He is Chairman of the Archives Committee, and we are particularly glad to publish an article by him.

Elsewhere in this issue is an obituary notice of Sir Edward de Capell Brooke, a good friend of the Society. Although Great Oakley Hall is substantially a Tudor house, internal changes, effected by Edward Trollope, Bishop of Nottingham, Sir Edward Brooke's grandfather, have given it a rather Victorian air. There are a number of texts incorporated in the decorative scheme. For instance, over the housemaid's room is written "Servants obey your masters", while over the Squire's room appears "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers".

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The acquisition of the patronage of livings by University colleges has been criticised on the grounds that the colleges were interested in providing livings for such of their Fellows who married, or required provision for their retirement, rather than in considering the spiritual care of the parishioners. However, they were the means of providing men of more intellectual power than was otherwise generally available, and, at Easton Mauduit, there is no evidence that the parishioners had any cause for complaint while Christ Church, Oxford was the patron.

The most famous incumbent of Easton Mauduit was Thomas Percy, inducted to the vicarage on 17 June, 1753, shortly after taking priest’s orders. He lived in the vicarage until 1780, although in 1778 he was appointed Dean of Carlisle. In 1782, he was made Bishop of Dromore in Northern Ireland. The Cathedral there had been built by another famous English cleric, Dr. Jeremy Taylor, when he was Bishop of Down and Connor. Percy remained Bishop until 1811, when he died at the age of eighty-two, and there he was buried.

It was while vicar of Easton Mauduit that he collected, annotated and published his most famous work, Reliques of Ancient Poetry, issued in three volumes in 1765. This book had a profound influence on the romantic verses and poems of the early nineteenth century, particularly on the works of Sir Walter Scott. It contained "compositions of all times and dates, from the ages prior to Chaucer, to the conclusion of the reign of Charles I." In his later years, Percy spoke or wrote rather slightingly of this production, and in a letter to his friend Edmund Malone, the Shakesperean critic, deprecated a projected memoir of himself being prefixed by a print of his picture after Abbott: "he cannot by any means think that such a solemn figure is fit to be prefixed to the sportive subjects of the Reliques—the gay amusements of early youth, of which he is now frequently reproached by his brethren and other serious persons".1

The Reliques was dedicated to Elizabeth, Countess of Northumberland "who adorns courts by her presence, and diffuses elegance by her example". Percy claimed descent from the Percies of Northumberland, although he came from Shropshire, and when he matriculated at

1 The letter, of which the original is missing, dates from 1806-07 and is printed on p. 213 of The Percy Letters, Vol. I, ed. A. Tillotson, Louisiana State University Press, 1944.
Oxford, from Christ Church in 1746, at the age of 17, he was described as "pleb". When he signed the subscription register of the University (also, when taking his B.A. and M.A. degrees), he signed himself "Thomas Piercy", as his father had done. But, from 1756, he signed himself "Percy", because he discovered that this was the spelling used by his Worcester ancestors in the sixteenth century, and "this was many years before I had the honour to be known to the Duke or Duchess of Northumberland". He was certainly quick to resent any imputation against the Percies, or Alnwick, their Northumberland castle, and Boswell records "a scene of too much heat" between Percy and his friend Samuel Johnson, because the latter praised the travel writer Pennant, and Percy "having the warmest attachment to the noble house of Northumberland, could not sit quietly and hear a man praised, who had spoken disrespectfully of Alnwick Castle and the Duke's pleasure grounds". However, on this occasion, the storm passed, and Dr. Johnson concluded that Pennant was "a slyng, sir; a sad dog... But he's the best traveller I ever read; he observes more things than anyone else does".

Johnson alluded to the controversy in a letter to Boswell some years later, which leaves no doubt of his warm regard for Percy. "The debate between Dr. Percy and me is one of those foolish controversies, which begin upon a question of which neither party care how it is decided, and which is, nevertheless, continued to acrimony, by the vanity with which every man resists confutation... If Percy is really offended, I am sorry; for he is a man very willing to learn, and very able to teach; a man out of whose company I never go without having learned something. It is sure that he vexes me sometimes, but I am afraid it is by making me feel my own ignorance... Percy's attention to poetry has given grace and splendour to his studies of antiquity. A mere antiquarian is a rugged being".

Percy paid a handsome tribute to Johnson in his Preface to the Reliques, "To the friendship of Mr. Johnson he owes many valuable hints for the conduct of the work. And if the glossaries are more exact and curious, than might be expected in so slight a publication, it is to be ascribed to the supervisal of a friend, who stands at this time as the first in the world for northern literature".

Samuel Johnson paid an extended visit to Dr. Percy in the summer of 1764 at his vicarage of Easton Mauduit. His "walk" is still shown to visitors to the house. He arrived on 25 June with "Miss Williams". Mrs. Anna Williams, "daughter of a very ingenious Welsh physician, and a woman of more than ordinary talents and literature", was a constant visitor at Dr. Johnson's house; after Mrs. Johnson's death, "she had an apartment from him, during the rest of her life, at all times when he had a house".

Percy, in his unpublished diary, recorded visits on 18 July to Etion (the Isteds; Percy's daughter Barbara married Samuel Isted in 1795), on 21 July to Hinwick (the Orlebars), and on 23 July to Castle Ashby; "Mr. Johnson I and my wife at My Lord Northampton's public Day". On 25 July "My wife, Miss Wms; Mr. Johnson & I took an airing by Bozeate". On 27 July, the whole party went to Horton to see Lord Halifax. Other visits were paid to Northampton, Wilby, Piddington and Bozeat. On 7 August, "Mrs. Williams went away: I carried her to Horton". Johnson stayed on helping Percy with his Preface and the glossary to the Reliques. Finally, on 18 August, "Mr. Johnson returned to London: I carried him to Newport Pagnell in chaise and he went in Berlin".

A Shropshire man himself, Percy found his bride in Northamptonshire, Ann Gutteridge of Desborough, whom he married there on 24 April 1759; she bore him two sons and four daughters. Dr. Johnson thought she had "more sense than her husband". There is a delightful anecdote told of her and Dr. Johnson. "Mrs. Percy afterwards nurse to the Duke of Kent, at Buckingham House, told me that Johnson once stayed near a month with them at their dull parsonage at Easton Mauduit; that Dr. Percy looked out all sorts of books to be ready for his amusement after breakfast, and that Johnson was so attentive and polite to her, that, when Dr. Percy mentioned the literature prepared in..."
the study, he said ‘No, sir, I shall first wait upon Mrs. Percy to feed the ducks’. But those felicitous days were about to change—not as to Mrs. Percy, for to the last, she remained a favourite with him. Fanny Burney in her Diary also has something to say about Mrs. Percy in later life. She describes how, during a visit to Bath in 1791, she found “cards left for me by the Bishop of Dromore, Mrs. and Miss Percy... The Collector and editor of the beautiful reliques of ancient English poetry, I could not but be happy to again see. I returned the visit: they were out; but the Bishop soon after came when I was at home. I had a pleasant little chat with him”. Later on she gives this comment on the Bishop and his wife. “The Bishop is perfectly easy and unassuming, very communicative, and, though not very entertaining because too prolix, he is otherwise intelligent and of good commerce; Mrs. Percy is ill and cannot make visits, though she sends her name and receives company at home. She is very uncultivated and ordinary in manners and conversation, but a good creature, and much delighted to talk over the Royal Family, to one of whom [the Duke of Kent, Queen Victoria’s father] she was formerly a nurse. Miss Percy is a natural and very pleasing character”. Percy was also intimate with other members of Johnson’s circle such as David Garrick and Oliver Goldsmith, although there is no evidence that they, like Johnson, stayed at the vicarage. Percy pays tribute to Garrick thus in the Preface to the Reliques: “in Mr. Garrick’s collection of old plays are many scarce pieces of ancient poetry, with the free use of which he indulged the editor in the politest manner”. There are several letters to Percy in the recently published definitive edition of Garrick’s letters. Oliver Goldsmith was a more intimate friend of Percy’s, and he wrote the life of Goldsmith prefixed to his Miscellaneous Works. It was Percy, who, on 31 May 1761, took Dr. Johnson to a supper given at his lodgings in Wince-

7 Johnsoniana or Supplement to Boswell, 1836, pp. 216,7.

Office-Court, Fleet Street, the first occasion on which Johnson visited Goldsmith. Percy was much struck by “the studied neatness of Johnson’s dress; he had on a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and everything about him so perfectly dissimilar from his usual habits and appearance that his companion [Percy] could not help inquiring the cause of this singular transformation. ‘Why, sir’, said Johnson, ‘I hear that Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his disregard of cleanliness and decency, by quoting my practice, and I am desirous this night to show him a better example’”. When in London, Percy usually lodged at Northumberland House (he was chaplain to the Duke), and he was a member of the Literary Club, which met at the Turk’s Head in Gerard Street, and whose members included Sir Joshua Reynolds (who painted Percy’s portrait), Dr. Johnson, Edmund Burke, David Garrick, Charles James Fox, Edmund Malone and other leading literary and political figures. He became a member of the Club on 15 February 1768, and his name (as Bishop of Dromore) is included in the list of members in 1797, when there were 40 of them. When in exile from his literary friends in Ireland, Percy never failed to enquire for news of the Club, and Edmund Malone was assiduous in reporting to him who had died, and who had joined the Club.

It must not be thought, however, that Percy’s preoccupation with this literary circle lessened his faithful discharge of his clerical duties in his country parish. Johnson said, when writing to a young clergyman in 1780, and giving good advice, “The Dean of Carlisle, who was then a little rector in Northamptonshire, told me, that it might be discerned whether or no there was a Clergyman resident in a parish, by the civil or savage manners of the people”. A debt of gratitude must be paid to Percy, moreover, for the care he took of the church registers, which he caused to be bound in one volume, with blank leaves of parchment added, “which are still used for the record of events in the parish other than baptisms, burials and marriages”. Percy’s own entries of these events are a model of clarity and accuracy. His relations with the Yelvertons and the great house appear to have been unexceptionable, although the family were

11 Miscellaneous Works, pp. 62,3.
12 Ibid., p. 73.
not the patrons of the living. He was specially friendly with Barbara, Lady Longueville, grand-mother of the 2nd and 3rd Earls of Sussex, to whom he dedicated his *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese and Han Kio Chooan* (1762, 2 vols.).\(^{14}\) Malone regretted that "the old Countess of Northumberland, Eliz. Howard, who died at 97 in 1705, had not a conference with your old friend Ly Viscountess Longueville, by which we might have had the anecdotes of two centuries". Percy called her "an excellent Chronicle and valuable friend".\(^{15}\) He naturally regretted "the unfortunate" sale of the last Earl of Sussex's "noble Library".\(^{16}\)

> It is possible that the world might have been deprived of the *Reliques*, as it is recorded that "the work was based on a manuscript with which a housemaid was just about to light a fire in a house which Percy was visiting. He snatched it from her just in time".\(^{17}\) However Percy himself came to regard this book, it will always remain a classic of its kind, and it is a matter of pride that it emanated from a Northamptonshire parsonage.

The writer wishes to thank Mr. R. W. Ketton-Cremer for helpful suggestions, and the full use of his library at Felbrigg.

**Gyles Isham.**

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**COMPETITION**

Although the fact is recorded in a footnote to L. F. Powell's revised edition of Birkbeck Hill's *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (1935), it is not generally known that Dr. Samuel Johnson attended Lord Northampton's public day at Castle Ashby on 23 July, 1764. He was taken over from Easton Mauduit by Dr. Thomas Percy, while a guest at the vicarage there (see p. 140). Spencer, 8th Earl of Northampton (1738-96) succeeded to Castle Ashby on the death of his brother on 8 October, 1763.

Prizes are offered for the best account of the visit, which might have been described by Dr. Johnson on his return to London to James Boswell, and recounted by him in his *Life of Johnson*. Boswell was actually in Holland at the time of Johnson's visit to Easton Mauduit, although he had already become acquainted with him. Not more than 300 words should be used.

**1st Prize**  A free copy of any volume still available issued by the Northamptonshire Record Society.

**2nd Prize**  A free visit for two persons to Castle Ashby on an "open" day, and two free teas in the refreshment room (by kind permission of the Marquess of Northampton).

The entries will be judged by Mr. R. W. Ketton-Cremer, and should be sent to the Editor, *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Lamport Hall, Northampton, by 1 May, 1969, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

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**REGISTERED PERISHABLE GOODS**

"I have taken order with the pulter to bryng your woorship weekly VI hennes (all dead), for by no meanes I can hyer hym to carry them alive. I have tied a piece of paper sealed about the hennes leggs & also ye turkies. I would have sent them up in a hamper but I could not intrst hym to bryng it bak agayne".

4 January 1580/1.

Thomas Hurland of Fotheringhey to Mr. William Fitzwilliam, Esq dwelling over against the glasse house by ye Tower in London.
THE POOR IN ROTHWELL, 1750-1840

In the church chest at the Parish Church, Rothwell there are a number of documents relating to the poor law administration, which throw a good deal of light on conditions of life for the poor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They include settlement bonds, indentures and orders of justices of the peace; also workhouse accounts, bastardy bonds and, particularly valuable for the period of the late 1820s onwards, the vestry minute books. The Kettering Vestry Minutes 1797-1853 edited by S. A. Peyton, provide an illuminating parallel situation and taken together we can reconstruct a good deal of the life of the poor in this area one hundred and thirty years ago.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of life among the labouring poor of Rothwell was the uncertainty of employment which necessitated frequent recourse to the parish. It must be realised that the textile industry was the most substantial alternative occupation to agriculture at the beginning of the nineteenth century in this part of the county. Robert Panter of Rothwell, weaver, asks why he is not allowed employment by the parish when he is not in work, has a wife and one child. Joseph Bodymore "has no employ—a weaver for Mr. Harris of Kettering—has been out of work three weeks on Saturday—has one child only nine years of age—has not earned more than 7s. per week take one week with another has not saved money—has a boy aged 17 years who lives with him and earns more than he can; another child aged 14 years earns 2s. per week. Will be content with an allowance of 5s. until next vestry". Richard Goodman, weaver, "asks for employment, has had no weaving during the last fortnight; has 2 looms in his shop: has been teaching the trade to two boys during the last year: has a stock of goods in the hats and hosiery in his shop". Samuel Ginn, junior and William Ashby, weavers of silk, apply "for assistance stating they cannot earn sufficient to maintain their families on account of reduction of wages" (not allowed). Women and children were also employed in the textile industry. William Yeomans' wife applied to have her two daughters aged 11 and 12 partly maintained by the parish, they being unable to maintain themselves at the Lace Pillows. One way the parish dealt with the unemployment of textile workers was to provide them with work of a like nature. Here Kettering had shown the way in the eighteenth century. The theory was that "the poor by exercising suitable employment might largely contribute towards the expenses of their upkeep". We find that the overseers are directed to pay a bill "one to Mr. Neal of London for hemp" and again "that half a ton of hemp and five cwt. of flax be ordered for the employment of boys and men". Widow Sharman who applies for more relief is "to have spinning". We know from the accounts in the eighteenth century (May 5th, 1774) that there is a bill for mending the spinning equipment at the workhouse. Similarly in April 1776 we find that the overseer of the poor pays "for half a year's rent of William Ho boys house and loom due ye 5th of April". As at Kettering, the weaving of wool was replaced at Rothwell partly by the weaving of silk and partly by shoemaking with silk predominating during the first half of the nineteenth century. The census records for Rothwell in 1851 contain the names of 62 men aged twenty years and over who were weavers and 46 men who were shoemakers. The trade of shoemaking was similarly subject to trade depressions. We hear that Samuel Tebbutt,

1 Northamptonshire Record Society, Vol. VI, 1933.
2 This is brought out in Kettering Vestry Minutes, p. xvi. Also the Rothwell Militia list compiled in 1777 contains the names of 156 men (all of them between the ages of 18 and 45 years) of whom 95 (61%) are stated to be weavers. (I owe this information to Mr. V. A. Hatley who is preparing an edition of the Militia lists).
5 Ibid., 26 November, 1829, case 26.
6 Ibid., 15 October, 1829.
7 Ibid., 26 November, 1829, case 15.
8 Ibid., 26 November, 1829, case 15.
12 I owe this information to Mr. V. A. Hatley.
shoemaker, applies to the parish for a maintenance for himself and family: “Has four children under seven years of age: has been turned off from employ at Northampton along with several hundred other hands”; the vestry however note curtly, “Has not tried any other master for employment: ordered to seek for work”. John Sharman applied “to be assisted to learn the shoe makers’ business: he is about 18 years of age and has some knowledge of the business: ordered that he be allowed 4s. per week for 2 months”.13

Other occupations which appear in the poor law records include rope making, sawyering, and domestic service. Frances Harris, widow, asks for additional relief; her present allowance is 3s. per week; she has two children, one aged 8, one 6 years; “is a ropemaker—says that her various employ(ment)s do not bring her in 9s. per week (Refused)”.14 Charles and James Shortland, sawyers, “Aged men, are at present without employ except a day occasionally; have each brought up several children—without parochial aid . . . ordered £1 each”.15 Quite often when someone is going into service they apply to the parish for a grant to equip themselves with clothing or shoes. “Widow York requests 6s.0d. for her boy to go to service; granted”16. Jonathan Richardson asks for “some assistance to clothe his boy thats going to service; allowed a pair of shoes”.17 Mary Sharman asks for a few shillings “to buy a few necessary articles of clothing in order to go to service; ordered that 10 shillings be given her”.18

Apart from setting men and boys to work in the textile business the parish from time to time thought up other ways of employing them. Individuals are sent directly to employers to seek work. Here the overseer appears to have acted as a primitive form of labour exchange. Samuel Tebut for instance “asks to be employed: has been unemployed only this morning. Has not asked for employ(men)t of anyone but the overseer. Refused”.19 And yet on the 9th December

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14 Ibid., 2 February, 1830, case 10.
15 Ibid., 15 December, 1830, case 3.
16 Ibid., Vol. I, 29 September, 1831, case 1.
17 Ibid., 6 October, 1830.
18 Ibid., 3 October, 1832, case 3.
19 Ibid., 4 December, 1828, case 11.
Samuel Tebbut is offered "some stone to break; ordered to go there". In the summer of 1829 it was resolved "that a number of men be sent to Mr. Turner of Harrington to break stone at 6d. per hand". A more obviously useful task was setting men to grind flour at the mills. At the same vestry it was resolved "that a number of men be employed at the mill and that if legal Bread be made of the Flour and given to paupers in the proportion of one stone to each Family as part of their necessary relief". Probably the mills were run at a loss as is suggested here. "That John Tomlin superintend the men that occasionally come to the parish for work either at the mills or elsewhere at the salary of 10s. per week for the present. That the sum of £100 be paid by the overseers to Mr. Samuel Sargeant as Treasurer to the mills to make good the capital advanced for working the mills by instalments". It was under discussion as to whether the mills were worth carrying on with at all, and on 17th March, 1831 a meeting was held "for the purpose of considering the propriety or impropiety of carrying on the manufacture of sacks etc. and the working of the mills after the 25th March". In the event it was decided that their working be continued but that they cut down the expenses of having a foreman. Another method of setting the unemployed to work was to hire them out to neighbouring farmers; a statement dated Dec. 31 1828 written into the end of the vestry minute book puts down this proposal in detail. "That the parish proposes to employ the spare men to dig for the farmers at the best price per acre that may be bid by public auction. Such bidding to stand good and binding upon each party for the space of 14 days; that is, the parish shall during that time send to the contracting farmer all such persons that apply to them for work who are able to perform the said labour and the farmer is bound to set to work all such men so sent to him and find them as much work as may be necessary to enable them to gain the sum of 6s. per week at a price per pole to be fixed by the overseer. The earning of the labourer to be paid by the farmer and the overseer to repay the amount to the farmer deducting the sum which he had contracted to give. A fresh letting to take place every fourteen days until the parish shall in public vestry resolve to discontinue the system that the labourers be directed into".

There were several other methods whereby the poor were relieved. Consignment to the workhouse, outdoor relief, and, for old women, the offer of one of the "widows’ houses". The existence of a workhouse in Rothwell is known from the middle of the eighteenth century and the workhouse accounts have survived for several years in the 1770s and 1780s. We know from an indenture dated 6th October, 1875 between George Hill of Rowell, sergeant of Law, and William Shortland, Daniel Daulby, Joseph Vialls and Thomas Freeman, churchwardens, Benjamin Vialls and Thomas Hill, overseers of the poor, that a lease was made of a house, formerly the Boot and Slipper, to John Essex, for 21 years at £16 p.a. "for the lodging, keeping, maintaining and employing of all such poor in the said such parish as should desire to receive relief or collection of the said parish". Accounts of repairs done at this and the earlier workhouse are a useful indication of relative costs in the building trade in the late eighteenth century. Floors are renewed, windows inserted, stairs put in by the order of Mr. Thomas Nutt and Mr. Benjamin Vialls by Richard Dent; e.g. - "May 16th for 6 oak beams 64 ft. at 1s. 9d. per ft. ... £5. 12. 0d."; later, "for 1129 foot of bord for ye chamber floors and ye stairs at 2d. per ft. ... £9. 8. 2d.". "July 30th for thirty three days work and a half a filling ye fraines, in laying ye floors and doing ye stairs and making ye doors and doing ye paticion and filling ye window boards ... £2. 15. 10d." Further masons work was also undertaken - "For work and materials; For 320 bricks at 3s. 8d. per hundred ... 19s. 2d. For 8 bushel of lime at 8d. per bushel ... 5s. 4d.". Walling was at 8d. per yard e.g. - "This side wall in the yard 89 yards ... 1' at 8d. per yard. For 2 days work myself ... 3s. 8d.". John Essex was the builder and this work was done at the order of Mr. Thomas Nutt in 1785. There were various carpentry jobs done to the furniture and wooden fittings in the workhouse as can be seen on April 19, 1774 for worke (sic)

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20 Ibid., 9 December, 1828.
21 Ibid., 29 June, 1829, case 3.
22 Ibid., 29 June, 1829, Resolution 4.
23 Ibid., 22 April, 1830, Resolutions 1 and 2.
24 Ibid., 10 March, 1831, case 2.
27 This document is in the parish chest, Rothwell.
28 The workhouse accounts are in a bundle in the parish chest. For the most part they are bills and receipted accounts.
seting a bed up 0. 0. 4d.”. “For a pare of joints for a casement 0. 0. 5d. For 2 latches and caches and nails 0. 0. 4d.”.

There was apparently one man in charge of the workhouse; the terms by which he served are mentioned in the vestry minutes dated 1st April, 1830. Daniel Daulby presented a proposal to undertake the management of the poorhouse “upon the following terms; to be allowed one pound of meat each day, with bread and cheese, and roots from the garden, but no grocery goods, with a salary of six shillings per week”. This proposal was cut by the vestry to 4s. per week.

The fare offered to the inmates did not err on the side of luxury. Basically it seems to have been bread, grits (oats for porridge), some potatoes (taters), carrots (carots) but no meat was mentioned in the accounts. Sugar, imported from the West Indies in great loaves is found “for half a pound of shugar ... 0s. 3d.”. With a diet like this it is not surprising that they suffered from skin complaints. “For stuff for the itch 0s. 10½d.”. When they fell ill the inmates received rough and ready medical aid, as is seen from the apothecaries’ or chemists’ bills presented for payment to the overseers of the poor; e.g.—in 1775 “For Edward Sharman’s wife bleeding and children ... 6d. Oct. 30th. Bleeding and Spirits (to revive the patient?) 1s. 6d. Nov. 11th. A mixture of castor oil 1s. 0d. Jan. 4th. Four powders 1s. 4d.”. Ten years later, in 1785, the main medicines seem to be explosive laxatives; e.g.—“July 10th The draught for Dan Timson ... 9d. July 14th Purging draught ... 9d. Anodyne Pills ... 6d. Senna ... 4d. July 31st Six Powders 1s. 0d.”. Roborant Tinctures and Anodyne Bolus are frequently mentioned. What are these? When the patient was beyond the care of the workhouse, he might be sent to the Northampton Infirmary if his doctor happened to be a subscriber and could nominate him. The paper which allowed admission said—“no in patient shall be admitted till fifteen shillings be deposited into the hands of the treasurer or his deputies to defray the expenses of Burial, in case he die, which shall be repaid if he be discharged deducting the expenses of removal”. This no doubt explains why Samuel Gamble applied “for the money to make up a sovereign as he borrowed to go to the infirmary. Allowed 5s. 4d the money required”. The poor had to be fed, doctored and clothed. Among the workhouse accounts are a number of bills which record purchases of clothing for the use of the poor; they include (April 28th 1775) “5 yd cloth for two shirts for Marlows boy at Mr. Thos. Buckbys at 13d ... 0. 5s 5d and (June 7 1775) 4 yds Russia Drab for a frock for John Gamble at 1/7 ... 0. 5s 8d. Buttons 8d. Thread 2d, lining 1/7½d, Pockets 7d, totalling 2s 10½d”. William Cooke is also seen providing Mr. Thomas Munn in 1774 with Flaxen cloth, Hemp Roll, Boys stockings (2 pairs men best double yarn) Cloth for body lining (linen?), Hats, Aprons, Petticoats, Handkerchiefs and tammy cloth for shifts and saddlecloth. Further materials were purchased Nov. 21 1775. “To ten yards of flax cloth @ 1/2d yd ... 10. 10d, to two yards check kersey @ 5/5yd yd ... 10. 10d, and on Jan. 5 1776, Flanil for blanket @ 2s 0d. March 9—To drill and linsey for Jims children 10s 7d. March 12—To drill, buttons, thread etc. 1s. 10d. April 8—check apron”.

The cost of running the workhouse to the parish is not clear but in conformity with the “less eligibility” principle of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 there were moves afoot during the period to reduce it. We find recorded on 28 March 1833 “that the allowance for the maintenance of the poor in the Workhouse be reduced to three shillings per head per week and Mrs. Daulby not to be counted in the number”. At this time also there seems a tendency to commit more people to the workhouse; e.g. 21 February 1833 “William Rowthorn’s son to be maintained in the workhouse and not allowed anything from the parish” and “John Richardson applies for relief for his daughter; not allowed except until she can safely be removed to the workhouse which the overseers will ascertain from the surgeon of the parish”.

The problem of orphans was tackled in a somewhat different way. On 2nd February 1830 “Mrs. Wilson states that there are the following children in the vestry—John Austin 15, James Richardson 16, Thomas Richardson 14, Sarah Beazley age 15, Anne Austin aged 8 and Kate Burrows aged 8 yrs. Resolved that endeavour be made to obtain a home and maintenance in private

20 Rothwell vestry minute book, 1 August, 1833, case 8.
21 Ibid., 28 March, 1833, Resolution 3.
22 Ibid., 21 February, 1833, cases 2 and 5.
families for three of the above named children, viz: Sarah Beazley, Annie Austin and Kate Burrows and also for the two Richardsons”. Another example was “Jane Woodford, an orphan belonging to this parish is come home and William Isits' wife her aunt is willing to provide for 2/6 per week until she has something to do—and the overseer is requested to provide her some cloaths”.

The most usual method of dealing with the problem of the poor was to make grants and supplements to wages from the parish rates in the form of outdoor relief. Direct application had to be made to the vestry and most of the vestry minutes before the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act is in fact made up with a record of individual applications. Usually the request was supported with a brief justification; e.g. Thomas Miller applies for 2 days pay that he lost by the weather ... Refused. Henry Walker's wife wants relief for herself and 3 children; her husband being in Goal [sic]; ordered that she have the usual allowance. Sometimes the fact that alternative sources of income—undeclared—as we would put it—were discovered, were used by the vestry as reason for refusing grants. There was the case of Joseph Rowthorn of Coventry who applied for relief who “received 20/- seven weeks since—has earned 35/- and no more since that application—has 3 small children—one of them 9 years old has earned 7/- in that period; in that time killed one hog in his family which weighed 60 lbs—refused”. As for poor James Lomus, “if he is found on the road with his waggon gathering dung is to have 1/- stopped, he is to have 1/- stopped for using vulgar language to Tomlin”. The vestry on several occasions used their power to enforce better manners or morals. “William Hilsby not to receive any money from the parish for the present week on account of misconduct”. “William Cave to receive no money on the parish account for the present week on account of drunkenness”. Jonathan Marriott's widow applies on account of her boy not to have anything allowed till she come in a milder manner.

Since the whole problem of poor relief was fraught with tensions on both sides, the parish wishing to pare down to the minimum and conditions of extreme necessity existing on the other side it is not surprising that there was some friction in the operation of poor relief. An instance of this was when the conduct of John Tomlin, assistant of the overseer, was investigated by a committee of the vestry. They reported that “they consider him harsh and oppressive to the labourers and that the opinion of 60 out of seventy rate payers upon whom they have called, consider that it will tend to the peace of the parish if he were dismissed”. Nevertheless the decision was that “although the conduct of John Tomlin is not free from blame they do not consider the case against him fully proved, that under the circumstances of the present times they think it would be very imprudent to give way to popular clamor and incendiary threats except in a case of manifest and substantial injustice though they will gladly reconsider the case and the propriety of his appointment in a period of less excitement”.

It is likely that one of the chief grievances was the periodical reductions of allowances which the vestry agreed to when the weather became milder in the Spring. We find a newly appointed vestry meeting on 28 April 1830 and resolving “that we now make out a list of the men with the price each man is to receive from his employer. That the weekly payment be examined in order to a reduction of the same where necessary”. A list of reductions, ranging from 1s Od to 3s Od per week follow. Again, two years later, it was agreed that “the allowance of man and wife be reduced to six shillings per week and the children to fifteen pence per head per week and those men that get employment any other way than by the parish to receive two pence per day or one shilling per week in addition to the six shillings per week”. This decision produced opposition but “this vestry are determined not to make any alteration from last week's Resolution”.

The “final solution” for the poor of Rothwell was emigration and the parish was prepared to help when it meant losing one of its burdensome paupers for ever. Abraham Walter had “the opportunity of getting out to the Swan River as Manager but is unable to raise the requisite

33 Ibid., 3 December, 1829, cases 2 and 3.
34 Ibid., 12 August, 1830, Resolution 7.
36 Ibid., 5 September, 1833, Resolution 9.
37 Ibid., 13 November, 1833, Resolution 9.
38 Ibid., 24 December, 1829, case 2.
39 Ibid., 11 February, 1830, Resolution 9.
40 Ibid., 23 December, 1830, Resolution 5.
41 Ibid., 3 May, 1832, Resolution 2.
42 Ibid., 9 May, 1832, Resolution 4.
means, has 6 children all of whom he will take with him; otherwise he has no prospect of maintaining them without parochial assistance". After two further meetings to consider this plea they allowed him Twenty five pounds to assist him to emigrate. The odd thing is that 6 months later Abraham Walter is applying for Thirty pounds to enable him to take himself and family to America and he is allowed Twenty five pounds. Either he has changed his plans or the vestry clerk’s geography is deficient. John Yeoman asked for assistance to help him to emigrate to America but was only allowed four pounds.

So far emphasis has been placed on the duty of the vestry to administer the Poor Law. There were other matters, however, that it busied itself with from time to time.

Occasionally a Calvinistic urge seems to have moved the vestry; on 15th October 1829 they resolve “that William Bates’ case of Bigamy and adultery [sic] be inquired into in order that he may be punished”. Nothing is mentioned about the reason why “William Law be took before Mr. Hogg and if possible to be committed to prison for his past misconduct”. There was some point in seeing that John Moore be brought to a sense of his responsibilities. The vestry decided “that the overseer and Mr. L. Turner be requested to fetch John Moore from where he now is and take him before a magistrate that he may be made to maintain his wife and child or be imprisoned”.

Occasionally the vestry shows a spirit of improvement and searches for ways in which to provide amenities for Rothwell by utilising the spare labour of the unemployed, rather in the spirit of the road improvement schemes of the 1930s. A public parish meeting was held “for the purpose of considering the propriety of sinking wells and putting down pumps in different parts of the parish and it was “resolved unanimously that two wells be immediately sunk . . . one upon the hill known by the name of Coopers Hill and the other on the bank near to Mr. Turner’s house”. We know from the minutes that the work was put in hand. “The five men that have been working at the well to receive three pence per day over and above their parish allowance the time there at work”. It is possible that this interest in well digging was sparked off by a fire which produced a tremendous excitement and evidently strong suspicions of arson. A meeting was held “for the purpose of adopting such means as may be thought best for the better security and safety of the parish from fire”. Twenty two names follow and they decide “that application be made to the different fire offices for their aid and support towards a reward to any person that will give such information that will lead to the conviction of the offender who perpetrated the late act of incendiarism at Rowell”. A watch was formed and a Bow Street officer was obtained for the “purpose of finding out the perpetrator of the late fire”.

Although I have ended on a note of violence, perhaps the most noteworthy thread that runs through these annals of the poor is the lack of a sense of struggle for better things, their sheer passivity in the face of hardship, their lack of incentive to improve their lot. One senses the demoralisation of generations of poverty stricken dwellers of Rothwell by the workings of the old Poor Law. The feature which was in the forefront of the minds of those who agitated for Poor Law Reform in the 1830s was the tremendous cost to the ratepayers of the old system. An annual average of £413 had been spent on poor relief at Rothwell during the three years between Easter of 1782 and Easter 1785 but the amount spent in the year ending Easter 1803 was £2,230. Rates amounting to 2/6 in the pound were levied at Rothwell during 1802-3; in the same year the equivalent figure for all the towns and villages in Northamptonshire taken together was 4/7d.

J. M. STEANE.

42 Ibid., 17 September, 1829, case 9; 24 September, case 1; 15 October, Resolution 3.
43 Ibid., 3 March, 1830.
44 Ibid., 28 October, 1831, case 4.
45 Ibid., 1 July, 1830, Resolution 5.
46 Ibid., 9 June, 1830, Resolution 3.
47 The notice of this is in the back of the vestry minute book dated 7 December, 1831.
49 Resolution of vestry recorded in back of vestry minutes 22 October, 1831.
50 Returns relative to the expense and maintenance of the poor in England 1804. I owe this reference to Mr. V. A. Hatley.
THE NORTHAMPTON ARBITRATION BOARD
AND THE SHOE INDUSTRY DISPUTE OF 1887 *

The National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives had pursued an industrial relations policy of conciliation in wage negotiations ever since the Union had been formed in 1874. Paradoxically, however, the Union’s success in establishing conciliation boards was often preceded by a considerable amount of militant activity. The Union’s attempts to form a Conciliation Board in Northampton had not been particularly successful, for the town was in the 1880s rather weakly unionised. In 1883 the local lasters and finishers’ branch had attempted to introduce into the town a uniform statement of wages which they hoped would eventually replace the various piecework statements in operation at the individual works. After they had enforced its acceptance upon one shop the employers had suggested the formation of a conciliation Board. This was accepted and the Board began to negotiate a general wages’ statement which would lay down the basic piece rate payments and the allowances for extra work. However, when the statement was completed a mass meeting of some 1,200 - 1,300 operatives rejected it and as a result the Board appears to have temporarily collapsed.2

The Board was revived in 18853 but two years later it was faced with a major industrial dispute. At the end of June 1887 the men employed at the factory of J. Branch struck work with the intention of securing a new wages’ statement. They were successful in this and in consequence the employers began to fear that further strikes would follow and that the Union would attempt to defeat each firm in turn.4 This fear appeared to receive confirmation when in July the Union submitted a new statement to the firm of Cove & West whom they had previously accused of systematically reducing wages.5 Mr. West refused to accept the demand for an increase in wages and accused the Union representatives of stirring up trouble amongst his own workmen who, he said, had never made any complaint to him. Although he was not a member of the manufacturers’ Association, West enjoyed their general sympathy for they thought that the current state of trade did not warrant any increase in wages. Consequently the men came out on strike.6 At a meeting held in the St. Michael’s Road Café they put their case to press representatives and responded strongly to the employers’ allegations. They accused West and his manager of refusing to listen to all previous complaints and of enforcing wage reductions through re-classifying work.7 When the union representatives had produced a printed wages’ statement which sought to remove this possibility West had refused on principle to meet them for although “He had nothing to say against the men, who were as respectable a body as could be found in the town . . . he thought they had been unduly influenced by delegates of the Trade Union”.8

Both the firm and the union began to adopt increasingly rigid attitudes. West threatened to introduce ‘blacklegs’ and tried to send work to Irthlingborough but the men there refused to do it.9 More extreme views were expressed by the operatives at a mass meeting held in the Town

* I am grateful to Mr. R. Gregson, General Secretary of the N.U.B.S.O., for permission to consult the union Reports, to Mr. G. D. Franklin, Secretary of the Northampton Arbitration Board for the loan of the Board’s Minutes and to Miss B. M. Makepeace, Northamptonshire County Librarian.

3 Rules of the Board of Arbitration and Conciliation of the Northampton Boot and Shoe Trade, Northampton, 1885.
4 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 9 July, 1887.
5 Ibid., 23 July, 1887; The Times, 23 July, 1887.
7 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 6 August, 1887.
8 Ibid., 13 August, 1887; N.U.B.S.O. Monthly Report, August, 1887.
9 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 20 August, 1887; The Times, 20 August, 1887.
Hall on September 7th. There the workmen heard a London delegate state that they should “preach the doctrine of discontent” and regard the strike as their first attempt to “emancipate themselves from . . . the thralldom of the capitalists”\(^\text{10}\). This prompted the editor of the *Northampton Daily Chronicle* to attack the “salaried agitators” and those of “Socialist views” and conclude, “It was incumbent upon people in the position of Messrs. Cove & West to stand unflinchingly against the enormous, arrogant and indefensible pretensions put forward in the name of the workmen”.\(^\text{11}\) Such views did nothing to reduce the existing tension and when Cove & West did manage to secure some “accommodators” there were some noisy demonstrations and several of those men still at work were followed by a crowd and had their house windows broken.\(^\text{12}\)

Neither literary nor physical outbursts aided those responsible trade unionists and employers’ representatives who were trying to find an amicable way of settling the dispute. A major problem which had to be overcome was the fact that Cove & West were not members of the manufacturers’ Association and so the case could not be taken before the Arbitration Board.\(^\text{13}\) In an attempt to deal with the issue the manufacturers’ Association passed a special resolution to admit Cove & West to membership. Since the Board now had jurisdiction over the dispute the Association requested that the men return to work so as to permit the usual procedures to be implemented.\(^\text{14}\) The Union was reluctant to order the men to return since they were unsure of how long the negotiations on the Board might be delayed without the employers having the incentive of securing the men’s return to work and the resumption of production. Consequently they asked for this dispute to be treated as a special case and the manufacturers held another meeting in the eleventh week of the strike and, with the agreement of Cove & West, accepted that the arbitration should be held before the men returned to work.\(^\text{15}\)

The drawing up of the wages list proved to be an undertaking of considerable technical difficulty. The Conciliation Board met on Wednesday, 12th October, under the presidency of Moses Philip Manfield, who was President of the Manufacturers’ Association and a local Alderman.\(^\text{16}\) Little progress was made but on the Friday the Rev. Dr. Sanders, headmaster of the Northampton Grammar School, was selected as umpire, in preference to Sir Rupert Kettle who was a Worcestershire County Court Judge and a well known arbitrator in industrial disputes. Meetings were continued during the following week and the men formerly employed at Cove & West’s expressed considerable dissatisfaction at the delay, for by now their poverty, on account of their lack of wages, was ceasing to be supportable.\(^\text{17}\) However, at the Board meeting of Thursday the 21st negotiations came to an abrupt halt. The Union had always hoped to secure a classification

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\(^\text{10}\) *Northampton Daily Chronicle*, 8 September, 1887.

\(^\text{11}\) *Northampton Daily Chronicle*, 8 September, 1887.


\(^\text{13}\) N.U.B.S.O. Monthly Report, October, 1887.

\(^\text{14}\) *Northampton Arbitration Board Minutes*, 10 October, 1887; *Northampton Daily Chronicle*, 10 October, 1887. (Rule 12 of the Board Rules of 1885).

\(^\text{15}\) *Boot and Shoe Trades Journal*, 15 October, 1887; *Northampton Mercury*, 15 October, 1887.

\(^\text{16}\) *Northampton Arbitration Board Minutes*, 12 October, 1887. Moses Philip Manfield. Born 1819, died 1899. In 1842 he became head of Manfield and Sons of Northampton and was a member of the town council 1866-88 and Mayor in 1884. From 1891-95 Manfield was M.P. for Northampton and was knighted in 1894. See F. Boase, *Modern English Biography*, Vol. VI, Truro, 1921, p. 130.

\(^\text{17}\) *Ibid.*, 15, 17, 20 October, 1887; *Boot and Shoe Trades Journal*, 22 October, 1887.
of the work on the basis of the materials used in the making up of a shoe and to restrict the amount of work which might be defined as falling into the lowest class, with its correspondingly lower piece rates. However, when they attempted to define the type of material which should be permitted to compose the Fifth class of work, which was the most common type produced in the town, the manufacturers refused to countenance this restriction. As a result the Union asked for the submission of the question to the referee. This was refused by the masters for they feared that if they conceded this point in the Cove & West wages' statement it would eventually be enforced on the whole town. The men regarded this as an ultimatum and the Union Executive met at Leicester and concluded that since the Manufacturers' Association apparently wanted to crush the Union they had no alternative but to fight.

This stand received the full support of those operatives who attended a mass meeting to consider the issue, for they were convinced that the employers' case must be weak if it could not be tested before an arbitrator. In response to the men's militancy the employers drew up a wages' statement of their own for the whole town, each of the members of the Manufacturers' Association entering into a bond of £100 to ensure that all would adhere to the Association's decisions. This new wages' statement "contained nothing in the way of restrictions or definitions of work" and in practice this meant that the classification of work, and thus the rate at which it would be paid, would remain entirely in the hands of the manufacturers. This the Union was not prepared to accept. Furthermore, the men alleged that the new list would entail wage reductions which in some cases would amount to 3s. per dozen boots produced. The manufacturers' leaders, Philip Manfield and Henry Wooding, met the local Union leaders who were accompanied by William Inskip, the General Secretary of the Union, but they failed to produce any compromise. Although William Inskip pointed out that the Leicester boot and shoe manufacturers had previously accepted a case containing samples of specimen boots and shoes as a basis for the classification of the various grades of work, the Northampton manufacturers continued to refuse to accept such a system.

Following the failure of this meeting the members of the Northampton Branch of the Union assembled in the Abington Square Café under the chairmanship of their local President, F. Inwood. After Inwood had condemned the employers for trying to enforce the new statement unilaterally, William Inskip reported that the Union had sufficient funds for a long struggle and that, because of the seriousness of the situation, the National Union Executive had decided to take control of the dispute. Finally, the meeting elected a committee of thirteen to prepare a wages' statement which could be presented as an alternative to the employers' own demands. A meeting with the

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18 Northampton Arbitration Board Minutes, 21 October, 1887.
19 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 29 October, 1887.
20 N.U.B.S.O., Monthly Report, November, 1887; The Times, 1 November, 1887.
21 Northampton Mercury, 29 October, 1887.
22 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 5 November, 1887.
23 Northampton Daily Reporter, 3 November, 1887.
24 Northampton Mercury, 5 November, 1887. William Inskip was General Secretary of the N.U.B.S.O. from 1886-1899.
25 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 12 November, 1887.
The manufacturers explained their position more fully in a wall poster issued on 21st November over the signature of the Association’s secretary, John Adin. They believed that any close classification of the work produced would be disastrous for the town and “would simply hand over a large portion of the trade of the town to other places”. The employers also accused the Union of interfering between themselves and their own workmen and complained, “the workmen of Northampton are not allowed to settle the dispute, the matter having been taken out of their hands by officials at Leicester. We still hope our workmen will see that we have done all we can to meet them and that they will accept the conditions offered in our resolution”. The manufacturers had proposed to close their works to all unionists on 26th November and to enforce a general lockout on December 3rd; during the final few days last minute attempts were made to achieve a settlement but no satisfactory compromise was reached. As tension rose the local magistrates prohibited meetings outside Cove & West’s and the police were required to protect the operatives still employed by that firm.

The employers received considerable support for their views from the editor of the Boot and Shoe Trades Journal and from the Northampton Chronicle whose editor remarked, “It is not for us to indulge in recriminations, but no small number of the inhabitants of the town are astounded beyond measure at what they look upon as the imbecility of men allowing themselves to be led by the nose, as it were, by outsiders, to their own immediate hurt and to the ultimate ruin of the trade”. The next wall poster issued by the employers reiterated these views and re-asserted their opinion that, “Restrictions in any shape or form, and hard and fast definitions, can only cripple the trade of this town, without any possible way benefiting the workman”.

Meanwhile the unemployed operatives were becoming increasingly short of money and on Monday, 5th December decided to appoint a deputation to suggest to the Town Council that they should provide alternative employment for those workmen affected by the strike and the lockout. The Council refused to consider the provision of public relief works and accepted the advice of Alderman Philip Manfield, the employers’ chairman, who informed them that the ‘strike’ would soon be over. There were again rumours that troops might be brought into the town and at least one of the operatives remarked that, “it looked as though the authorities wanted to starve them first and shoot them down afterwards”. It was against this background that negotiations between the Union and the Manufacturers’ Association were reopened. A few concessions were made at the meeting on the Tuesday. It was provisionally agreed that the Union would accept the employers’ wages’ statement in principle if the manufacturers would permit it to be amended in certain respects where it differed considerably from the men’s proposed statement. Furthermore it was accepted that the employers’ demand for six months’ notice be amended to three months from either the 1st April or 1st October. No agreement could be reached over the question of the ‘accommodation’ at Cove & West’s. The Union was hostile to any proposal that their members should return to work with men who had failed to support them in the dispute, whilst the employers were equally reluctant to discharge men whom they regarded as faithful

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26 Ibid., 19 November, 1887.
27 Manufacturers’ Association Wall Poster dated 18 November, 1887; Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 26 November, 1887.
28 Manufacturers’ Association Wall Poster, 21 November, 1887; Northampton Mercury, 26 November, 1887.
29 Northampton Mercury, 3 December, 1887.
30 Ibid., 19 November, 1887; The Times, 2 December, 1887; Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 3 December, 1887.
31 Northampton Chronicle, 3 December, 1887.
32 Manufacturers’ Association Wall Poster, 3 December, 1887. See also Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 10 December, 1887.
33 Northampton Daily Reporter, 6 December, 1887; The Times, 6 December, 1887.
workmen who had stood by them in a time of difficulty. This provisional settlement was accepted by the operatives who gave their representatives full power to negotiate a final settlement.34

It appeared that the dispute was well on the way to a solution, when only a few days later, on the Saturday, a deadlock was again reached. The difficulty arose over the classification of the lower classes of work and remained unresolved after the meeting on the following Monday.35 As a result the manufacturers returned to making virtually all their old demands and at a mass meeting of unionists and non-unionists at the Plough Hall the Union General Secretary, William Inskip, denounced the terms as far too humiliating ever to be accepted. The meeting resolved, in line with the Union's general policy, that the whole question be referred to arbitration. A deputation was appointed to meet the manufacturers but achieved nothing and when the masters later left the Chamber of Commerce, "A large number of men . . . groaned and hissed the manufacturers as they came out. Mr. Manfield and several others, under police escort, were followed by several hundreds groaning and hissing. In St. Giles Street the police charged the people and dispersed them".36

The progress of the dispute had been watched with interest by the London boot and shoe operatives and at their request a London Congregational minister, the Rev. Fleming Williams, came to Northampton to see if he might mediate in the dispute.37 Mr. Williams had previously assisted the London operatives to settle a dispute and in Northampton he was equally successful. With his aid the two sides again met and actually reached an agreement. Principally it was decided that those parts of the wages' statement which had already been agreed upon should be accepted and that although a standard case of samples should be provided for the guidance of the Arbitration Board the manufacturers would be granted unrestricted freedom in the choice of materials which made up the shoe. All future disputes were to be referred to the Arbitration Board or to a Court of Appeal. The court was to consist of a person nominated by each side and a third person selected by the two nominees.38 It was believed that the employers were considering as their representative Thomas Hughes, the author of Tom Brown's Schooldays, who had previously arbitrated in the iron industry in the North-East of England and the cotton spinning trade of Lancashire.39

It was expected that the detailed negotiations over the precise terms of the wages' statement would take a considerable time and so the Arbitration Board, meeting on December 30th, unanimously accepted Philip Manfield's proposal that the men return to work on January 2nd, 1888. The new statement was to be paid as soon as the men returned to work and the Board hoped to have prepared a case of samples by which the work might be classified at least within 14 days after the return to work.40 Subsequently a mass meeting of the operatives accepted this settlement, although some had reservations about the reductions in certain rates and in the failure to deal with the problem of the "accommodators".41 However, the men returned to work and, whilst work was made 'under protest' at the old rates until it was dealt with and classified by the Board,42 the dispute was concluded.

The consequences of the dispute for the Arbitration Board were, if anything, advantageous. The efficient working of a conciliation and arbitration board demands, at the very least, that both the manufacturers and the workmen shall be well organised. During the dispute both sides had

34 Northampton Chronicle, 8 December, 1887; The Times, 9 December, 1887; Northampton Mercury, 10 December, 1887.
35 Northampton Chronicle, 15, 20 December, 1887; Northampton Mercury, 17 December, 1887; Northampton Daily Reporter, 19 December, 1887; Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 17 December, 1887; The Times, 14 December, 1887.
36 Northampton Mercury, 19 December, 1887; The Times, 21 December, 1887.
37 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 31 December, 1887; The Times, 26 December, 1887.
38 Northampton Chronicle, 24 December, 1887.
39 Boot and Shoe Trades Journal, 31 December, 1887. Thomas Hughes, 1822-96. Christian Socialist, called to the Bar in 1848, Q.C. in 1869, Member of Parliament 1865-74. 1882 became County Court Judge. Hughes was a legal adviser to trade unions during the 1870s, closely involved with the co-operative movement and was from 1872-83 Principal of the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street.
40 Northampton Arbitration Board Minutes, 30 December, 1887.
42 Northampton Mercury, 7, 14, 21 January, 1888.
shown they could do this effectively and the Union in particular emerged from the dispute with a stronger local branch than had been the case initially. At least 250 new members joined the local branch. The cost of the dispute had now made both the manufacturers and the Union wish to avoid disputes in the future and by the middle of 1888 the Board was reported to be working to the satisfaction of both parties so that industrial relations in Northampton's staple trade were amicable once more.

JEFFREY H. PORTER.


JOHN JAMES GRAVES

An interesting letter has been received about the two articles on John James Graves which appeared in Northamptonshire Past and Present, Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2, from Major H. E. Knight of Carlton House, Geddington. He says:—

"I have found the two instalments in Northamptonshire Past and Present concerning J. J. Graves, most interesting as I attended Hanging Houghton school just before and during the First World War. I would like to mention one or two items which may be of interest to other readers of this excellent publication.

Firstly, does anyone know the whereabouts of the famous "Illuminated Ten Commandments" painstakingly executed by James Graves which hung in a glazed frame on the left hand side of the fire place in the main room? I paid a visit to the school in about 1962 and found that this work of art had been removed and that Mrs. Latimer was not aware of its existence.

Secondly, your notes in Appendix C regarding William Abbott ("W.L.A." as we knew him) brought back somewhat mixed but nevertheless happy memories. W.L.A. was not only a cricketer who narrowly missed county honours but also a fine soccer player and was a member of Walgrave Amber team in the years 1901-1913. I owed a lot of my early education to his thoroughness and had a tremendous admiration for his flourishing (and in fact spectacular!) handwriting.

However, your remarks as to his being "free with the cane" are a masterly understatement! During both morning and evening periods, each and every miscreant, be he lazy, stupid or unruly was promptly ordered "on the line" which meant standing at the end of the rows of desks in line with the entrance from the door. There one stood until the end of the period to await his ministrations. Victims knew precisely then what to do, i.e. bend over the nearest convenient desk end and receive according to the heinousness of one's wickedness. The sublety of the "long wait" did not of course add cheer to the transgressors. The greatest crime of all and always rewarded with an out and out thrashing was being "caught out" throwing at the school bell (long since removed from its bell-cote on the roof ridge).

I kept contact with W.L.A. until the beginning of the Second World War as I always had a tremendous admiration for him long after leaving the school. This was, in fact, fostered by the knowledge that he was badly injured when the old fashioned boiler (at the back of the fire place) exploded in February, 1919. W.L.A. was in hospital for a long time but fortunately none of the children or Mrs. Abbott, who was in the adjoining infants room, were so badly injured.

This was not the end of the sad story by any means as litigation as to responsibility and damages for Mr. Abbott lasted some twelve months. This action was successfully undertaken for Mr. Abbott by the same Union which Graves himself had founded many years earlier.

It is significant indeed that some hundred years later a Northamptonshire man should once again figure in the history of Union, in that Mr. C. W. Elliott, a Headmaster at Corby, has been elected their president for their centenary year".