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Cover illustration:
The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Canons Ashby
(Photo: John Roan)
Instructions for Contributors

All contributions must be provided in hard copy and in electronic format on a CD or as an attachment to an email, preferably in Word .doc or docx. Please use the existing house style of NP&P. Normally, the maximum length is 6,500 to 7,000 words. Shorter articles and small news items are also welcome. Draft texts may be sent for discussion. Printed references used more than a few times should be abbreviated after the first time and referred back to the full citation. Each article should have at least one illustration and full articles at least three. All illustrations must be of good quality with copyright permission stated and obtained where appropriate. If digital illustrations are provided they should be in separate files, either JPEG or TIFF, preferably with a resolution of at least 300 dpi.
NOTES AND NEWS

On 25 and 26 May 2013, the Friends of Delapré Abbey held a Heritage Weekend which included guided tours of the Abbey. A number of community history groups took part, among them the Record Society with a display put together by Rosemary Eady and Jacqui Minchinton.

A Mystery from History at Canons Ashby. In early February this year, Edward Bartlett, House Manager of Canons Ashby was locking up for the night. As he was walking through the house a thought struck him to look further inside a 400-year-old cupboard. With a torch he discovered an entrance to a small concealed chamber, hidden in the panelling of a room once the Winter Parlour, but which had been used as the servants’ dining hall for the last 300 years. Clearly not a natural void left during the building process, this tiny chamber is floor-boarded and the walls have been plastered from the inside to create a space that could hide a person and a sizeable amount of objects the owner of the house might want to keep hidden away from public view.

Edward believes that this secret chamber dates back to the late sixteenth century, when it is believed the Dryden family may well have been part of a society that evolved into what we now recognise as the Freemasons. The room that conceals this chamber is itself a fascinating and puzzling space. The walls are painted with the crests of local families and enigmatic symbols some of which would be recognised by today’s Freemasons, and frankly odd Latin texts, which tell the reader things such as ‘do not eat of those things with a black tail’ or ‘check your tongue, your belly and your lust, the best thing is to enjoy someone else’s madness’.

There has been speculation that this room was used as an early form of Masonic lodge before Freemasonry was established in England some 130 years later in 1717. This concealed
chamber was clearly made at the same time, and we can only speculate as to its purpose. We
do know that it was not a priest’s hole; the Dryden family were Puritans.

Interestingly, a hundred years later in the early eighteenth century, the walls of the brightly
coloured room were covered over with a white paint. Perhaps the decoration looked shabby
and the family, who were giving Canons Ashby a makeover wanted a change. It is hard to
show this to every visitor to Canons Ashby as part of the regular tour as it is hidden, but
anyone who asks to see this secret chamber will be shown it, as long as they can get into
the cupboard!

* * * * *

Serendipity occurred as I was sorting through some papers and came across a copy of
Northamptonshire Notes and Queries from February 1913 which featured an article by the
Editor, Christopher Markham, on Wootton Hall. Written one hundred years ago this is
from his article:

On the west side of the main road, leading from Northampton to London, about
two miles from the town, and a quarter of a mile from the road, stood the house …
which was in the parish of Wootton, and about a mile from that village.

This was built of Kingsthorp stone, white in colour, and soft in texture, which had
not weathered well, and had been partially cemented over on the outside. The house
faced north and south, and from the front door Queen Eleanor’s cross could be seen
in the distance, through the avenue stretching away to the north. It had two large
circular bays on the south side, and a balustrade round the roof of the central portion.
It was altogether a very plain building, and quite devoid of any architectural details,
nor was there anything particularly worthy of note inside. The situation, however,
was pleasant, and the view towards Blisworth extensive….

In 1911 the repair of this building was undertaken, under the idea that but little was
required. It was, however, soon found that, owing to the dry rot which had permeated
all the timbers, it would be necessary to entirely rebuild the house. It was therefore
taken down, and is now being re-erected, on a site a little to the south of the old
structure. The new house is of Bracknell brick and Ketton stone, and the
characteristics of the old hall, though on a larger scale, are being retained.

* * * * *

Do you have a Clarke of Scaldwell Drawing? It has been suggested that a future
volume for the Society should be a survey of the work of the nineteenth century artist,
George Clarke of Scaldwell. Clarke was a schoolmaster at Hanging Houghton near
Lamport, but developed a talent for sketching local buildings and from his sketches
producing black and white pen wash drawings. He eventually gave up his school work and
devoted himself to providing copies of his drawings especially for the local gentry and clergy.
He drew every parish church in the county and most of the large houses and parsonages.
There are large collections of his drawings in both the Record Office and the
Northamptonshire Libraries. However there are many in private hands. Do you have one?
If so would you be prepared to have it recorded for possible use in the future volume? Every
care would be taken with confidentiality and any drawings in private hands would simply
be listed as ‘Private Collection’; there would be no indication of ownership.

If you would allow a record to be made – a simple digital photograph will suffice – would
you please let Bruce Bailey know, either by telephone 01832 731779; e-mail:
bruce.drayton@btinternet.com; or by letter to: Laundry Court, Drayton House, Lowick, Kettering NN14 3BB. Thank you.

★★★★★

**Book Launch at Boughton House.** On 10 July, a reception was held at Boughton House to launch the latest Society volume, *Estate letters from the time of John, 2nd Duke of Montagu 1709-39.* It was held in the Great Hall and, following brief talks by Duke Richard, Alan Toseland, the transcriber, and the two editors and advisors, Peter McKay and David Hall, the party moved to the North Colonnade where Pimm’s and petits fours were served. The book is beautifully produced and full of the most interesting information for historians, as well as a wider public.

![The Duke of Buccleuch presenting a copy of the book to Alan Toseland who transcribed the letters. (By kind permission of The Duke of Buccleuch, KBE)](image)

★★★★★

This has been a bumper year for additions to your library; in addition to the above, *An Atlas of Northamptonshire: The Medieval and Early-Modern Landscape*, co-authored by David Hall, was published and is reviewed in this issue. And, of course, Pevsner.

★★★★★

As usual I would like to thank the authors and reviewers for their excellent material, and David Hall and David Harries for their support. In 2014, we will be remembering the First World War. If you have or are thinking about a relevant paper, please do let me know. Remember to consult the website for the latest about the Society: www.northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk.

Barbara Hornby

**Notes on Contributors**

**David Adams** was brought up in Essex. During a career of 31 years with BBC Transmission, he served at many stations before being made redundant in 1994. He studied Architectural and Local History at Leicester University, at the same time serving as House 6 northamptonshire past and present

The Duke of Buccleuch presenting a copy of the book to Alan Toseland who transcribed the letters. (By kind permission of The Duke of Buccleuch, KBE)

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The Duke of Buccleuch presenting a copy of the book to Alan Toseland who transcribed the letters. (By kind permission of The Duke of Buccleuch, KBE)
Steward at Canons Ashby, responsible for the contents and building. David retired in 2007 but continues to research local and family history. dxadams@mac.com

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**John Beckett** is Professor of English Regional History at the University of Nottingham. Between 2005 and 2010 he was Director of the Victoria County History. His books include *Writing Local History* (2007), and (with Matthew Bristow and Elizabeth Williamson) *The Victoria County History 1899-2012: a Diamond Jubilee Celebration* (2012). John.Beckett@nottingham.ac.uk

**Heather Bird** obtained an MA in Historical Studies from Leicester University and later studied for a postgraduate certificate in Vernacular Architecture. Local landscapes, their buildings and the people who lived in them have been a long term interest. Heather has now moved from the Northamptonshire/Leicestershire borders to the more urban West Midlands where she looks forward to exploring a new area. heather@sibbertoft.plus.com

**Keith Brooker** left full-time employment in 2010 after a career in university and further education spanning over 30 years. He now lives in East Yorkshire and Norfolk and is involved in a number of activities, including teaching adults and talking history to anyone who will listen. Keith has served on the NRS Council for over 20 years. keith.live@hotmail.co.uk

**Roy Hargrave** has a BA (Hons) in Fine Art Valuation, an MA in Victorian Art and Architecture and a PhD in Architectural History from Royal Holloway, University of London. Roy’s doctoral thesis was on Northamptonshire architect, John Alfred Gotch. Roy is a fine art dealer who specialises in early Northamptonshire artists and architectural and topographical subjects. roy@hargravefineart.co.uk
We are presenting you with a miscellany of papers on an architectural theme to celebrate the publication of Bruce Bailey’s revision of Pevsner’s *Northamptonshire* published by Yale University Press and the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art on 4 September 2013. Starting off this issue is Bruce’s description of the rather arduous process involved in the revision. We are also giving you a sneak preview of the cover which I am sure you will agree provides a dramatic overture to the book.

In the course of putting this issue together, I have encountered many happy coincidences. The most striking – and most interesting – concerns the same characters turning up in several papers, to the point that the issue provides us with a fascinating view of the lives of a certain set of people living in Northampton over the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. Names such as Sir Ryland Adkins, Harry Manfield, J.A. Gotch, and Alexander Anderson keep popping up. As well as focusing on architecture in Northampton and beyond, the issue contains papers on the County Council and the history of the VCH and the same people were involved in both.
Revising Pevsner

BRUCE BAILEY

Having spent the last three years or so on this project, I thought I should say a few words about how I went about it. But first …

What is Pevsner? More rightly the question should be ‘Who was Pevsner?’. Nikolaus Pevsner was born in Leipzig in 1902 into a Jewish family. His father was an affluent businessman and Nikolaus, while at grammar school, developed an interest in art history, with a leaning towards architecture. His first job was as an assistant in the museums in Dresden and he lectured on art history at the university at Göttingen. He first visited England in 1930 and this began his deep interest in English art and architecture. With the rise of the Nazi regime Pevsner emigrated to England in 1934.

He made two important friendships during his early years here – Gordon Russell, who was a designer at the Royal College of Art, and Allen Lane, the publisher of Penguin Books. It was for Lane that he wrote his most influential book, An Outline of European Architecture, published in 1943. It was also to Lane that he suggested the idea of a series of county volumes describing their most important buildings, and much to his surprise Lane agreed to the project and so began The Buildings of England series, initially published by Penguin Books. Work started in the late 1940s with the aim of covering two counties every year. Pevsner by then was lecturing in Cambridge and Birkbeck College, London, so the visiting was done in university vacations.

The first two volumes, Cornwall and Nottinghamshire, appeared in 1951. Every county in England had a volume by 1975, with Pevsner himself completing 32 counties, ten others being written with collaborators and four largely by other writers, although he himself oversaw the complete coverage of the country, a vast and impressive achievement, recognised by his knighthood in 1969. It was already apparent in the late 1950s that there was a need to begin revising the original texts, and a programme was put in hand to begin that process. Nottinghamshire first appeared in 1961 and a revised edition was published in 1973. Pevsner died in 1983. While the accurate title of the series is The Buildings of England by common usage it is always known as just Pevsner.

My Involvement with the Northamptonshire Volume

In the 1950s I worked as a librarian at the Central Library in Abington Street, Northampton. Having developed an interest in old buildings and Northamptonshire history, I can still remember the day when Pevsner came into the Library to look at what was then called ‘The Local Collection’ and I was summoned by Victor Hatley, who was Reference Librarian, to meet him. Pevsner told us that his research assistant, Helen Thomas, would be coming to Northampton to compile background notes for him, and hoped we would give her as much help as we could, which, of course, we readily agreed to. He then set off round the county and the published text appeared in 1961. It quickly became my Northamptonshire Bible and quite soon endless scribbled pencil notes began to appear on its pages. In the mid-1960s we heard from Pevsner again that he intended a revised edition and was sending Bridget Cherry to do this.

By this time I had left the Central Library and was, again with Victor Hatley, at the then College of Further Education in St George’s Avenue. I had already become more deeply involved with research, largely due to my friendship with Sir Gyles Isham, and together we collaborated with Bridget on the new version. I should say at this point that this was basically a corrected version of the original text. I well remember Bridget saying that we had to
keep more or less to the same word count so there was little opportunity to expand descriptions. However, Gyles did prevail on Pevsner to allow us to rewrite a number of accounts, mainly the description of Northampton and one or two country houses. In many ways it was unfortunate timing since it was just at the time when the centre of Northampton was being developed with the building of the Grosvenor Centre and the destruction of many older buildings around the Market Square, a number of which had already gone by the time the volume was published in 1973. Anyone visiting Northampton today with the current *Pevsner* in hand will find it difficult to relate to what he sees around him.

**Should it be Revised Again?**

Since 1973 there have been a number of important studies of Northamptonshire buildings, most notably the beginning of a project by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (RCHM), from their Cambridge office, to record all the historic sites in the county. RCHM already existed for a number of counties and there were introductory volumes and separate volumes on archaeological sites and then detailed inventory volumes recording all worthwhile buildings.

Northamptonshire got off to a flying start with the archaeological volumes published between 1975 and 1982. The first full inventory volume, *Architectural Monuments in North Northamptonshire*, covering those parishes bordering on the Soke of Peterborough, was published in 1984. Then it was decided to cut back the programme and no further inventory volumes would appear, but there would be a volume on the major country houses and one on the churches, and although basic research was done on these, only the country house volume was published (1996).

RCHM was eventually dissolved and absorbed into English Heritage, and the research material for the project is now with their archive in Swindon. Alongside this, another project was launched by *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi* (Catalogue of Medieval Window Glass) and Professor Richard Marks of York University published *The Medieval Stained Glass of Northamptonshire* in 1998. Similarly a huge amount of research has been inspired by the Record Society itself through the issues of *Northamptonshire Past and Present* so there was out and about in the county a vast store of knowledge available. It was about four years ago that I met by chance Charles O’Brien, deputy editor of the *Buildings of England* series, and I asked where Northamptonshire was in the revision schedule. The answer was that it had not long been reprinted so it was quite low down. ‘Why?’, he asked, ‘Are you interested in doing it?’ There were then discussions with Simon Bradley, chief editor, and the result was that I took on the project.

**The Revising Process**

The first thing which had to be done was to get the existing text into a computerised form. This was done by scanning the published pages – in America, I believe. What I then needed to do was to create separate folders for each location in the text. It sounds very simple but, in fact, the scanner did not understand many of the abbreviations and architectural descriptions (all piscinas were turned into piscines!) and anything in the margins (illustration references, for example) and footnotes were all drawn into the text. It was a very tedious process trying to reconcile what actually was on the page with what the scanner thought was on the page.

Having done that and printed off the separate location pages I then had to collate with these anything I already had in my personal files. Fortunately I had kept all my Northamptonshire place-name sheets, which had notes I had taken from county histories, directories and other sources that I had compiled previously. Over the years I had also
collected magazine articles, especially *Country Life*, and guidebooks, etc., so these too were added. Then from London came a series of document boxes with all the correspondence since the last edition, more magazine articles, etc. and this then needed to be added. So what started as a couple of large document boxes of folders quickly became five boxes. Another series that arrived was the printed Department of the Environment (DOE) Listed Buildings. This provided me with a list of all the important historic buildings in the county, and brief notes from these with any dates or architects’ names served as a useful check when out in the field.

Eventually I felt I was in a state that I could start going round the county looking at churches, houses, and villages. Where to start? As I live in the northern part of the county, I decided to begin there with the RCHM inventory volume for that area.

What should I do? Should I take the current Pevsner text and go round and check it, perhaps? After some thought I decided ‘No’, I would do what Pevsner himself did. I would go out with my notebook, go round a village and write down what I thought should be mentioned and then go back and check the text. I feel in retrospect this was the right thing to do, since I was not coloured by what the current text said and it threw up all sorts of queries which might otherwise have been overlooked. What impressed me was how brilliant Pevsner’s own eye was, especially for medieval church architecture. There were very few instances where I found any discord and his accounts largely stand, even if I have added some extra material. He was less good on the country houses, but then the RCHM had done a detailed investigation, not just a quick look around, which is what Pevsner did. What still astonishes me is that Pevsner went round the county in about a month and wrote it all down. It took me nearly eighteen months to simply get round the county! People who criticise Pevsner for missing things or getting a date or name wrong should bear this in mind.

Slowly, then, I progressed round the county. It was slow partly because when Pevsner went round in the 1950s, nearly all the parish churches were open (as I remember from my bicycling days), but now, in many cases, churchwardens have to be contacted and buildings have to be opened specially. I should add that, without exception, the churchwardens of Northamptonshire churches were exceedingly obliging on this venture and on the whole the same can be said for owners of private houses. I tried to look at everything mentioned, at least from the outside.

As the sequence of tours evolved, so it became clear that there were certain buildings that needed further research, and the next stage was to begin looking at documentary evidence, largely that held by the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO). It is impossible to enumerate all the different sources but I should pay tribute to Crispin Powell, formerly of the Office, whose knowledge of the collections highlighted numerous sources which I would otherwise not have found. The staff of the Record Office were enormously patient in ferreting out hidden documents, plans and illustrations, and without their cooperation the new volume would not be as complete as it is. In a similar way, Jon-Paul Carr of Northamptonshire Libraries has looked up all sorts of bits of information. A major source which may not be known to everyone is the British Library *British Newspaper Archive*. This is a subscription service but allows access to most of the files of the country’s older newspapers and has an excellent search tool. It is a fascinating source and very much a case of one thing leads to another. You can spend many happy hours playing with it!

*Fellow Researcher*

Almost immediately I began making contact with those, like myself, who had been doing
research over the years. Of special importance was the work of Paul Sharpling who had been cataloguing all the post-Reformation stained glass in the county. I could note down important windows in the churches but Paul could often identify their makers, and this was one of the areas where the Pevsner eye was weak. He relied upon what had been noted by others and clearly had no personal eye for Victorian and Edwardian windows. With Paul’s collaboration I think we have included every major window in Northamptonshire churches. Then there were people who had researched their own villages, churches or houses and I can only refer the reader to my list of acknowledgements in the volume for the names of those who provided me with information. While my name appears on the title-page as author it should really be coordinating editor, since without the huge input by others, my text would be a fragment of what it is.

The Printed volume
The Pevsner series is now published by Yale University Press (Bedford Square, London) and the editing, etc. is all done from there. My editor, Charles O’Brien, has been especially helpful and has managed to ask many perceptive questions arising from what I had in my drafts. There is similarly an excellent back-up team to deal with illustrations, plans and the mechanics of getting the text through the printing process. One of the changes with recent volumes is that they now have the luxury of colour photographs in place of the rather varied selection of black and white, many from the somewhat dated collection of the National Monuments Record. I have had the good fortune to persuade John Roan to photograph for me, and he has spent a good many hours travelling around the county taking numerous pictures. Inevitably there has to be a selection and I only wish we could have included more. In addition we can now include some black and white illustrations within the text and this has allowed a few engravings and several drawings by the mid-nineteenth century artist, George Clarke. There are, of course, the usual selection of plans, both buildings and towns, all of which have been drawn specially for the volume.

The whole project was eventually wound up in the middle of May this year with the promise of publication late August/early September. So, all done, and I now wait with some trepidation to see what the reviewers make of the new Pevsner’s Northamptonshire.
Alexander Ellis Anderson LRIBA (1866-1935): A Scottish Architect in Northampton

DAVID ADAMS

Walking the streets of Northampton, as the buildings of the past are relentlessly replaced by new designs, one wonders who were the people responsible for the public face of the town. Who were the architects behind the buildings that created what was mainly a Victorian and Edwardian façade?

Names such as E.W. Godwin (Guildhall), Matthew Holding (Guildhall Extension), E. Lutyens (War Memorial) and E.F. Law (Goodyear Building, now BBC Radio Northampton) come to mind but also a Scottish architect who spent the majority of his professional life in Northampton, namely Alexander Ellis Anderson, architect to the businesses and residents of the area. His designs range from simple garages or motor houses to churches and factories, not forgetting shops, cinemas and warehouses. There was probably no area he did not create designs for throughout his career. Like those of so many of his contemporaries, his designs, while being functional, were equally decorative – perhaps a lesson for some recent additions to the streets of the town. He was influenced by the Arts & Crafts movement and John Ruskin, the Victorian art critic. Consequently he named his house at 1 The Drive, Brantwood, the same as Ruskin’s house in the Lake District. Also, when his office was in Abington Street, his letterhead embodied Ruskin’s ‘Seven Lamps of Architecture’ motif (Figure 1).

For those who are interested in researching his buildings, there are still many extant but it is a vanishing legacy. This article aims to show people where some of these buildings are and to find out what an eclectic designer he was.

Alexander Anderson was born in Scotland in 1867, son of a tea dealer.1 The exact location of his birth is a mystery and has been quoted as Forfar, Dundee and Glasgow. His brother William was born in Dundee. The family does not seem to have been poor, as both Alexander and his brother became architects. While William trained at the Edinburgh College of Art, Alexander received his training initially through the building trade. He first worked for Messrs Davies in St Andrews and then for G. Easton in North Berwick. Alexander moved south to Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire to work for the joinery firm of J.A. Hunt. He then moved to Leek to the offices of William Sugden, architect and builder. It seems by this point he was a competent surveyor and was learning the architectural profession. In 1891 he joined his brother William in Glasgow as an assistant draughtsman and architect. William had just set up his own practice and by then was President of the Glasgow Architectural Association.2 Unfortunately, following a building collapse in 1899, he had a nervous breakdown and committed suicide in 1900.

1 Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Library.
2 Dictionary of Scottish Architects
Alexander had left the practice in Scotland in 1893 and moved to Northampton. By now he was a proficient architect and started his career here in Northampton in partnership with Abraham Mosley and Harold Scrivener. Little is known of either Mosley or Scrivener. Scrivener advertised himself as a sanitary engineer and later lived briefly at 78 Derngate. It seems that as from 1893 when Anderson arrived, the business became known as Mosley & Anderson, based in the Goodyear Building. The practice rubber stamp gives their address as Goodyear Chambers, Abington Square, which was home originally to the British United Shoe Machinery Co. In 1896 Mosley & Anderson added an extension to this building and it was later extended in the same style in 1930, but not by Anderson.

**Mosley & Anderson Partnership 1893-1900**

In his first seven years in Northampton, Anderson was involved in several buildings. Many were smaller projects such as new shop fronts or alterations to existing buildings. However, it was during these years that the first warehouse for Messrs Inglis & Co., leather merchants of Glasgow, was built. This is the red brick building on the corner of Dychurch Lane and Fish Street, now used by the Borough Council. *(Figure 2)* This building sees the introduction of one of Anderson’s ‘trademarks’, namely the use of rebus to decorate the façade. One is a monogram for Malcolm Inglis *(Figure 3)* and the other incorporates the date, AD 1895.

Staying in Fish Street, the entrance to the Whyte Melville Club and 20th Century Chambers are two more buildings from this partnership. The latter has Mosley & Anderson’s monogram on the decorated pilasters that run up to the roof line. 20th Century Chambers, 3 Fish Street *(Figure 4)*, became their offices after leaving the Goodyear Building.

There is also a reference to Mosley & Anderson having an office in Finedon and building the Working Men’s Club on Wellingborough Road. The door detail is very similar to the

3 Planning applications, Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO).
doorway of the Whyte Melville Club in Fish Street. Two chapels were also built in this period, namely the Doddridge Memorial Chapel in St James Road (now demolished) (Figure 5) and the Baptist Chapel in Adnitt Road.

Note that the alpha pediment on the Doddridge Chapel was Mosley & Scrivener’s trademark, which was used on the Emporium Arcade on the Market Square (now demolished).

The Adnitt Road Chapel was Anderson’s winning entry in a competition to design a chapel for the Baptist Union of Northampton on Monks Park. The problem with partnerships is discerning who in the partnership was responsible for the design, as architects rarely sign their drawings. However, the commemorative pamphlet published by the church elders does refer to Anderson as the winning entrant.4

One of Anderson’s early designs for himself was Holly Lodge, on the corner of Holly Road and Abington Avenue. This was his family home and featured in The Builder in 1897.5 It is an unusual house on a difficult corner site, but it is where we see the appearance of Anderson’s fascination with circular objects. In this case, it appears as a round tower front on the corner and a semi-circular window over the front door. Semicircular and oval leaded windows were to be one of his favourite features in subsequent years. There was no sparing the carpenter, as the window over the door is a semi-circular wood sash window. (Figure 6)

Alexander Anderson 1900-1927
Anderson’s break with Mosley is recorded in the London Gazette in 1900 where the Notice records the dissolution of the Mosley & Anderson partnership. Anderson set out on his own at 35 Abington Street, and the Mosley & Scrivener partnership re-emerged at 3 Fish Street. It would seem from this Notice that Scrivener probably continued to work for Mosley & Anderson throughout the 1890s. It is possible Harold Scrivener ran the Finedon office as he appears as Borough Surveyor for Finedon around this time, and in 1904 Mosley

Figure 3. Malcolm Inglis Rebus. (Author)

Figure 4. 20th Century Chambers, 3 Fish Street. (Author)

4 NRO.
& Scrivener were contracted to design the Finedon water tower. One of Anderson’s early contracts on his own was his third chapel, the Primrose Hill Chapel, in 1901. (Figure 7) This building, opposite Barratt’s Footshape Boot Works, has now been converted to apartments. It is a totally different design from the other two, more in a pseudo-Palladian style with a semi-circular pillared porch and a bas-relief in the pediment. The chapel itself was circular with Carolean style plate tracery windows.

At this point (1901) Anderson moved from Holly Lodge to Fernleigh, 50 Kingsley Road, overlooking the racecourse; then two years later to Brantwood, 1 The Drive. In 1907 he moved to his new house, Hillcrest, in Abington Park Avenue, now renamed Christchurch Drive on the Alexandra estate. In 1910, he was accepted as Licentiate of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Anderson now adopted the Arts & Crafts style for his residential buildings. Here his trademark characteristics abound. Distinguishing features are rooflines, which cut down across the first floor in a mansard style, and, as mentioned above, oval windows in the bay sides and small semi-circular leaded bay windows. It is these features that help to identify other houses as Anderson’s work.

According to the Northampton Independent in 1907, Anderson had a vision of creating in this area of Northampton a small development echoing the designs of the new garden cities. He built only a few houses along Abington Park Avenue. The signature features mentioned above identify the main ones. Some also have the typical Arts & Craft font used for their names in the stucco façade. The names include The Bungalow, The Cottage, The Nook and Hillcrest for himself. While the grand idea of this garden village did not materialise, walking round the roads in the vicinity of Abington Park Crescent, one sees some in a similar style which are not by Anderson.

Also in Christchurch Road is the red brick Lyndhurst, built in 1924 for Mr Peach, with its characteristic semi-circular oriel window on the first floor. (Figure 8)

6 www.newfinedon.utvinternet.com/WATER_TOWER.htm
7 RIBA Library.
In recent years this property has acquired a second floor which is sympathetic to the original façade and, to the casual observer, unnoticeable. Not in the same style but just across the park is Stonehenge in Park Avenue North, identifiable by the typeface for the name. It also includes curved windows and a sundial. This was built in 1906 for William Barratt, the owner of Barratt’s shoe factory. Another house for a shoe factory owner is Oaklands, Harlestone. This was built for Mr Lewis of C. & E. Lewis and features polygonal bays and a sundial. Today it is largely obscured by several mature trees.

**Figure 6. Holly Lodge, Abington Avenue. (Author)**

The Co-operative Society Buildings

Anderson moved his new practice to 35 Abington Street, and this marked the beginning of a number of buildings for the Northampton Co-operative Society, including their main branch at 64–66 Abington Street in 1909. This was later demolished and was replaced by the current Art Deco façade in 1936. Anderson’s building had a similar white glazed tiled front but with a lot of ornamentation with pilasters, swags and garlands; a fairly typical style for Edwardian buildings. This style was echoed in some of the branches he built at this time. Many of these buildings have either been demolished or replaced. The Mayorhold (1915) was a typical example.

Branch No. 6 in Hester Street, Semilong (1908), a red brick building, is still in use. St James and Far Cotton branches have been replaced with non-Anderson Art Deco buildings and are no longer Co-operative stores. Branch No. 5 in Kingsthorpe still stands, now painted cream. It was initially suspected to have been a cinema as it has a tall narrow façade, redolent of small cinemas. In 1919, one of the last branches to be built was No. 18 in Balmoral Road. The post-war style had changed from the white glazed stonework of Abington Street via the moulded or rubbed brick of Semilong, to a more utilitarian brick façade. No. 18 is no longer a Co-op store but is still in use as a ‘corner shop’.

8 25, 50 and 75 year souvenir books, Northamptonshire Libraries Local Collection.
In 1912 Anderson designed the new Steam Bakery in Barry Road, which interestingly included stables for the delivery horses. The building still stands and is a Co-op branch, but the stables have been demolished to create a car park. There are three booklets in Abington Street Library, Northampton, containing photographs of some of the branches and of the interior of the bakery. Several of the branches illustrated have now been demolished.

**The Shoe Trade**

One of Anderson’s specialities was shoe factories, some of which are still standing. A favourite example is the Barratt Footshape Boot Works on Primrose Hill with the ostentatious alpha balustrade. (Figure 9) Alas only the office range survives, now a listed building. This design harks back to Mosley and the Emporium Arcade balustrade. Built for William Barratt in 1913 the design incorporated the use of iron columns and concrete floors to minimise the effects of fire, a hazard in leather factories. Unfortunately, in 1922 there was a fire on the upper floor of the factory but, due to its construction, damage was limited to the one floor. This meant that the lower floors were soon returned to production while the upper floor damage was repaired.

This was not the only factory Anderson rebuilt after a fire. John Cave & Sons’ factory in Rushden was burnt to the ground in 1901 and Anderson designed the replacement using the alternative approach to the hazard of fire by building a single storey factory in College Street, Rushden, with firewalls and doors between the various departments. This solution was available only to those with access to open ground as the building’s footprint was so much larger than for a multi-storey building. Another single-storey factory by Anderson was designed for Loake Bros in Kettering. This was one of his earliest while he was still in partnership with Mosley. Not only does this factory still stand but the original bills and specifications are also in existence. The cost for the factory was £4,034 13s 0d. These

9 *British Shoe and Leather Trades Biographical Directory.*
documents can be found in the Northamptonshire Record Office in the Loake Collection.

Other examples of shoe factories are the Padmore & Barnes factory, now Church’s, in St James Road; Webb’s factory in Brockton Street, now apartments; and Crockett & Jones in Magee Street, still a factory. The warehouse section of Webb’s in Bunting Road was featured in *The Builder* in 1897. Like some of his other buildings this has several rebuses decorating the façade, including his favourite Northampton rose. Across the road in Arthur Street is the Miller Last Works. Anderson built an extension to the works in 1903 consisting of a tower and workrooms at the lower end of the old building. The tower has a date-stone for 1903.

Another of his more monumental buildings was the new leather warehouse for Malcolm Inglis in Fish Street. This was the second building for him in Fish Street. This new building is in brick and stone with a magnificent carved stone quadrant façade over the main entrance with bull’s heads to show that leather was their trade. This extends right to the roofline and includes a panel proclaiming that the Malcolm Inglis Company was founded in Glasgow in 1796. Such ostentation seems to have fallen by the wayside these days.

In Northampton Central Library there is a presentation book written by Anderson and printed for the opening of the building with charming engravings of the façade and some other details of decoration. The whole is a masterpiece of Edwardian printing. Malcolm Inglis has long departed, but this building still stands and is now apartments with ground floor shops. Green’s of Stimpson Avenue and Hawkins of St Michael’s Avenue, both shoe factories, also received the attention of Anderson with alterations and additions.

Anderson’s talents also extended to Electric Picture Houses, or cinemas, and temporary entertainment structures such as an outdoor stage for Grapho & Jackson and a skating rink in Wellingborough Road. The skating rink site is now a petrol station near to Christchurch. One cinema that stands largely complete, but again converted to apartments, is the Regal, later the Essoldo, in Grove Road. The Coliseum, just below the Footshape works, still stands but the façade has been removed and the building converted to retail premises. However, the pediment from the façade has been preserved in the wall in front of the adjacent buildings.

An interesting diversion for Anderson was to design the Memorial Hall in Castilian Street. *(Figure 10)* This is a memorial to the First World War in Scottish baronial style. Initially it
Figure 9. Barratt’s Footshape Boot Works. (Author)

Figure 10. Memorial Hall, Castilian Street. (Author)
was used as a military hospital, but it is probably remembered as the YWCA hostel. It is unique among his buildings both in style, harking back to his Scottish roots and also because above the doorway in the left-hand spandrel, he is named as the architect. This building is also now undergoing restoration and conversion.

On the housing front there are quite a lot of Anderson’s designs still surviving. One large development is the Monarch Road/Imperial Road area adjacent to the Footshape works off Kingsthorpe Road. Built for Mr Catt, a local builder, they were probably for the factory workers in the Footshape Works, Webb’s Factory and Miller Last Works. Countess Road is a row of terraced houses with full height canted bays, unlike Monarch Road, which had canted bays at first floor level only. The Countess Road development was possibly homes for the workers at the neighbouring Robinson’s factory, which Anderson extended.

The last house he designed was in the Art Deco style. This is Cornerways on the corner of Lime Avenue and Wellingborough Road. (Figure 11) It has two vertical stucco panels with his favourite rose motif and thistles and Anderson’s oak-lined hall and staircase, very much the style of the day.

Basset Lowke and 78 Derngate
Before addressing Anderson’s associations with 78 Derngate, it is worth noting that Anderson lived in Sarnia, No. 72, and Keightly Cobb, his assistant, lived next door at No. 70. Both houses show signs of Anderson’s signature alterations, particularly to the rear. As well as being near neighbours, Anderson had worked for the Basset Lowke family, building a workshop, store and factory in Kingswell Street and undertaking alterations to some of Lowke’s other premises in Northampton. Unfortunately the Kingswell Street factory, which Anderson built, was destroyed by fire in recent years.

It seemed natural for Basset Lowke to approach Anderson to draw up the alterations to his new home at 78 Derngate. This project was unusual as two Scottish architects were involved (Anderson and Charles Rennie Macintosh), but as far as we know, they never met. It is more curious when you think they were contemporaries in the same line of business. However, while Macintosh trained with the Glasgow School of Art, Anderson progressed through the trade learning from professionals such as surveyors and architects. As with the interior décor, it is very likely that some of the re-design of this modest terraced house was influenced by Basset-Lowke himself. While it is usual for clients to instruct and advise their architect, I suspect Basset Lowke’s engineering background may well have made him a little more proactive with some of the innovative re-design of the interior. We know that he advised Macintosh on some of the fitments. The Anderson plans are in the Northamptonshire Record Office.

Anderson & Walker 1928
In 1928 Anderson joined forces with James Walker ARIBA. There is little information of the work of this partnership in Northampton but it appears that the practice functioned in Walthamstow, North London. During this period Anderson remained on the electoral roll as living in Hazelwood Road, Northampton, but he may well have been working in Walthamstow as there are no entries in the Northampton Building Register during this period.

Of his personal life very little can be gleaned. On 14 November 1895 he married Mabel Palliser at All Saints Church in Northampton. They had two children, Stephanie, born in 1900 and Edric Alexander in 1903. The only photo of Anderson discovered so far is in an issue of the Northampton Independent in 1907 when he won a golf competition. (Figure 12) Stephanie and Edric were reported in the paper as dancers and entertainers, and Stephanie
set up her own dance studio with her friend, Miss Peach. The dance studio was in Hazelwood Road, where Anderson now had his chambers. He retired to the new garden city of Rickmansworth. He finally moved to Chiswick with Mabel to live with Stephanie and died of heart failure on 14 December 1935 in St Bartholomew’s Hospital, London, at the age of 69. Mabel outlived him by six years.\(^\text{10}\)

Anderson was a prolific architect in his adopted home of Northampton. Many of his commissions were for the non-conformist industrialists of the area, perhaps influenced by his Scottish upbringing. His designs were varied but reflected an interest in modern trends as shown in the Alexandra Estate project, although the Co-operative contracts and factory projects are in a typical Edwardian style. Consequently he was influential in shaping the public face of Northampton in particular as well as areas of the county. It is unfortunate that some of his elegant façades have been demolished, but it is fortunate that the modern trend for apartments has found an alternative use for his buildings.

**Main Buildings** (excluding many additions and alterations)\(^\text{11}\)

**Designed when in partnership with Abraham Moser (1893–1899).**

- 1895 Holly Lodge, Abington Avenue
- 1895 New Entrance to Whyte-Melville Club, Fish Street
- 1895 Malcolm Inglis Office & Warehouse, Fish Street
- 1896 3 Houses, Colwyn Road
- 1896 Marlow & Son, New Street between Patrick Street & St George’s Street – Demolished
- 1898 Baptist Chapel, Adnitt Road
- 1898 Kennard Warehouse, Fish Street – Demolished
- 1899 Claridge’s Factory, Adnitt Road – Demolished

\(^{10}\) Mr J. Tyler letters to the author.

\(^{11}\) Planning Applications Register, NRO.
Designed when in practice on his own (1900–1927)
1900 Malcolm Inglis Warehouse, Fish Street
1900 Jeffery & Sos, Warehouse, Woolmonger Street – Demolished
1900 Dr Cairns, White Lodge, Barrack Road & Marriot Street
1901 A.E. Anderson, Fernleigh, 50 Kingsley Rd, Motor House – (the first in Northampton?)
1901 J.P. Robinson, Factory, Spencer Bridge Estate (Countess Road?)
1901 Congregational Church, Primrose Hill, Kingsthorpe Road
1902 Miller Last Co, Arthur Street, Additions to factory
1902 Wright Bros, Packing Case Factory, 48 Lower Mounts – Demolished
1903 Mr Hadley, 14 Houses, Countess Road
1903 J.T. Lowke, New Warehouse, Kingswell Street
1904 Northampton Co-operative Society, Harborough Road Branch #5
1905 Levy Freres, Office, 67 Horse Market – Demolished
1905 A.E. Anderson, House, Sandringham Road (The Bungalow?)
1906 A.E. Anderson, Hillcrest, 48 Abington Park Road (now Christchurch Road)
1906 William Barrett, House, Stonehenge, Park Avenue
1906 J. Smith, House, 22 Chaucer Street
1907 Hoare & Cole, Printing Works, Hazelwood Road – Demolished
1908 Northampton Co-operative Society, Semilong Road Branch #6
1909 A.E. Anderson, Motor House, Hillcrest, 48 Abington Park Road
1909 J. Hollingsworth, 44 Abington Park Road – Coach House & Stables
1909 Northampton Co-operative Society, 64–66 Abington Street – Demolished
1909 Northampton Co-operative Society, Barry Road, New Stables
1909 Empire Skating Rink Co, Skating Rink, Wellingborough Road – Burnt down

Figure 12. Alexander Ellis Anderson, *Northampton Independent* 1907.
(Northamptonshire Libraries)
1909 Grapho & Jackson, Temporary Pavilion, Wellingborough Road
1910 F. Haffenden, House, Weston Road – Lowood, The Avenue Cliftonville?
1911 Northampton Co-operative Society, Barry Road, Steam Bakery
1911 Mr Hadlow, 2 Houses, 168 & 170? Cedar Road
1911 J. Grose, Garage, Marefair – Demolished
1912 William Barrett, New Factory, Footshape Works, Kingsthorpe Road
1912 A.E. Catt (builder), Motor House, Abington Avenue
1913 J.S. Lowke, Model Store, Kingswell Street
1914 A.E. Catt, 52 new houses on Kingsthorpe Road, Monarch Road & Imperial Road
1915 Northampton Co-operative Society, 5, Mayorhold Branch No. 11
1919 Northampton Co-operative Society, Balmoral Road Branch No. 18
1919 Mrs D.D. Taylor, Memorial Hall, Castilian Street
1919 Gamble & Corington, (Regal) Picture House, Grove Road
1919 Hannington & Walls, Coliseum Picture House, Kingsthorpe Road – Façade removed
1920 R. Sealer, House, 38 Christchurch Road
1920 A.E. Anderson, House, Thursby Road
1922 William Barrett, Footshape Works, Kingsthorpe Road – Reinstatement after fire
1924 Mr Harland, 2 Houses, Beech Road
1924 J.H. Peach, House & Motor House, Lyndhurst, 52 Christchurch Road
1927 W.T. Hanning, House, Cornerways, Lime Avenue & Wellingborough Road

Further Reading
Victor Hatley. Biographical Notes, NRO.
Loake Brothers papers. Mosley & Anderson factory specification, NRO.

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John Alfred Gotch (1852-1942), the distinguished architect and scholar, was born into a respected Kettering family, long established in shoe manufacturing and banking. His great-grandfather Thomas Gotch (1748-1806) introduced boot and shoe making to Kettering and became the town’s principal employer. His grandfather John Cooper Gotch (1772-1852) established political connections with the Whig aristocracy of the region and his father Thomas Henry Gotch (1804-91) was responsible for running (and ruining) the family bank.

John Alfred was educated at Foy’s Academy, Brompton Road, London; Kettering Grammar School; and at the University of Zurich and the Polytechnic School of Zurich. In Gotch’s own generation his brother Thomas Cooper Gotch (1854-1931) became a famous painter (he painted John Alfred’s portrait for the Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA]).
(Figure 1) and his other brothers distinguished themselves in the fields of education, commerce and local government. All of these factors fed into Gotch’s career, allowing him in 1879 to set up a private architectural practice in Kettering.

In 1880, the architect Charles Saunders (1858–1944) moved to Kettering to assist Robert Winter Johnson (1832–1884), to whom Gotch had previously been articled. Saunders took over the goodwill of Johnson’s practice on the latter’s demise in 1884. On 1 March 1887, Gotch entered into partnership with Saunders. The foundation of this joint enterprise then led to 50 years of prosperity and productivity. Their association was to last until their joint retirement on 31 December 1937.

During the entire period of their association, Gotch and Saunders invited only three other architects to join them as partners. The first was Arthur George Leighton (1867–1943); the second John Alfred’s nephew, Laurence M. Gotch (1881–1964); and the last but most significant was Henry Ralph Surridge (1885–1954). Surridge joined the firm as an office junior in 1889 and was made a partner in 1930. It was at that time that the partnership took on the name for which it was known for over 70 years: Gotch, Saunders and Surridge.

The well-known reference to Kettering as ‘the town that Gotch built’ is no exaggeration. Rather it encapsulates the huge contribution Gotch made to his place of birth. He designed and supervised the construction of shoe factories (Figure 2) and warehouses, shops, offices, banks, hospitals, schools, public houses, a coffee tavern and a temperance hall. He could turn his hand to almost any building type, from churches and chapels to working men’s clubs and a party political club. His firm was responsible for a variety of sport and entertainment venues in Kettering: golf and cricket pavilions, the Kettering Town Football Club stand, the leisure facilities at Wicksteed Park, the Alfred East Art Gallery and the Victoria Hall. He built a wide range of housing, from simple terraces to detached middle-class homes, and a handful of grand properties for local tycoons.

Further afield, the firm was responsible for the design of several First World War memorials, and the alteration and enlargement of numerous historic country houses.

In an extraordinary nine-year period following the First World War, Gotch and Saunders designed and built over 140 branches for the Midland Bank. Their crowning achievement was the construction of the Bank’s headquarters in Poultry, London, in association with Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens (1869–1944).

Gotch had a special interest in Elizabethan and Jacobean architecture and became a national authority on the subject through his writings. He was the author of nine books (two of which were reissued): A Complete Account, Illustrated by Measured Drawings, of the Buildings erected in Northamptonshire by Sir Thomas Tresham (1883); Architecture of the Renaissance in England, 2 Vols. (1894); Early Renaissance Architecture in England (1901 & 1914); The Growth of the English House (1909 & 1928); The English Home from Charles I to George IV (1918); Old English Houses (1925); Inigo Jones (1928); The Old Halls & Manor-Houses of Northamptonshire (1936); Squires’ Homes and Other Old Buildings of Northamptonshire (1939). He was also the editor of a tenth book on the history of the RIBA: The Growth and Work of the Royal Institute of British Architects 1834-1934 (1934).

Apart from his renown as an architectural historian, he also achieved eminence as a public figure. Gotch’s long and distinguished period of service to his profession commenced in 1882, when he was elected a Member of the Council of the Architectural Association and served as President of the Architectural Association in 1886–7. This position automatically
made him a Member of the RIBA Council, on which he served between 1886 and 1904, and between 1905 and 1925 and again in 1930. He acted as Vice-President of the RIBA between 1914 and 1919, and as President between 1923 and 1925. He was the first provincial architect to be appointed President since the formation of the Institute in 1834. He also acted as President of the Northamptonshire Association of Architects between 1911 and 1922.

In addition, he was Vice-President of the Society of Antiquaries, a founder member of the Royal Fine Arts Commission and, for ten years, a Trustee of the Soane Museum. In 1924 he received an honorary MA degree from the University of Oxford and was appointed the first Charter Mayor of Kettering in 1938.

John Alfred died at his home, Weekley Rise, Weekley, Northamptonshire, on 17 January 1942. He had married Annie Perry in 1886. She predeceased him, as did their son Roby Myddleton, killed in action in 1916. He was survived by a daughter, Hester Perry.

Selected List of Buildings by J.A. Gotch & His Partners
(Note: a number of these have been converted or have changed use.)

In Kettering:
1887-91, 1893-4 H. Hanger Factory, Stamford Road
1888 Liberal Club, Dalkeith Place
1890-1 T. Bird factory, Bath Road/Digby Street
1891-4 Sun Hotel, Market Street
1892 Sunnylands, Headlands (St Peter’s School)
1892-4 Rockingham Road, Wesleyan Church (Salvation Army)
1892-6 Elm Bank, Northampton Road
To these should be added numerous First World War Memorials 1920-22, including those at Brigstock, Finedon, Pitsford, Titchmarsh, Weldon, Islip, Burton Latimer and Kettering.
Farthingstone: A Mecca for Edwardian Architecture and Art

JUDITH PATRICK AND BRUCE BAILEY

This article derives from research by Judith Patrick for her book Walter Cave: Arts and Crafts to Edwardian Splendour, Phillimore 2012. The article was submitted prior to publication of the book but, knowing that this issue of Northamptonshire Past and Present was to have an architectural theme, it was held over. Coincidentally I had also discovered Cave’s work at Farthingstone together with other buildings and works of art there, hence this extended article using, with Mrs Patrick’s permission, a version of her original article. Mrs Patrick’s book contains a detailed biography of Cave and his work and the section on Littlecourt has more information about the design and fitting up of the house than is included here.

Cave was an important architect and many will know at least one of his works, the Burberry Store on the corner of Haymarket and Orange Street in London.

Farthingstone is a charming village in the hinterland of south Northamptonshire. It is a village you might drive through and see little to detain you – but you would be mistaken. Tucked away is a remarkable remnant of a fine Edwardian country house, possibly the finest Edwardian house that was built in the county, with behind a high stone wall, a delightful memorial garden with a shelter and a cloister, and then in the church some splendid stained glass windows by the well-known firms of Morris & Co. and Powells. The whole ensemble owes its presence to the Agnew family. The Agnews claimed descent from an ancient Scottish family although they did not rise into prominence till the end of the nineteenth century. The first of note was Sir William Agnew (1825-1910) who was created baronet in 1895. In 1870 he had joined his two younger brothers, Thomas and John Henry, and his brother-in-law, William Bradbury in the printing firm of Bradbury & Evans, proprietors of Punch magazine. The firm was soon renamed Bradbury & Agnew and the brothers took leading roles, William becoming Chairman in 1890. The Farthingstone estate on the south edge of the village was acquired in 1904 by Phillip Leslie Agnew (1864-1938), fourth son of Sir William, who was to take over the directorship and ownership of the company on his father’s death. Phillip had been educated at Rugby and New College Oxford and had studied law, but instead of going to the Bar joined the family firm. In 1889 he married Alexandra Georgette Christian. They shared a deep interest in music. Georgette, as she preferred to be called, was especially keen about old English folk music. She also wrote novels.

Littlecourt, Farthingstone

On acquiring the land, Phillip immediately set in place ideas for a new house and for this he turned to the architect Walter Cave (1863-1939). Cave had been articled to the prominent architect Sir A.W. Blomfield, but instead of joining an established firm he had set up his own practice and quickly became known for his country house designs. As a prominent member of the Art Workers Guild and a regular exhibitor at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, Cave liked to use locally available building materials in a vernacular arts and crafts manner, often producing a layout for the garden as well as the house. He considered that buildings evolve and that architects had to apply their knowledge of tradition to current problems while taking advantage of new construction methods. The designs for Littlecourt were begun in 1904 and eventually signed by Cave in March 1905. They were published in The Builder in 1907 (Figure 1). This was a crucial professional period for the Agnews’ chosen architect as he became a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1906, President of the Architectural Association in 1907 and 1908 and joined the Masons.

Cave chose for his building contractor Henry Martin of Northampton. Martin, whose office was in Thenford Street, was a highly respected builder and was associated with the architect Matthew Holding, having built for him St Matthew’s church, Northampton (1863-5). Martin’s worth was known outside Northampton, having won in 1902 the commission to
Figure 1. Walter Cave’s Design Drawing and Plan of Littlecourt 1905.
Published in The Builder 1907. (Northamptonshire Libraries)
build the Royal Masonic Schools at Bushey, Hertfordshire. Others involved with Littlecourt were E. Wingfield Bowles as Consulting Engineer, W. Bainbridge Reynolds for metalwork and electrical fittings, Messrs. Crittall for heating and ventilation and George Wragge for casements and window fittings. The house was built of Hornton stone with Collyweston slates for the roofs. The style was broadly Tudor with rubble walls and ashlar dressings. The windows were mullioned with casements, the larger ones with transoms. The central part of the house was recessed with two broad wings with double gables. The left-hand wing had a canted bay on the entrance front and at the rear an enormous music room. The right wing housed the kitchen and other services, including a lift, as well as the tower for water tanks, looking rather church-like with battlements. The water was pumped from a source in a nearby field. Water was also provided to some cottages and a public pump house. The house was powered and lit by electricity produced on site by a small power house set up by Blackburn and Starling. It was for the practicality of his designs that Cave was to win many clients. There was already a yard and stables but this was replaced in 1913–14 with a much larger complex also designed by Cave with a motor house (garage), a short distance east of the house.

The garden layout was also built to Cave’s 1905 design. Stone terracing, steps and paths were of Hornton stone. On the principal garden side a sequence of curved steps led down to a croquet lawn, with a long terrace edged by herbaceous borders. On the west side was a rectangular yew hedged rose garden with seats looking across a circular paved area with a sundial. There were a number of garden buildings, notably a Summer House, which still survives, as does a child’s play house, called The Little House and dated 1911, built in the same style and manner as the main house. Inside it is fitted out with oak miniature fittings with fireplaces and a plumbed sink. On the back wall is a memorial stone dated 1916 recording pets which had belonged to the Agnew’s daughter Joy. A set of five photographs exists showing the interiors as originally fitted out1. The head gardener at Littlecourt from 1905 was James Claydon, who had worked at Veitch’s Nursery and at Fawsley Park before moving to Littlecourt. A series of postcards survive showing the gardens as revised following some alterations designed by Cave in 1917.

The new stable block built in 1913–14 is now called Littlecourt Yard. (Figure 2) It remains almost intact as Cave designed it, still houses his original plans and is still used for its original purpose2. The complex consists of stables, a pair of cottages, barn and racquets court, a dog kennel, pump house and motor house. Like the house it was built of coursed rubble with Collyweston slate roofs. The buildings are arranged around a courtyard approached through a wide arched entrance. A veranda runs around three sides with herringbone brick paving. In the centre is an octagonal feature with seats and a sundial. There were eleven loose boxes for the horses, with an isolation box, an office, a washing room, a harness room, a saddle room and a workshop with benches. The harness room still has all its original fittings and is a rare survival. The motor house, which is on the north side of the complex, is an equally rare survival. It originally housed a Renault car, driven by a French chauffeur, the first car to appear in Farthingstone. Early motor cars were so temperamental that they had to have special housing, an area of design that Cave pioneered.

The Agnews eventually moved to Littlecourt in 1910 from their London residence, 18 Gloucester Square, Hyde Park, and it must have appeared that they were embarking on an idyllic country life: a new house fitted with all modern conveniences set within beautiful rolling countryside and, for Phillip, a chance to behave like a local squire. He loved hunting,

1 Tapper Collection, RIBA Library A320.
2 It is beautifully maintained by Jennie Miller and her partner.
he was a JP and he quickly established himself among the local gentry, serving as High Sheriff for the county in 1924. There is a glamorous portrait of Georgette by John Singer Sargent now in the Tate Collection. This was commissioned in 1902 and shows her as she would have appeared on grand occasions with an elaborate dress and large hat. It is a portrait that remained with her till her death.

However, their lives were constantly tinged with sadness. In 1896 a daughter Christine had died as a baby. Two years later a daughter, Enid Jocelyn, always known as Joy, was born and she thrived, and for her was built the child’s garden house already mentioned. All seemed well and Joy married Captain Roger Evans of the 7th Hussars. In 1920 they had a son, Michael, but within a year Joy contracted tuberculosis and died. This loss was greatly felt by the Agnews, and in her memory they created a memorial garden in Farthingstone village. It was opened in 1922 by the Agnews’ son, Ewan Seigfried, who was himself to die in 1930 from an illness contracted during the First World War. Phillip Agnew died at Torquay in 1938 after a long illness and Michael, the grandson, in 1942. Georgette was to live on until 1957 but always surrounded by the memories of her family members who had gone before.

On her death the estate was put up for sale, excluding the house. She felt that it contained so much sadness that she did not want anyone else to live in it. So unfortunately, a short time later it was demolished; a tragic loss of this fine Arts and Crafts house. Fortunately the stable court survives to give a glimpse of this remarkable phase of Farthingstone’s history.

The site of Littlecourt itself was bought by Colonel A.E. Henson, a partner in the architect firm of Brown & Henson. This firm, begun by John Brown, later Sir John Brown, in the 1920s, was to become one of the most important in Northampton. Amongst their buildings are the Nurses Home (1939), the Barratt Maternity Home (1936) of the General Hospital and Bedford Mansions, Derngate (1936). Sir John also designed the 1914-18 war memorial.
at Great Brington, based on Lutyens’ famous Whitehall, London, Cenotaph. Henson’s house, completed in 1962, was a striking design, all on a single floor with much use of glass and steel. Although the front garden of the old house was obliterated, much of the rear garden survived. In its way Henson’s house was as remarkable as Littlecourt had been. However, it too has gone, demolished in the early 1990s to make way for a rather nondescript vernacular pastiche with just a few echoes of Littlecourt itself.

Joymead
This is the memorial garden created in memory of the Agnews’ daughter Joy who died in 1921. It is situated on the south side of the main street, hidden behind a high stone wall and entered by a small gateway. A delightful haven it has a sheltered seat and a small cloister. The shelter is the work of the architect Frank Pearson, son of the famous John Loughborough Pearson, architect of Truro Cathedral. The garden was opened in 1922 with a speech made by Ewan; he was to survive only another eight years, so in 1930 a second memorial, the Cloisters, was erected. (Figure 3) This was designed by Paul Panter of the firm of Talbot Brown & Panter of Wellingborough. Walter Talbot Brown had established an important practice within the field of domestic architecture as well as performing restoration work on several of the county’s churches. Panter also designed churches, St Barnabas at Wellingborough being one of his most important works. A sundial in the garden is yet another memorial, for Joy’s son Michael who died in 1942. Some of the wooden furniture lodged in the Cloisters came from the garden at Littlecourt.

Stained Glass Windows in Farthingstone Church
Several of the windows record the family losses that have already been mentioned. Two were commissioned from the famous firm Morris & Co.; of course by this time Morris had died and the firm was in the hands of John Henry Dearle (1860-1932). Dearle had joined the firm as office boy but quickly established himself as a talented designer, not quite as inspired as Morris himself but often very imaginative. A number of the later designs of
the firm, once credited to Morris, are now known to be by Dearle. On the south side of the chancel is a window showing Flora, chosen as a memorial for baby Christine, and on the south side of the nave a splendid window depicting St Dorothy is for Joy. (Figure 4) Both of these are by Dearle. Two other fine windows were commissioned from the firm of James Powell & Sons, one on the south side of the nave showing heroes of Arthurian legend, Sir Bors and Sir Galahad, for Ewan, and one on the north side showing Sir Gareth and Sir Villars for Michael.

Conclusion – Cave and Martin

The successful partnership at Littlecourt of Walter Cave, architect, and Henry Martin, contractor, was to continue. In Hampshire they combined at Roche Court, Fareham and Dock House, Beaulieu, both 1908. In 1909 came Bengeo House, Hertfordshire and in 1911 they were involved alongside other designers in building a new retirement village at Whiteley, Surrey. This prestigious development consisted of residential units, shops, churches, a club and a hospital all set in landscaped grounds.

* * * * *

There is then more to this small charming stone village than immediately meets the eye. It should be celebrated for the fine works of art it encompasses. Within Northamptonshire it is an important example of early twentieth-century patronage by one family, which has enhanced the environment for residents and visitors to Farthingstone. In particular the buildings by Cave and the glass by Morris & Co have resonance for the Arts and Crafts movement beyond the confines of the county. Everyone should be proud of what was and what still is achieved in this place.
Towards the end of the nineteenth century a movement grew up to create more attractive housing for the more well-to-do of society. The idea was to have reasonably large houses, well designed and situated in garden plots with the whole area around them designed on a garden village principle. One of the earliest of these was Bedford Park, Chiswick, London, begun in 1875 by the speculative developer Jonathan Carr, using architects like E.W. Godwin and Norman Shaw. The most famous example is, of course, Hampstead Garden suburb, which was begun in 1910 with Sir Edwin Lutyens as chief architect. There were two attempts at such estates on the edge of Northampton; one was the Spencer Estate at Dallington, planned about 1880, and the other at Delapré, which was begun in 1911.

The Spencer Estate, Dallington
This derived from an idea of the architect George Devey (1820-1886) who just before 1880 had begun to provide designs for estate buildings for the 5th Earl Spencer. Devey had a considerable reputation as a country house designer and from the 1870s he had formed a partnership with a fellow architect, James Williams. While they had had a very successful business, the sort of work they did for the Althorp Estate, i.e. the rebuilding of farmhouses, cottages and premises, suggests that they were running short of work. There was plenty of opportunity since the estate not only had land around Althorp itself but also considerable holdings at Theddingworth, Dingley and Brampton Ash, on the Leicestershire border and also at Steane near Brackley. A number of these holdings had come to the Spencers under the terms of the will of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, in the middle of the eighteenth century. They also still had pre-Althorp Spencer land around Wormleighton on the Warwickshire border. It is unclear how Devey was chosen by Earl Spencer but it may be through his good friend Lord Revelstoke, for whom Devey had built Membrand Hall in Devon in 1876. Earl Spencer’s son Robert was to marry Lord Revelstoke’s daughter Margaret in 1887.

Devey’s idea was for a lavish garden village with substantial villas in a variety of styles, together with attractive cottage rows interspersed. The land allocated for this was on the eastern edge of the Dallington estate, which had been purchased by the Althorp estate in 1863. This had been a well-judged acquisition since they already owned the Harlestone estate and so effectively owned all the land between Althorp and the Northampton Borough boundary. Any building development west of the Borough would therefore come within their orbit.

The exact location of the proposed estate was around the site of the former Dallington Mill, perhaps not a fully propitious location since it was then liable to some flooding from the river. Today the area is that to the east of Spencer Bridge Road, between St James’ Park and St James’ Square.

An illustrated poster was produced stating that ‘Plans and full particulars’ could be had from ‘Messrs Becke and Green, solicitors, Northampton; Mr J.N. Beasley, Chapel Brampton and Northampton; and Mr George Devey, 1234 Bond Street, London’. The poster has five vignette views of prospective villas and detailed drawings for these and some of the cottages were produced and exist in the Royal Institute of British Architects Drawings Collection at the Victoria & Albert Museum. No plan of the layout seems to survive.
There clearly was little interest in the scheme and it came to nothing. The solicitor Becke is quoted as complaining of ‘the depressed state of trade’. In order to start the scheme, Devey himself had purchased a plot, and once it became clear that the scheme had failed it was decided to develop the whole area for general housing. A layout of streets was devised, running roughly parallel to Spencer Bridge Road, and these were gradually built up from the 1890s through to the early 1900s. The streets all have names deriving from Spencer history. As well as Althorp and Marlborough there are Seymour (the 5th Countess’s maiden name), Sunderland (an early Spencer title), and Wimbledon (a former Marlborough estate). Alongside are two shorter streets: Muscott (a Spencer farm near Daventry) and Steene [sic] (for Steane, near Brackley). Devey did build on his plot, which forms the corner of Spencer Bridge Road and St James’ Park Road, with a series of five semi-detached dwellings. These still exist, though they are substantially altered and modernised and show little evidence of the ‘cottagey’ appearance which they originally had.

**Delapré Garden Village**

This was proposed in 1911 by the developers Gibson, Skipwith & Gordon and was designed to occupy land on the west side of the Towcester Road, about half a mile north of Far Cotton. Just like for the Spencer estate, the timing was unfortunate since the First World War intervened and only a handful of houses were built. They are brick-built with tiled roofs and square projecting bays, part tile-hung but with half-timbered supports on the first floor. They form part of the Towcester Road frontage, running from Nos. 162 to 182. One pair, Nos. 172-174 were built by the Northampton architect H.M. Scrivener for his own use. Scrivener was for some time a partner of Alexander Ellis Anderson (see David Adams’s article in this issue).

Equally abortive was a further scheme at Delapré proposed by the landscape architect firm of Thomas Mawson & Sons as part of their ‘Proposals for development and reconstruction’ of Northampton, commissioned by the County Borough in 1925. This elaborate scheme included new civic buildings, a bypass system around the town and the development of the park at Delapré into a housing estate. Once again nothing came of Mawson’s plan, though in the 1930s the building of a new police station, fire station and baths on the Mounts owes something to his inspiration; some of the bypass system that now exists does to a degree correspond to what Mawson suggested in 1925. If only Mawson’s plan had been adopted it is possible that more of the central area of the town would have escaped the ravages that were perpetrated in the 1970s.
An Unusual Church Porch
St Nicholas church is tucked away behind mature trees on the eastern edge of the village of Marston Trussell and is hardly visible from the road. This interesting church is unusual in having a pair of oak cruck beams and a horizontal tie beam built into the outer doorway of the north porch. These timbers show very obvious signs of being re-used. There is also a substantial interior timber lintel over the priest door in the north chancel. The church, like many in the county, is built of ironstone and limestone in square coursed blocks and rubble, with ashlar dressing. In our county of stone churches, it is rare for oak crucks to be used in their construction. Their survival at Marston Trussell going into the twenty-first century is, as far as I am aware, unique. This article suggests the origins of these timbers and examines possible dates for their re-use in the church. (Figure 1)

Figure 1. St Nicholas Church, Marston Trussell, showing north aisle and porch. (H. Bird)

The Parish
Marston Trussell is a small village with one main street, sitting on the border between Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. There has been a settlement at Marston since the Roman period. The Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (RCHM) recorded extensive Roman pottery around the church and village, and also a possible ‘large Roman building or settlement’¹. This was linked to a crossing of the River Welland, which runs through the fields near the church. The river acts as both the parish and county boundary at this point.

The village name has been recorded as Merston and Mersitone², indicating a settlement on marshy ground. The Trussell family owned the manor from the twelfth to the sixteenth century (Appendix). During their long ownership, their name became synonymous with

the village. From 1330 to the late fifteenth century, this family also owned the manor at Hothorpe, adjoining to the west.

The parish is about 1,300 hectares and includes Thorpe Lubenham, formerly an extra parochial site, to the east. Marston Trussell and Thorpe Lubenham both contain visible remains of moated sites, indicating the location of their medieval manors.

The Porch

The porch, which leads into the north aisle, is of post-medieval construction and incorporates the much older and obviously re-used oak timbers3. These are cruck-shaped (Figure 2) and appear to be shortened, with clearly visible redundant peg holes from previous usage. The bases of the crucks now rest on stone plinths. The horizontal beam above the crucks has also been altered and is crudely constructed. It also shows peg holes and small timber insertions not relevant to its present use. A simple incised carving follows the ogee shape around the door, typical of the fourteenth century. This is visible on all three timbers, suggesting that they were formerly used together, although it is possible that the ogee carving may have been added at a later date. The three large timbers are joined by mortise and tenon joints, two each side. These are held by wooden pegs, decayed but still in situ. The beams, unfortunately, also show considerable external decay.

Above these large timbers, the north face of the porch is decorated with narrow decorative timbers and rendered infill of a later date, although in harmony with the entrance timbers. The tiled roof is supported by roof beams, which are visible inside the porch. The porch is constructed of square dressed stone with small, splayed, unmatched lancet windows on either side. These windows, of slightly different size and construction, have almost certainly been re-used from elsewhere. The timber outer door to the porch, now unused, is permanently propped open, and a wire mesh door protects the entrance. The timber door is constructed of substantial vertical and horizontal oak planks, studded with square iron nails. The iron hinges and a wooden lock case could be of an early date and are probably of local construction. (Figure 3) Wooden planks fill the spaces between the crucks and the door itself; these are abutted to each other and do not appear to be joined. Pevsner and Brandwood4 suggest a fourteenth-century date for the outer porch timbers themselves, but provide no explanation of their chosen date.

There are several local legends about these beams. One suggests they came from a Danish

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3 R. CHM, op. cit.
longboat, navigated up the Welland, another that they are the remains of long-lost lock gates taken from the canals. A more likely suggestion is that they were re-used in the church porch when the nearby medieval manor house was demolished, and this idea is explored further here.

The Church

Pevsner and Brandwood both date the present church mainly to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with later alterations. The Trussell family owned the manor in the twelfth century and it is arguable that at least parts of the church are of earlier origin. This article concentrates only on those areas of the church which may relate to the porch timbers. (Figure 4) The earliest church would have had a nave and chancel with a south aisle added shortly after. The north aisle is a little later in style and, like the south aisle, was once longer. The development of the church was complicated by the provision of a chantry chapel in 1284 and the precise sequence of the building is not clear. The chantry, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, was endowed with the provision of a stipend for two priests; a considerable bequest. It was founded by Richard Trussell, later killed at the battle of Evesham. It was built to the south of the chancel, and the outline can be clearly seen. (Figures 4 and 5).

The chancel contains a double sedilia (stone seat) in the south wall, decorated with a dog-tooth pattern, and this may be linked to the provision of the two chantry priests. Chantry chapels were established so that perpetual prayers were said for the souls of the departed, in particular for the souls of the founder and his family. The belief was that such prayers speeded the passage of each soul through purgatory.

The chancel encroaches on the arcades of the south aisle at its southeast corner where there is a blocked arch. The chancel was obviously extended, as both north and south aisles have been altered and shortened, possibly due to the building or later demolition of the chantry. The outline of the position of the chantry chapel can be seen outside the south chancel wall. A re-used window has been awkwardly inserted here. The chantry was demolished in 1548. As late as 1524 it was mentioned in local wills when bequests were made ‘to the chantrre priest’ and ‘to the shantrye of Marston iis to an awlter clothe’.

It is worth noting that, in addition to the porch, timber is also used in the church to provide the lintel above the priest’s door in the north chancel wall. However, this curved and shaped horizontal oak beam shows no sign of re-use. The external arch to this door is of stone with a drip mould, thirteenth century in date. This external stone is visible on the interior with the timber arch spanning a wider arch set in front of the door and level with the

6 J. Bridges. The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire, Vol. 2, 1791.
interior chancel wall. (Figure 6) There is a large oak chest carved out of a single timber block and dated to the thirteenth century at the west end of the south aisle. (See Figure 4)

Evidence for the Date of the Porch

Churchwardens’ accounts for St Nicholas Church survive from 1607. An interesting entry appears in the accounts for 1619 when Richard Turner and John Smyth were churchwardens. An extract is as follows:

For Mathew Coeles for hys work about the church porch iiiis vid (3 shillings and 6d)
For fower loads of stone at the pike vis iiiid (6 shillings and 4d)
For fetching the same (9 shillings and 4d) ixs iiiid
For 6 strykes of lime (3 shillings) iis
For fetching the same (8d) viiid
To John Smyth for a beam in the porch (2 shillings and 6d) iis vid
(Presumably this was the Churchwarden as mentioned above)
For 3 strykes of lime (8d) viiid
For fetching the same (10d) xd
To John Mawsende for pai (ving) the church porch iiiis (4 shillings)
To William Redwood for his work (21 shillings) xxis
For laythes and nailes (5d) vid
For tiels and fetching iis iid (2 shillings and 2d)

These accounts confirm that the porch was in existence before 1619, possibly a considerable time before, because extensive repairs or partial rebuilding had to be undertaken. As part of the work, the porch was paved and tiled. One beam is mentioned, that supplied by John Smyth, churchwarden. We do not know if this was new or re-used timber. Could this have been a roof beam to support the newly tiled roof? Or was it one of the timbers which flank

Figure 4. Sketch Plan of St Nicholas Church showing site of chantry chapel (not to scale). (H. Bird)

8 Northampton Record Office (NRO), 206p, 64-66.
the porch entrance? The most expensive item recorded, apart from labour, is the purchase and transporting of the four loads of stone.

In 1683 the churchwardens paid a further 11 shillings and 7 pence ‘for board that made the Church doors’ and a further 10 shillings and 8 pence ‘for the iron works for the door’. This seems to date the existing outer door and fittings with some certainty. It is made of thick, flat nailed planks with handmade hinges and a wooden stock lock, matching the description of the work given in 1683. (Figure 7)

It also provides evidence that the crucks were in place by this date, as the timber door is constructed so as to reflect their curve. (See Figure 3) Further repairs to the porch, door lock and latches are recorded throughout the seventeenth century.

A later survey of 1911 describes the state of the church at that time and sets out the work recommended. The porch is described as having been ‘…altered considerable towards the end of the 18th century and of late years. The walls are plastered with stucco on the inside and the roof renewed in deal … of steep pitch covered in tiles. The front of the porch is constructed of massive oak posts in the form of an archway, which is filled in with later work to fit a square door’.

The Manor and the Trussells
The Trussell family had an important influence on St Nicholas Church. The outline of a medieval moated manor can still be seen, situated close to the north–east of the church. This manor was replaced by one based on an enclosed courtyard plan built slightly further to the north. The plan of this later house was lost when a new road was built across the site in the late nineteenth century. The manor was owned by Osbert Trussell in 1150. His grandson, Richard, was recorded as priest at Marston in 1233 and was followed by another Richard who founded the chantry in 1248 and paid for the necessary building alterations this entailed. He was killed at the battle of Evesham in 1265. Laurence Trussell was priest in 1313, the connection between the family and the church continuing. In 1364, William Trussell of Marston was renting out previously assarted land in Rockingham Forest. This assarted land was a source of income for the family and also shows that he had access to a supply of forest timber both for his manor and the church. It may also be relevant that church porches became more common from the fourteenth century.

9 NRO. 206p, 254.
10 A ‘square door’ is described in the survey. However, the door head is actually shaped as shown in Figure 7 to fit into the curve of the timber arch.
11 See Appendix, Owners of the Manor at Marston Trussell, based on J. Bridges, op. cit.
12 NRO ZA438.
By the late fifteenth century the Trussell family were in decline. The early death of two infant male heirs led to the manor passing, around 1500, to a daughter, Elizabeth. She married John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and Marston Trussell subsequently remained in the ownership of the de Vere family until the early seventeenth century. When the de Veres rebuilt the manor house, probably in the early sixteenth century, they may have decided to re-use some original timbers and stone from the older moated house and move them to the church at this point. We know that the ‘new’ courtyard manor was built before 1645. When King Charles was defeated at the battle of Naseby, a few miles from Marston Trussell, his followers fled north from the field towards Leicester. A group of cavaliers was chased and trapped near the church at Marston, which was then in a ‘dead end’ or ‘pudding bag end’, blocked by the courtyard manor house. They were caught and killed there, and then quickly buried in a communal grave in the field next to the church.

The 1815 Enclosure Map shows that Edward Disbrowe then owned the ancient manor site by the church, and the old manor had been demolished by that date. In the late nineteenth century, the Bennet family enlarged and gentrified their house to the west of the village and extensively altered the village road pattern, creating a park, garden and lake to provide a suitable approach to their house. A new road to Market Harborough was then made beyond the church, across part of the land which surrounded the moated site and over the site of the now demolished courtyard manor house.

Conclusion
The unusual re-use of oak timbers in St Nicholas church porch is likely to have been because these heavy timbers were already available nearby, and the most likely suggestion is that they are linked to the adjoining manor site. The church and the porch have been continuously repaired and altered over the centuries. Legends of Danish boats and lock gates can be discounted, although the strength and interest of these local legends has probably been an important factor in the survival of the porch timbers.

The Trussell family were doing well in the thirteenth century when they established a chantry at the church and paid for the church alterations this entailed. The priest’s door with the timber lintel in the north chancel may have been part of these alterations, providing easy access to the chancel and chantry for the dedicated priests from the adjoining manor.

13 An information board giving more details about this Civil War incident is displayed at the entrance to the churchyard. It was installed by the Naseby Battlefield Trust.
In the later fourteenth century, we know that William Trussell had access to timber from Rockingham Forest. He could have transported and used this green timber in his manor house and in the church. The oak crucks may have originally been used in a gatehouse or a domestic hall entrance in the early manor, before being moved to the church. The incised carving would fit in with this theory, which I favour as being the most likely date for the timbers.

Another date for their use in the church could be around 1548, following the abolition of the chantry. The outer walls and roof of the chantry were demolished then and this would have entailed further alteration and repair to the church. The inserted window on this corner may have been moved from elsewhere in the chantry and it is possible that the two narrow stone windows in the porch were also moved at this time. These windows may equally have come from the adjoining manor along with the oak timbers. Another date for the reuse of the timbers could have been later in the sixteenth century when the de Vere family built a new manor house on a more modern, enclosed courtyard plan. This seems less likely because by 1619 extensive repairs or rebuilding were needed to the porch.

I would be very interested to hear from any readers who have further information. Otherwise we must await further investigations and perhaps the conclusions of the awaited *Victoria County History* for this part of the county. Precise dating of the timbers by dendrochronology would answer many questions, but is unlikely at this time. St Nicholas church is a real gem in a delightful setting, with much to interest and intrigue the visitor, and is well worth a visit. It deserves more detailed research and we must hope these oak timbers will survive. The small village struggles to support and repair its ancient church.

**Appendix**

**Owners of the Manor at Marston Trussell**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c.1150</td>
<td>Osbert Trussell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1200</td>
<td>William Trussell (Richard Trussell priest at Marston c.1233)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1240-1265</td>
<td>Sir Richard Trussell, founded the Chantry c.1248, slain at Evesham 1265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1285</td>
<td>Sir William Trussell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1340</td>
<td>Laurence Trussell, Priest at Marston Trussell 1313, son of Warine Trussell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1364</td>
<td>Sir William Trussell, named on Assart Roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1466</td>
<td>Sir Thomas Trussell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1480</td>
<td>Sir William Trussell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1498</td>
<td>Elizabeth Trussell married John de Vere, Earl of Oxford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 Information taken from J. Bridges, op. cit.
The Restoration of St Andrew’s Church, Arthingworth 1871-3: A Contest Between the Architect and the Incumbent

BRUCE BAILEY

The restoration of medieval churches in the Victorian age was one that often caused discord when architects wanted to do more than expected by the patron who was paying for the work. Among the parish papers of Arthingworth in the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO) is an entertaining sequence of letters illustrating this. The architect put in charge of the work was J.K. Colling (1816-1905). He was recommended to the Reverend H.R. Rokeby, who was both rector and lord of the manor of Arthingworth, by the rector’s neighbour, R.J. Naylor, squire of Kelmarsh. Naylor was aware of Colling’s work since he had banking interests in Liverpool and Colling had built for him the Albany Building (1856-8), Old Hall Street, in an elaborate Italian Renaissance style, and a few years later, Hooton Church, Cheshire, in an Italian Romanesque form.

While the correspondence is not a complete series, enough survives to give a picture of relations between the architect and the patron. The letters begin in July 1871 when Colling writes:

I have forward you [sic] by book post the drawings of your church. You can keep them & submit them to your friends as long as you may find necessary, say a month or 6 weeks. In explaining my views as to the restoration, I would mention that I have taken the early piers and arches as the key note for what I have added. The pier with the scalloped capital in the Nave is probably as early as the 12th century, although late in the century as indicated by the arches being pointed. The Westernmost arch appears to have been erected at a different time to the others and is probably of the same date as those in the chancel which are 13th century work. That is what is usually called Early English or the first pointed style… I have adopted therefore simple lancets for the windows – all single in the North aisle, as in consequence of the position of the buttresses and the trusses of the roof, I could not get in double lights. The North window I have done away with as it is 15th century work, of a commonplace character and not worth restoring. In the South aisle I have put double lancets where there was room for them. There is some indication in the South aisle of 14th century work, but it is of such a character as to be scarcely worth preserving, and it would have interfered with the wish of bringing back the church to its early and simple character. The square pier in the Nave would be altered and made with two half shafts to correspond with the circular Norman pier with scalloped capital.

In the chancel I have put at the East end an Early English triplet with simple lancets at the sides, the new chancel arch being of the same character as the present, except that it is loftier, of better proportions and rather more ornamental. The external character of the structure I have kept as simple as it was possible but internally I have put trefoil arches and detached shafts to the windows in order to gain all the depth and richness I could on the inside by simple means. The detached shafts would be of red sandstone, all the others new dressed stonework throughout would be of Ketton stone.

PS. I intend to tile the floors of chancel and Altar space with Maw’s or Minton’s tiles in patterns.

It is pretty clear that Rokeby was a little taken aback with Colling’s ideas and he referred the plans to some friends, and they agreed. He writes in reply to Colling:

The work being one of repairing & restoring it and not building a new church, He [one of his
friends who is not identified] thinks we ought not to alter the whole character of the church by going back to so early a period. If carried out as you suggest it would be impossible to recognise the old church. All old landmarks would be swept away. He holds for conservation in the restoration. He suggests repairing the present character of the chancel by putting a decorated East window & two simple windows same style instead of lancets.

Colling replies on 26 July:

Respecting the date of the arches in the chancel, you rather make a mistake. What I said was that they were Early English or 13th century work, probably the same date as the westernmost arch in the Nave. The present chancel arch is also of that date and the new arch is intended to be of the same character. These therefore being the only Architectural features in the Chancel, one ought to make our additions to it also in that style.

I would strongly recommend that the Chancel be kept as drawn but when it comes to the Nave and Aisle, it is a different thing. If the N & S windows are considered sufficiently good to be retained, let us preserve them by all means ... I am the last person to do away with anything worth preserving, therefore I give in at once in this matter.

On 1 August, Rokeby replies:

I have taken the opinion of another gentleman who has made church architecture & restoration his especial study & he quite concurs in preserving the present windows all through & in taking them for our models in what new ones we have to put in ... In the chancel he would take the windows in the S aisle & make the E window something of the same sort only with 3 lights.

Colling is clearly a little put out by these ‘friend’s’ opinions. On 2 August he writes:

I think I had better not give any opinion at present upon your friend’s advice as to the restoration of your church, but wait until I have heard everything that may be advanced on the subject. I will then, when you have returned the drawings to me, reconsider the whole matter and give you my opinion thereon. I shall be most happy to examine carefully every suggestion that may be made.

Rokeby then approached a friend, F.H. Sutton, who made a sketch of ideas for the east end of the chancel. Colling comments on 4 August:

My idea of making the restoration more in accordance with the earlier features of the church does not appear to be appreciated. For a decorated Chancel, Mr Sutton’s sketch is very good, but I do not admire his Reredos.

On 10 August, Colling sends back amended drawings:

I have put a plain roof of the Nave but in the Chancel I have retained the panelled ceiling. The East window will have lights 2 feet wide and the centre of the Reredos I propose to fill with a sculptured cross, surrounded with emblems of the four Evangelists carved in alabaster.

Rokeby then referred the drawings to the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton, acting in those days rather as the Diocesan Advisory Committee does today. He reports:
The Committee would recommend that the Font be retained near its present position, adjoining the pier by the South door; they would change the form of the base of the pier. They think the mouldings of the Chancel Arch too early in character for the rest of the Church …they think too that the Evangelistic symbols which are designed for the portion of the reredos over the Altar are too prominent.

Colling is not going to give in easily. There seems to have been a suggestion that the new chancel arch should be a copy of the tower arch. Arthingworth church has an especially fine 15th-century Perpendicular style tower. On 30 September he writes:

In answer to your letter I must ask you not to oblige me to make the Chancel arch a reproduction of the Tower arch. The present arch is a 13th-century one, as well as those in the Chancel, and the Nave arches are 12th century. Therefore we shall be quite wrong if we go and put a 15th-century chancel arch, letting alone the fact that the early arches are so much more beautiful than the later ones.

A new set of plans arrived on 6 October and Colling notes:

I have shown the screens in the arches with the seats backing upon them, which gives an increased width and passage between the seats in the centre, which is an advantage since the benches for boys are added. The enclosed tracing shows, I believe, what you wish for the arrangement for the Altar, but it appears to me like a very bad one … for the width of the chancel. Also your altar is too long – 5 feet for your church is ample.

Also in October, Colling suggested using a builder Cornish from North Walsham, Norfolk, whom he had used before, but Rokeby wanted to use a local man. Colling writes in December:

I have seen Mr Cornish this afternoon and I find that his estimate will come very near mine – perhaps he may be £40 or £50 more but not higher. I will apply to Mr Stanyon for an estimate, if you still wish it, but I am quite satisfied myself that Cornish’s is a perfectly fair estimate in a proper and creditable manner.

An undated letter from Rokeby argues:

I think Stanyon ought to give an estimate. It seems to me that a Builder at Harbro’ can do a church at Arthingworth much cheaper than a builder at Norwich.

Some estimate notes among the papers show that Stanyon’s estimate was £2,513, while Cornish’s was £1,770. So clearly Colling got his way because the church was duly restored using Cornish, and the next surviving letter of note concerns the finished job. Colling writes a year later, 20 December 1872:

I have written Mr Cornish about the a/c for the church … I am sorry to hear that the tile paving is still not satisfactory. Cornish ought not to have put the work into the hands of an incompetent man, and I have told him so.

The letter goes on to mention moving a monument a little closer to the east wall of the chancel to be clear of the vestry screen. (This is the fine memorial by the sculptor P.M. Vangelder, whose splendid monument to Elizabeth, Duchess of Montagu, at Warkton, many will know.)
The problems of the accounts were still not settled in July 1873 and Colling writes:

I can explain some of the matters in Cornish’s a/c. Reredos. The extra I required was £5-10-0 but afterwards £2-10-0 was added for the alabaster and which you agreed at the time. West window of Aisle. A new square-headed window was included in the contract, but the extra is for the arched head and the tracery – an alteration which you permitted me to make, as I thought it would be a great improvement – which it is. Side windows in the Chancel were intended and have been in stained glass, they were therefore not put in the Contract at all. The other matters I have written to Mr Cornish about.

Here the letters end. What can be said is that Cornish does seem to have done a good job and Colling has left Arthingworth one of the more decorative restorations of the time. Both Colling and Cornish were to be used by Richard Naylor at Kelmarsh in 1878, and there Colling certainly got his way as that church is one of the most elaborate restorations in Northamptonshire. The Reverend Rokeby resigned the living at Arthingworth in 1915 but continued to live there, dying in 1921 aged 90.
A Carved Stone Head at Blisworth: Part of Holdenby House?

BRUCE BAILEY

This note derives from researches by Tony Marsh for the Blisworth Archive.

Quite recently a carved stone head has re-surfaced at Blisworth. It had originally been discovered in 1961 by the late George Freeston, having emerged following alterations to a cottage in Stoke Road, Blisworth. What appeared on the surface to be a date stone of 1652 with the initials R B, cut into two sections, when removed, proved to have on the reverse an extraordinary carved face. An enquiry at the British Museum by George brought forward the suggestion that it may have originated from Holdenby House when that was demolished following its purchase in 1650 by one of Cromwell’s chief officers, Adam Baynes. Of this vast palace-type house, Baynes kept just a short section of the service wing, which was converted into a house, the present Holdenby House, demolishing almost entirely all the other buildings around the two courtyards of the original palace. When Peter Tillemans drew the ruins c.1719 for the county historian John Bridges, a few sections of wall still stood and some stone obelisks which had formed part of the decorations of the Great Hall.

The stone is interesting since it is carved from clunch, a soft chalky stone not native to Northamptonshire but which is to be found in Bedfordshire, especially quarries formerly at Totternhoe, and in some places in East Anglia. The quality of the carving is excellent and of course Sir Christopher Hatton, when building Holdenby in the 1570s, with his royal connections, would have used some of the best craftsmen available. The fine carved wooden screen now in the church, but presumed to have come from the house, is firmly attributed to Garrett Hollemans who was one of the finest carvers of the time, working especially in alabaster from the quarries near Burton-upon-Trent. In Harrington church there is a splendid tomb in alabaster to the Saunders family dated 1588 which is his work. There are certainly some similarities with the grimacing mask head at Blisworth with details on known Hollemans monuments. However the fact that it is carved from clunch is also interesting since due to the softness of this stone it would only have been used for internal

(Photo: T. Andrews)
carving rather than being used outside. There are at Boughton House and Apethorpe Hall mid-sixteenth century chimneypieces carved from clunch and while these are purely architectural there are again some similarities with the Blisworth head, especially with the chimneypiece in the Audit Room at Boughton. The Blisworth head was clearly larger originally and it looks as if it may have had ears and more hair above the forehead. The lower lip has also been partly broken away. When found in 1961 there was some evidence of colour and gilding, though this has now vanished. Cautiously one might attribute the carving to the Hollemans school.

The initials RB are also relevant since living in Blisworth in 1652 was Richard Bland, a Lieutenant in Cromwell’s army. He would have known Captain Adam Baynes and what is most likely is, that when visiting him at Holdenby, seeing the demolition, he brought back the carved head to be used as the date stone in his cottage, perhaps when that was altered or rethatched. As a Roundhead was he thinking of the head of the unfortunate late King and this is why he used it, with the face inside the wall? There were other members of the Bland family in Blisworth in the seventeenth century, where they were tenants of the Grafton Estate. Two plots are recorded in Stoke Road and it is on one of these that the cottage stood from where the date stone was removed in 1960. A good deal has been discovered about Richard Bland since the stone has been rediscovered and further research may reveal more.
Sulby Hall: Further Information

HEATHER BIRD

In 2010, *Northamptonshire Past and Present* published an article on the history and ownership of Sulby Hall, a country house in northwest Northamptonshire.1 The house was designed by Sir John Soane in about 1794 and had been demolished by 1952. Following the 2010 article, I was very pleased to be contacted by several readers with an interest in the history of this house. They provided me with further information and suggestions for which I am grateful.

This follow-up article reflects the theme of this year’s journal and provides some information on the later period of the Hall’s history as well as adding a little more to our knowledge of the earlier owners. It highlights some of the practical difficulties facing the owners of country houses in the period following the First World War, difficulties that were common to many large estates and that led to the demolition of so many. The tastes, lifestyle and financial standing of individual owners influence the history of their houses just as strongly as the economic and social times in which the owners live. Sulby Hall provides some good examples of these influences.

Early Years

The first owners were the Payne family who acquired their wealth and social standing throughout the eighteenth century, purchasing land in Northamptonshire, particularly in Welford where John Payne bought the Manor House. This process continued when his son, Rene Payne, a banker by trade, bought the manor at Sulby and started to build a new house there. He bought the small manor house from a Mrs Wasshorn, whom he remembered visiting as a child. Mrs Elizabeth Wasshorn was in fact a cousin of John Payne, Rene’s father. When Rene decided to purchase his own country estate in the county he chose to buy a house and land already known to him and in the possession of a family member.

Rene only occupied the property for a few years before his death in 1799. A question that arose from the earlier research was why Rene’s youngest son, George Payne, came to inherit the bulk of his father’s estate despite having three older brothers. Rene’s four sons were all illegitimate; the reason why Rene and their mother, Martha Pearson, did not marry is not known.

However, the illegitimacy led to many complications. The four children were known by their mother’s name of Pearson and only adopted the name Payne after Rene’s death, as required in his will. The lengthy will ran to several pages and four separate codicils of different dates. Having now found and studied the will that Martha Pearson, the boys’ mother, made in 1806, it appears that it was the extreme complications and badly written codicils of Rene’s will that created difficulties. Rene’s constant reviews of his will probably arose from his very natural wish to try to protect his children’s inheritance despite their illegitimacy. The youngest son, George, was named throughout as the ‘residual legatee’. There was a court case challenging the will and it was George who was eventually awarded the bulk of the inheritance.

Martha, in her own will, makes it clear that she was attempting to remedy this apparent injustice by leaving such money as she had to her other two sons, John and William. The

3 Will of Martha Payne. PRO 11/1531.
will states ‘George Payne being most amply provided for by the will of his father and for this reason only and not on account of his being entitled to experience from me any less affection and regard than the other said children I do not intend to leave him any part of the property…’ The fourth son, Edward, had already died. George therefore inherited at a young age, with only his mother and a Trustee to guide him. He was killed in a duel at the age of 31 leaving a very young family, so the pattern was repeated. His eldest son, another George, inherited as a child and his three younger siblings were not so well provided for. This George’s lifestyle and inability to live within his means were discussed in the earlier article4.

Elizabeth Mansel
Sulby Hall and estate, newly established at the end of the eighteenth century, were in some respects ill-fated. Rene Payne died shortly after building the house, his son died young and the second George Payne, in the mid-nineteenth century, was a gambler who spent recklessly and was compelled to sell. The next two owners, first Sir Frederick and Lady Elizabeth Child Villiers and then Elizabeth Mansel, were committed to the estate and they also had the income to enjoy it. The problem in their case was that neither had obvious successors.

More information has come to light about Elizabeth Mansel (known in her own family as ‘Aunt Kitty’). (Figure 1) She inherited the Hall and estate somewhat surprisingly in 1897 under the will of the widowed Lady Elizabeth Villiers, a daughter of the 7th Earl of Athlone. ‘Kitty’ was described in Elizabeth Villiers will as her ‘god daughter and niece of the half-blood’. Lady Elizabeth Villiers’ mother had remarried after the death of her first husband. Her second husband was William Gambier and this second union produced one daughter, Jemima. She in turn married Lt. Col. George Mansel, a professional soldier, and Elizabeth Mansel (‘Kitty’) was their eldest child, and therefore a sort of ‘step niece’ to Elizabeth Villiers.

The Mansel family came from Smedmore, Dorset. After the death of Lady Villiers it may have been a shock to Elizabeth Mansel, aged 47 and unmarried, to become sole owner of an estate and a large house in Northamptonshire, far from her native Dorset. It was not surprising that she took with her to Sulby a core staff of reliable servants from her family home at Smedmore. Mary Ann Broomfield was employed as a housekeeper at Smedmore House in 1871 when Elizabeth Mansel, aged 21, was living there with her parents. In 1901,6 Mary Broomfield was housekeeper at Sulby Hall. Edwin Ashford, butler at Smedmore House in 1891, also moved to Sulby Hall and was butler there in 1901. The Coachman living in the cottage at Sulby in 1901 was George Melmott. He and his family had all been born in Blandford, Dorset and had almost certainly moved up from Smedmore.

4 Northamptonshire Past and Present, op. cit.
5 Information from Hugh Mansel, a descendent of the Mansel family. She is referred to as ‘Kitty’ here to prevent confusion with Elizabeth Villiers.
6 Information from 1871 and 1901 censuses.
Some furniture from Sulby Hall was moved to her house in London when Elizabeth Mansel finally decided to sell the estate in 1911. This followed the sudden death of one of her brothers while he was staying at Sulby. She died in 1934 at Hyde Park Gardens, London aged 85.

When George Payne inherited the estate in 1825 he enlarged the house considerably to make it more suitable for large-scale entertaining, despite having no family of his own. From that time until Guy Paget bought the estate in 1911 the house was never occupied by a family with children. The Paget’s ownership was interrupted by the First World War when the house was used as a convalescent hospital, which must have led to some dilapidations. Guy Paget served with the Scots Guards and was gassed in Flanders during the war7. (Figure 2)

Between the Wars
After the war there was a period when the house was again used for hunting, shooting, dances and hospitality by the Pagets. The surrounding land was run as a sporting estate, with mainly pasture fields, planted spinneys and well-kept fences. It may have seemed that life had returned to a pre-war normality, although this was an illusion. Large country houses were increasingly difficult to maintain and to staff. In the 1930s, the Pagets moved to Wheeler Lodge, a smaller residence nearby. Sulby Hall was then let furnished to Frederick Pearson, a publishing magnate and sponsor of the English Davies Cup tennis team. The Pearsons hunted and kept a good stable of horses during their period at the Hall. Lionel Edwards, the well-known equine artist, was commissioned to do a painting of Mrs Pearson and her stepdaughter on their horses, and a photograph exists showing him painting this picture in front of Sulby Hall.

At the Hall the clocks were wound weekly and a regular night watchman was employed to patrol the house, make up the fires and check for safety. Although Frederick Pearson was still resident at Sulby in June 1940, when his daughter’s engagement was announced, this period was brought to an end by the outbreak of the Second World War. The Hall was then unoccupied.

**Wartime**

The Air Ministry selected an area to the south of Husbands Bosworth as a site for a new wartime aerodrome, and part of the Sulby estate was included in this massive undertaking. The airfield had three runways laid across the flat land to the north of Sulby. Trees were cleared, hedges removed, crops flattened and runways and access roads rapidly laid across the area, permanently altering the road layout and field pattern. The aerodrome buildings were scattered across a wide area to reduce the risk from enemy bombing, and it is easy to see how the seclusion and setting of Sulby Hall was lost, even though the Hall itself was not occupied by the military.

Eric Parker, now living in New Zealand, provided information about wartime Sulby. In June 1944, as a young man of 17, he was sent by his Northampton employers to assist in the work of upgrading the electrical installation at Sulby Hall so that it could be connected to the mains electricity, which had been provided to the aerodrome. Eric has written his private memoirs of that time and has kindly allowed me to refer to them in this article.

When Eric was sent to work at Sulby it was occupied by Bishopwood Private School, which had to evacuate its premises near Bletchley when these were compulsorily purchased for use by the United States military. America only entered the war after Pearl Harbour, and the school probably moved to Sulby sometime in late 1943 or early in 1944. There were about 100 girls and boys aged 7 to 16, as well as the school staff. Eric writes, ‘It was difficult to know where the estate grounds ended and the airfield began’. His memoirs continue: ‘The electrical system had failed. It had its own 110-volt electricity supply provided by a motor generator complete with battery standby unit. The batteries were of large unsealed lead-acid type contained in glass rectangular jars… due to wartime shortages, when they failed they could not be repaired or replaced’. (Figure 3)

The generators also failed and spare parts were unobtainable. Eric remembers the lights in the Hall as giving ‘a dull red glow when switched on’ so candles were used, placed on saucers or stuck in bottles, which sounds dangerous, especially in a school. The problem was caused by moisture getting into the porcelain fittings and equipment. This was a characteristic condition when premises were unoccupied or unheated in winter months, and in fact by then the house would have been largely unoccupied for about four years.

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8 Information taken from Eric Gilbert Parker, *Memories of Youth*, 2012, ISBN 978-0-19705-6, Chapters 16 and 17. Printed privately. I am grateful to Eric for his willingness to share his recollections of the time he spent at Sulby.
Before the Hall could be connected to the 230-volt mains, the electrical system had to be brought up to the required standard. Eric considered the existing wiring, although old, was ‘a first class installation’. The Hall had probably been wired around 1912/13 when Guy Paget added a further storey to the wing to provide more bedrooms. A number of appliances in the kitchen and laundry worked off the 110-volt installation and it was decided to keep these in use and supply electricity to them via a step down transformer.

Eric and two colleagues were sent to live and work at the Hall from Monday to Friday each week during the summer of 1944. At first, he recalls, they were allocated ‘a basement bedroom, dark, damp and half underground’. This room was probably located in the original servants’ basement accommodation under the main house. ‘On our first night … at 2 am … we looked up to the sky and saw scores of aircraft in waves towing gliders silhouetted against the night sky.’ They learnt afterwards that the Second Front had begun.

He describes the ‘oak floored dining room with oak panelled walls’. The bedrooms were decorated in different styles: ‘Italian, Spanish, French, Japanese, Greek and Austrian themes’. This is confirmed by interior photographs dating from the 1930s showing many of the rooms furnished as they would have been by the Paget family. The ornamental gardens ‘had seen better days and there were tennis courts where the Davies Cup team had been coached’.

They began to update the electrical fittings to make them safe for connecting to the mains. Finding their basement bedroom too cold and damp, they moved to an attic and ate their meals with the general staff in the service wing. Very soon a ‘wave of civilians descended on the place from the London area’. This exodus was caused by the arrival of the German V1 ‘doodlebug’ bombs in the capital.

The water supply for Sulby Hall came from a well near the bridge over the River Avon and water was pumped up to fill a large tank in the roof. The pump was unreliable and was due to be replaced by an electrical one which had not arrived, again because of wartime shortages. This meant that Eric and his workmates had the job of starting up the old petrol pump every morning, an exasperating job as it kept on cutting out. The job was made harder by the fact that ‘often the tank emptied unexpectedly and the cause never discovered’. When this happened, the Hall was without any water until the pump was restarted. They concluded that somewhere on the airfield water was being drained away, but they never got to the bottom of the problem.

Eric recalls that when he was at the Hall it was generally in good condition with no sign of misuse or vandalism. ‘It was obvious from the outset that the house had been beautifully set out and furnished in its heyday’. The various rooms were fully used by the school. After the school closed, the Hall was never occupied again. Sulby Hall had lost its setting with the building of the airfield and it no longer had a purpose as a sporting estate. The Pagets were unable to find tenants, and having no further use for it themselves it became neglected.

Guy Paget was killed by a severe fall while out hunting in March 1952. His estate, including Wheeler Lodge, was sold that year. Possibly the decision to sell had already been taken before his sudden death. At this time many large houses and estates were facing redundancy as owners were unable to find the staff to run them, and the income from the agricultural

9 Copies of these photographs are held by the English Heritage photograph collection.
10 Eric Parker, op. cit.
11 The school discipline and supervision were apparently not of the highest. There was a scandal after one of the pupils became pregnant, which led to the school closing.
land was not sufficient to maintain them. Built for more opulent and leisured times, they were increasingly becoming a burden on their owners. In the decade after the war it was very difficult to get materials to repair and modernise older properties, so that year by year they fell into greater disrepair. By the time of the sale, Sulby Hall itself had been demolished\textsuperscript{12}. The remaining furniture, panelling, fireplaces, stone, lead and anything else that could be removed was sold.

The final demolition was swift. A team of labourers started on the roof and what remained of the hall was knocked down and allowed to fall into the extensive cellars that ran underneath the building. The estate, consisting then of about 622 acres, was purchased by an Investment Trust in 1952. If it had survived into more affluent times it might have become a golf or leisure club, or a prestigious country house hotel. As it was, the post-war decade saw the demolition of this once attractive John Soane house; only a few outbuildings and parts of the garden and landscaping remain. (Figure 4)

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\textsuperscript{12} The sale particulars, prepared in advance of the sale by Greville-Heygate and Co., describe Sulby Hall as ‘suitable for demolition’ and it was listed to be sold as a lot with 14 acres. By the time of the sale this lot had been withdrawn and the Hall had been demolished.
Writing Northamptonshire’s History: 
The Early VCH in the County

JOHN BECKETT

The Victoria County History (VCH) is a national institution. Founded in 1899 and dedicated to Queen Victoria two years after her Diamond Jubilee, in 2012 it enjoyed a revival of royal patronage when Her Majesty the Queen agreed to renew the royal blessing in the context of her own Diamond Jubilee. In origin, the VCH was modelled on those monuments to Victorian collective endeavour, the Dictionary of National Biography and the Oxford English Dictionary, both of which used multiple contributors to achieve a level of output with which no individual could hope to complete. In Northamptonshire the VCH has passed through three phases: 1899–1908 when two volumes were published and a great deal of other work undertaken; 1930–37 when two further volumes came out, with financial and academic support from two leading players in the Northamptonshire Record Society, James Manfield and Miss Joan Wake; and 1997 onwards when three further volumes have been published and others are in preparation. This article looks at the first two phases, and touches briefly by way of conclusion on the work undertaken since 1997.

The VCH began life as a commercial enterprise initiated by the publishing firm of Archibald Constable & Co., through one of the firm’s partners, H. Arthur Doubleday, who was also the first editor. Doubleday formed a General Advisory Council to oversee the project and committees to provide help with documentary and architectural material. He also encouraged the setting up of county committees. The Northamptonshire committee was dominated by the county’s landowners and parsons. It was chaired by the lord lieutenant, Earl Spencer, with R.B. Loder, the High Sheriff, and Sackville Stopford-Sackville, chairman of both Quarter Sessions and the County Council, as his supporters. Members included the Duke of Grafton, the marquesses of Exeter and Northampton, two earls, four barons, four bishops, two honourables, five baronets, and a group of local dignitaries, including two mayors, and three chairmen of Urban District Councils. Many of the other 82 members were designated as esquires and 11 were clergymen. Nineteen of the members were JPs. The committee was designed to add lustre to the project, to facilitate access to private collections of manuscript material, at that time largely in private hands, and to buy the books. The actual work was undertaken by an executive committee of fifteen, chaired by Sackville Stopford-Sackville, which included the two nominated editors for Northamptonshire.

The VCH was established in Northamptonshire on administrative lines that were standard to all counties. In the original scheme it was allocated four volumes, to consist of a mixture of general essays, and topographical parish studies. This was set out in the preface to volume 1 in the county ‘set’:

The scope of this work, as will be seen from the general advertisement of the Victoria

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1 This article is a version of the Spring Lecture delivered to the Northamptonshire Record Society at its Annual General Meeting on 4 May 2012. I am grateful to members of the audience for comments, to Dr Steven Hollowell for commenting on the text and preparing the map, and Matthew Bristow for help identifying some of the documentary sources.

2 I am not in this paper touching on the question of the Northamptonshire families volume published in 1906 and edited by Oswald Barron, a regular contributor to The Ancestor, launched in 1902, which he edited from 1903. His primary task with the VCH was to edit the feudal baronage section of county sets, but this was dropped at an early date. See Peter Gordon, ‘Oswald Barron, editor of the VCH Northamptonshire families’, Northamptonshire Past and Present 57 (2004), 69–72.

3 VCH Northamptonshire I (1906) lists all the members of the committee. It is not clear that it ever met.
Writing Northamptonshire’s History: The Early VCH in the County

History, differs essentially from that of any county history hitherto attempted. The services of specialists both national and local have been secured for the treatment of the subjects with which their names are identified, so that the authority for the statements put forth and the views advanced can be at once recognised. The subjects comprised in the present volume are arranged in chronological order from the geology of the county down to the Domesday Survey. The second volume will follow general articles on ecclesiastical history, the history of ancient schools, architecture, industries, etc., but the bulk of the remaining three volumes will be taken up with detailed histories of the parishes and manors of the county, and the work will conclude with a chapter that draws the various threads together, and recounts the civil and political history of this part of England from the Saxon period, when the county first emerged as a distinct area, to the present.4

This was, more or less, how it worked, although because only two volumes were published in the planned set of four, and new priorities were in place by the time the VCH Northamptonshire resumed in the 1920s, the final collection of general essays, including the political history of the county, never appeared.

Arthur Doubleday developed a model on which the organisation of VCH work in each county was based. He looked initially to commission a local man, or men, with a local history background and good contacts, to help him put together a membership list for the County Committee. If that worked well he usually signed them up to help with the editing and, in their specialist areas, writing of the volumes. The Northamptonshire editors identified and approached at this stage were John Charles Cox, and W. Ryland D. Adkins. Cox, rector of Holdenby since 1894, was a leading figure nationally in local history, the author of the first textbook on how to write a parish history, and a gentleman-parson with a long list of publications to his name.5 Adkins, a barrister and later an MP (1906-23), was knighted in 1911 as Sir Ryland Adkins. He was vice chairman and, from 1920, chairman of the county council and, in the words of his Times obituary, had ‘a profound knowledge of the history of the county’.6 He seems to have been responsible primarily for the architectural material.7 The two men were offered £200 apiece in editorial fees, payable in equal instalments on the publication of each of the planned four volumes for Northamptonshire. The VCH agreed to meet their out of pocket expenses and to pay them separately for any written contributions (whether general articles or topographical studies) they might undertake. The agreement was signed on 4 November 1899.8

Within a few months, Cox decided to relinquish the living of Holdenby, and to retire to Sydenham in Kent. Although he continued to write prolifically, he stepped down as joint county editor for Northamptonshire, and was succeeded by The Reverend Robert Meyricke Serjeantson, at that time curate of St Sepulchre’s, Northampton, and an antiquary who contributed extensively to the history of the county town.9 Serjeantson was first named as editor for Northamptonshire when a VCH prospectus for the county was issued in summer 1900, and he seems to have been taken by surprise: he wrote to Doubleday ‘I told

4 VCH Northamptonshire I (1906), preface.
6 The Times, 31 Jan 1925.
7 VCH Archive, Institute of Historical Research, University of London (hereafter VCH) A26, f. 417.
8 VCH A15, 4 Nov 1899.
9 Robert Meyricke Serjeantson (1861–1916): A History of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton (1897), History of All Saints Church, Northampton (1901); History of St Peter’s Northampton (1904), History of the Castle of Northampton (1908); History of Delapré Abbey, Northampton (1909).
Dr Cox that I would undertake it if I were asked by you, and if it was the wish of the [county] committee. I have heard nothing further till this morning. What are your personal views on the subject? Doubleday’s response has not survived, but several months later, in February 1901, Serjeantson welcomed a proposed meeting with Cox ‘as I am quite in the dark as to what is being done’. The meeting seems to have been successful although he remained concerned that he had ‘no official position’. VCH Northamptonshire (volume) I was largely complete before Serjeantson replaced Cox, which may explain the curiosity by which Serjeantson was named as one of the editors of the volume while Cox was paid the £50 editorial fee due under the terms of the November 1899 agreement. (Figure 1)

Volume I in the Northamptonshire set was published in 1902, one of the earliest VCH volumes to appear. As a national series written at county level, the first volume for each county included essays covering, loosely, natural history, archaeology and Domesday Book. The natural history was largely written by London-based experts such as Richard Lydekker, who wrote on palaeontology for every county, B.B. Woodward, a regular contributor on mollusca, Rev Canon Fowler on beetles, Herbert Goss on butterflies, and the Rev T.R.R. Stebbing on crustacea. However, the section on botany was written by two local experts, George Claridge Druce and Hugh Neville Dixon, both leading members of the Northamptonshire Natural History society founded in 1877. The Romano-British essay was written by the distinguished Romanist Professor Francis Haverfield, and Anglo-Saxon remains by Reginald A. Smith. J. Horace Round wrote the essay on Domesday Book. Haverfield, Smith and Round were regular contributors to VCH general volumes, contributing essays to the first volume of many county sets.

Volume II in the Northamptonshire set was published in 1906. The first 400 or so pages consisted of general essays on ecclesiastical history, religious houses, schools, industries, sport, and a very brief section on ancient earthworks which had presumably not been ready for volume I. The section on religious houses was written by John Charles Cox, and that on schools by A.F. Leach, who wrote on the subject for many counties. The section on ecclesiastical history was written by the editors, Serjeantson and Adkins. Since Serjeantson was an Anglican clergyman, and Adkins was a nonconformist, agreeing the content and tone of their essay proved problematic. When, in March 1905, Adkins proposed to edit the

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11 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 16 Feb, 1, 5 March 1901.
joint contribution ‘to improve it’, Serjeantson complained:

Personally I may say that to have a nonconformist touching up an article on the church and removing therefrom all that tells against or that is unpalatable to his own party seems to me to be an impossible situation! Still more so when he proposes to say (as he told me on Saturday) that the history of the church in the 18th century was most uninteresting and that the chief interest centres in the nonconformists! P.S. after all, the vast majority of the subscribers to the V.C.H. in this county are churchmen. I don’t ask that they should have more than their due share of consideration, but I do plead that they should not have less than their share. We feel just as keenly, and just as conscientiously, as the nonconformists do and only ask for fair treatment.\(^{13}\)

When eventually the proofs reached him in April 1906, Serjeantson had one final outburst:

Not for all the wealth of the Indies will I ever attempt again to write an article on matters ecclesiastical in conjunction with a nonconformist! It is an utter impossibility unless one writes an absolutely colourless article. We revised this paper together and after hours of discussion here is the result…. Personally I shall be glad to see the last of it.\(^{14}\)

This contrasted rather starkly with his admission only a few months previously that ‘Adkins did his sections on the nonconformists uncommonly well’.\(^{15}\)

Also in VCH Northamptonshire II, Serjeantson took responsibility for the section on industry, which included bell founding, pipe making, leather, boots and shoes, gloves, whips, textiles and allied trades, lace and paper.\(^{16}\) Here he ran into problems with one of the authors. In April 1905 Serjeantson signed up T.J. George and Bruce B. Muscott to write the sections on industry. George, a graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge, and a Northampton librarian was ‘a very nice fellow’, and he had previously written on early man in VCH Northamptonshire I.\(^{17}\)

This was a good start, but things went wrong when George presented his work. The VCH general editor described it as ‘the very poorest stuff… and gives us really very little more of the history of the trades he touches than what could be obtained from any technical dictionary’.\(^{18}\) Serjeantson visited George to ‘tell him politely that it was not quite what you wanted’. He expected George to ‘ask me to get someone else to do it’, but ‘unfortunately George said he would take it home and do it himself! Short of telling him point blank that the article was poor stuff I gave him the broadest hints, but he did not seem disposed to take them!’ Serjeantson asked VCH Central Office to write directly to George ‘and suggest his getting the help of an expert. It will come with more weight from you.’\(^{19}\) Eventually they sorted it out between themselves and signed up Beeby Thompson, a geologist, to write up the section on quarrying.\(^{20}\)

Of the other general essays in volume II, Cox seems to have produced his material on religious houses without much difficulty, and much of the section on sport was written by

\(^{13}\) VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 22 March 1905.
\(^{14}\) VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 24 April 1906.
\(^{15}\) VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 16 July 1905.
\(^{16}\) VCH Northamptonshire II (1906), pp. 289-340.
\(^{17}\) VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 4 April 1905.
\(^{18}\) VCH A56, Page to Serjeantson, 19 Sept 1905.
\(^{19}\) VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 28 Sept 1905.
Christopher Markham. The nature of the VCH meant that it depended for its market on the same class of men who sat on the county committee, and their interests were well represented in the section on sport, with Markham writing on the Royal Buckhounds, stag hunting, the Pytchley Hounds, the Woodland Pytchley, the Pytchley Country, the Grafton Hounds, the Grafton Country and the Fitzwilliam Hounds, as well as harriers and beagles, coursing, falconry and flat racing. Other essays covered shooting, angling, steeplechasing, golf, athletics, cricket, football and polo. The section on cricket was notable for a contribution by ‘the late W.G. Grace, Jun., M.A.’.

The final 200 pages or so of volume II included the first topographical material for the county. The map shows the topographical coverage of Northamptonshire to date. (Figure 2) Work started in the north-east of the county, covering the Soke of Peterborough and Willybrook Hundred, which were published in volume II. Little initial thought seems to have been given by the VCH to the question of how to write the ‘Topographical Accounts of Parishes and Manors’ or even of what content they would contain. In 1899 Doubleday assembled a small group of experts to make recommendations. This included the genealogist and publisher W.P.W. Phillimore, but for reasons unknown this initiative fizzled out; instead, John Charles Cox was asked to prepare some models based on Northamptonshire parishes.

This took time, and for Serjeantson, charged with pressing ahead on the topographical work for Northamptonshire, it was also frustrating. By May 1901 he had drawn up lists of parishes in the county and was inviting local clergy to take them on, but he did not even know if authors would be paid or whether they were expected to undertake the work in a voluntary capacity.21 By March 1902 he was already starting on the work: ‘I hope to be able to give more time to it. I have been visiting various churches lately making friends with the various vicars with a view to future operations. I hope to do a good deal of exploring by cycle and otherwise during the summer months, but I want rather to know on what lines to work.’22

21 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 11 May 1901.
22 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 26 Mar 1902.
In June 1902 Serjeantson was in discussion with Cox and a Mr Brereton over ‘which parishes each is going to do. Already they overlap, and friction is bound to ensue sooner or later unless some arrangement is made. Cox seems very anxious that what he has already written should be inserted. Probably Brereton has the same view about his articles!’23

The lack of clarity at the VCH over how to compile the topographical studies is almost certainly the reason for the recruitment in 1902 of William Page, as joint general editor with Doubleday. Page was a record agent, and had been involved with the VCH from the beginning as a member of its Records Committee. He reorganised the work of the VCH and employed many young scholars in a refurbished London Office on James, now Orange, Street, near the National Portrait Gallery. He prepared, with Doubleday, a guide to writing the VCH, partly based on Cox’s recommendations.24 For some reason, Serjeantson seems to have been unaware of this until 1904 when he wrote to Doubleday requesting ‘one of your guides to contributors to V.C. History. It will doubtless enable me to answer some of the innumerable questions that I am constantly being asked. It contains I think specimen parishes, which is what are frequently asked for.’25

Page, in sending Serjeantson a copy of the guide, took the opportunity to set out the principles on which the VCH topography was to be researched. The VCH specifically warned would-be authors and editors against relying on earlier county histories such as those for Northamptonshire by John Morton, John Bridges, and George Baker,26 and encouraged them instead to use the muniment rooms of the county’s gentry and, above all to scour the records in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and Lambeth Palace Library.

The staff Page had employed in the Orange Street office gathered together on a parish by parish basis ‘all the documentary material such as Inquisitions Post Mortem, Fines, Close, Patent and Pipe Rolls etc’. Serjeantson was then told that:

… the local work we require done you will find marked in red ink in the Guide I am sending you under the heading of Topography. I particularly wish to point out that the items of information contributed by local men should not be put together in a consecutive form, but that each item should be written out separately under the heading which is given in the margin. The most scrupulous care should be taken with all information which is not given from personal observation, and should be vouched for by a reference to the printed or MS work or map from which it is taken.27

Page added that architectural material would be collected by experts whose task was ‘to describe in detail the churches and domestic buildings which are of note’. The architectural experts were, in this case, Cox and Brereton, who were to do the churches.28

For Serjeantson, this was useful information. In February 1904 he attended a meeting of

23 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 7 June 1902. None of Cox’s trial entries seems to have been printed.
25 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 19 Jan 1904.
27 VCH A56, Page to Serjeantson, 2 March 1904.
28 VCH A56, Doubleday to Serjeantson, 2 March 1904.
the Northamptonshire Architectural Society and was asked by a number of archaeologists from the Kettering area what they were to do: ‘They seemed very much annoyed that nothing had been done in the way of giving them directions as to how they are to write the topographical history. I promised to meet Gotch, Bull and Wise and discuss the matter with them’. F.W. Bull was offering to do Kettering and Rothwell, and Charles Wise to do Weekley and some other places:

I think the time has come when we must do something, for people on the committee have been grumbling very much lately. If they have something to work at it will occupy their minds! I know one or two squires who would like to undertake their own parish, but how would they do it? And probably they would want far more space than we could allow; each man naturally thinks his own little corner the hub of the universe!’

Subsequently, Serjeantson met with J.A. Gotch, Bull and Wise in Kettering, and they agreed a list of parishes each man was willing to research. Not surprisingly, they chose to do parishes in the area around Kettering, rather than those in the Peterborough area required by the VCH, although Serjeantson claimed to be making arrangements for a meeting there as well in order to ascertain who would take on what.

Page’s rearrangement of the Central Office impacted on Northamptonshire. In summer 1904, Doubleday left the organisation, and Page became sole general editor (having done the task jointly with Doubleday 1902–4). The young scholars, many of them female, were employed initially to search for parish references in printed sources such as the Close Rolls, and were then deployed to search class lists in the Public Record Office, the British Museum, and Lambeth Palace Library. References to parishes were recorded on ‘slips’. Each slip contained one reference to one parish. The slips were collated into parishes, hundreds and counties. Initially it was intended that these would be made available for county editors and authors so that they could write the parish histories, but so competent were the researchers that the VCH decided instead to have them compile manorial descents which could be checked over in any particular county by the local editor.

This did not prevent Serjeantson complaining that the material was not reaching him quickly enough. In April 1905, he lunched with Colonel Strong of Thorpe Hall, near Peterborough, who:

… has promised to do all he can to help. He is a man of considerable influence in these parts. I have secured a similar promise from a Stamford antiquary and things look more hopeful. I can however get on much faster when I have some of the parishes from the office, which according to a letter received about a month ago are to be sent to me, a few at a time, as they are completed, as far as they can be at the office. I shall then know what to enquire about.

The manorial descents, to which he was referring were not yet ready, but in late summer 1905 Miss Joyce Jeffries Davis, one of the London office staff, was assigned to Northamptonshire to work on topographical entries being prepared for volume II. Miss Davis had studied at St Hildas, Oxford, before joining the VCH. In September 1905 she was working on the records at Burghley House. Serjeantson took to his bike on her behalf. He told Page on 15 September that he was about to spend ‘the whole of next week cycling

\[29\] VCH A56, Serjeantson to Doubleday, 29 Feb 1904.
\[30\] VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 5 April 1905.
\[31\] VCH A57 Christine Burrows to Page, 25 April 1907. She died in 1933.
\[32\] VCH A56, Page to Serjeantson, 8 Sept 1905; Serjeantson to Page, 9 Sept 1905.
about Willybrook and Navisford Hundreds’, and a week later he reported to Page that ‘I have been all over the country around Peterborough and Stamford this week, clearing up odds and ends for Miss Davis’.  

In early 1906 Miss Davis requested the loan of court rolls from the collection at Peterborough Abbey for her use on Northamptonshire topography. The Dean and Chapter would have preferred her to travel to them, but agreed in the end to send the material to London when Page assured them that it would be kept in a strong room when not in use and returned as quickly as possible. In the midst of all this, in January 1906, Serjeantson was offered, and accepted, St Peter’s, Northampton. When he moved into the rectory in June 1906 he reported to Page that he had discovered that ‘my house keeper drank like a fish so I had to pack her off at a moment’s notice!’ He found time, however, to prepare the editorial note for volume II, in which he expressed his thanks to ‘the clergy and churchwardens of the respective parishes, who have all, without exception, been most kind in offering every facility for the examination of the various parochial records in their charge.’ The volume was finished, final proofs were read in October 1906, and it was published before the end of the year.

The contents included a list of responsibilities. ‘General descriptions and manorial descents prepared by the General Editor [Page], the Editors for the County [Serjeantson and Adkins], and Miss Joyce Jeffries Davis, Oxford Honours School of Modern History’. Serjeantson had collected all the local information but he admitted that Miss Davis had ‘done all the actual writing’. The only entry to be separately distinguished was the chapter on the Borough of Peterborough written by Mary Bateson, a fellow at Newnham College, Cambridge, from 1888 until her death in 1906. She was a distinguished medievalist with numerous publications, as well as being a well-known suffragist.

Research now began on Northamptonshire topography for what was intended to be volume III. Negotiations took place in 1907 for Serjeantson and Adkins to write the remaining topographical volumes, although the proposed agreement seems never to have been signed. In January 1908 Page assured Serjeantson that he was anxious to get on with Northamptonshire III, which was intended to include Corby, Rothwell, Polebrooke and several other hundreds. They already had abstracts of Inquisitions Post Mortem in the VCH office, and Page asked Serjeantson if, presented with this material, he could write the parish topographical studies, less architecture and charities, for one or two of these hundreds by June 1909. This was a shift away from the earlier policy whereby the London staff drafted the entries for the local editor to check over. The VCH would send him all the material they had, and would also be able to check some sources for him in the PRO. What progress Serjeantson made is unclear, but in 1908 a funding crisis brought the VCH to a standstill. In June 1909, Serjeantson told Page that he and Adkins had met and talked about the future, and Adkins was in favour of calling together the county committee. For his part Serjeantson could see no point in doing so, and there is nothing to suggest that it was convened. Serjeantson did suggest a few names of locally wealthy people who might be able to put

33 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 15, 23 September 1905.
34 VCH A15, E.J. Gray to Miss Davis, 31 Jan 1906.
35 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 17 June 1906.
36 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 20 June 1906.
38 VCH A56, Serjeantson to Page, 22 Feb 1906.
39 Oxford DNB 30640.
40 VCH A15, Nov 1907, unexecuted.
41 VCH A15, 8 Jan 1908.
up some funding, a list which included James Manfield.42

Any approach to Manfield was evidently not successful. When work resumed on the VCH in 1910 funds were available for just ten counties, which did not include Northamptonshire.43 In March 1912 Page told Serjeantson that he was anxious to get together a new prospectus for Northamptonshire, and he asked him to check over the names of the county committee.44 Again, this does not seem to have led anywhere, and work at the VCH ceased altogether in 1915 as a result of the First World War. Serjeantson died at Acton Burnell, Shropshire, his family home, on 15 November 1916 and was buried in the churchyard there. He was described in the editorial note to volume III, as ‘a scholar and a clergyman beloved by all who knew him’.

In July 1917, Stopford-Sackville complained to Page that ‘although 15 years have elapsed since the issue of the first volume of the history of Northamptonshire, no progress seems to have been made of late. At this rate the whole of the Advisory Committee in the county (which has already lost about thirty members) will have passed away before the work is completed.’ Among those who had died was Serjeantson, and Stopford-Sackville recommended Mr Alexander Hamilton Thompson of Stretton as his successor. In a chilling echo of all that the VCH had been trying to avoid, he added ‘My desire that another “torso” should not be added to a series which includes the histories of Bridges and Baker will be my excuse for troubling you with this letter’.45 Page annotated it to the effect that just twenty-four of the 169 parishes proposed for volume III had been drafted.

Nothing further was done, but once the war ended Stopford-Sackville resumed his campaign. He wrote to Page on 7 March 1919 to say ‘I am glad to think that there is a chance of resuming work on the topography of this county in connection with the Victoria History’, adding that he was willing to try to whip up some ‘pecuniary support among county people though at this difficult time I could not expect to raise a large amount’.46 Page invited Stopford-Sackville to meet him in London in April 1919, but if he did, and if anything was forthcoming, no note of such a discussion has survived.47

After the war Page was unable to do much more than edit volumes prepared before 1914 for publication, and then only when local funds were forthcoming. Mostly these were volumes completed before 1908. The editorial note to Northamptonshire III, which eventually appeared in 1930, commented that ‘Since the publication of the second volume of the Victoria History of the County of Northampton nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed. The war and post-war difficulties put a stop to historical research and caused the History to fall into abeyance for many years.’ Put slightly differently it meant that work had been undertaken for Northamptonshire but it could not be published because there were no funds available.

Early in 1924 Page opened negotiations with James Manfield, the Northamptonshire shoe entrepreneur, with a view to his providing funding towards publication. Born in 1856, the second son of Sir Philip Manfield M.P., James had been chairman of Manfield & Sons, Ltd, boot manufacturers since 1899, and an active politician and philanthropist in both town

42 VCH A15, Serjeantson to Page, 5 June 1909; Page to Serjeantson, 7 June 1909.
43 VCH A15, Page to Serjeantson, 3 June 1910.
44 VCH A15, Page to Serjeantson, 23 March 1912.
45 VCH A15, Stopford-Sackville to Page, 10 July 1917. At this date Hamilton Thompson was living in Northamptonshire and giving local history lectures on behalf of the Cambridge syndicate.
46 VCH A15, Stopford-Sackville to Page, 7 March 1919.
47 VCH A15, Page to Stopford-Sackville, 10 March 1919.
and county. He was a Justice of the Peace for Northampton, Member of Northampton Borough Council, and Chairman of its Finance Committee. He had succeeded to the business on the death of his father in 1899. In the early 1900s he had built Weston Favell House, a stone house and small park. In 1925 he gave it to become Manfield Hospital, and it was later converted into flats. He had been a founder-supporter of the Record Society in 1920 when Miss Wake thanked him in the preface to the first volume for his ‘generous support’, without which the society could not have got off the ground.

After some wavering over whether he would prefer to help out financially with Somerset or Northamptonshire, Manfield opted for Northamptonshire, and in August 1924 he wrote to Page from Zermatt, Switzerland, to confirm his commitment. The agreement was signed on 24 December 1924 with Manfield offering a loan of up to £1,200 in instalments as required, to enable research and writing to be completed, and publication costs to be met, for volume III. He was to be repaid from sales revenue. Page’s breakdown of costs included £400 for contributors’ fees and £150 for illustrations. He estimated another £125 for incidental costs such as the architectural descriptions. Manfield died suddenly in London on 9 July 1925, but his executors agreed to continue with the loan arrangement.

Page now needed to find a way of updating the material prepared in the Orange Street office before the First World War. Both Serjeantson and Adkins were dead, and Hamilton Thompson had moved to Leeds. Page turned instead to several of the women who had been working for the VCH before the financial catastrophe of 1908. In December 1924 he wrote to Miss Henrietta Garbett, by this time librarian of the William Salt Library in Stafford, to say that work was resuming on Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire, news which gave her ‘enormous satisfaction’. He asked her if she would be willing to undertake some work towards completing the projects. She admitted she thought she would be ‘rather stiff at it’ having not undertaken VCH work for many years, and that doing the work remotely, from Staffordshire, rather than in London might cause some difficulties: ‘would you, I wonder, let me try a Northampton parish or two to see how I get on?’ She suggested Page nominate two parishes for her to work on from Stafford, apologising for looking ‘rather greedy’, but adding that ‘I do not know how you are allotting or working the parishes, and I only put these down because of their connexion with this county or because I know that we have ancient deeds or other material relating to the lords.’ Brixworth and Old in Orlingbury Hundred were nominated for her attention. She was still working on them two years later, but something clearly went wrong subsequently because Brixworth and Wold appeared only in volume IV, and these two parishes were attributed to Margery Fletcher. Perhaps Miss Garbett’s concerns about working remotely proved justified. She remained at the Salt Library until 1939, but she was not named as a contributor to Northamptonshire topography.

48 The Times, 10 Jul 1925.
49 ODNB 47, 893.
50 Northamptonshire Record Society, I (1922), preface.
51 VCH A15, James Manfield to Page, 25 Aug 1924.
52 VCH H89, ledger, Northamptonshire section.
53 VCH A15, memo by Page, 3 March 1925.
54 VCH A15, James Jackson to Page, 11 Sept 1925.
55 VCH A15, Page to Mrs Manfield, 27 June 1930; Mrs Manfield to Page, 28 June 1930.
56 VCH A15, Henrietta Garbett to Page, 15 Dec 1924.
57 VCH A15, Page to Garbett, 14 June 1926.
58 Papers of Miss Garbett had survived at the William Salt Library, which is still the headquarters of the VCH Staffordshire project.
Although this initiative seems to have come to grief, a glance at the contents pages of volume III makes it obvious that other women researchers were employed to prepare and write, or perhaps to re-edit earlier entries prepared before 1908. They included several women who had been on the staff of the VCH in Orange Street prior to 1908: Charlotte Calthorp, Helen Douglas-Irvine, Catherine Jamison and Maud Simpkins. Catherine Jamison worked for the VCH 1905-10 and again 1926-39. She was Assistant Secretary of the Royal Historical Society 1943-6, and published papers on a number of subjects. Early in 1930 she was correcting proofs of seven parishes in Huxloe Hundred, possibly after having revised some of her own earlier work, or doing so for entries prepared before 1908 by other women. Page needed her to fast-forward the entry on Higham Ferrers, because he found he did not have enough material for the volume, and this entry came in to volume III under Charlotte Calthrop’s name, so we can assume Miss Calthrop wrote the original and Miss Jamison corrected and update it in 1930.59 She was offered payment at the rate of 2s 6d an hour, and accepted the proposal ‘as it is for the VCH’. Initially she was ‘a little doubtful whether I shall remember the forms of the footnotes and abbreviations etc.’ Back in 1908 she had intended to keep her copy of the VCH guide ‘as a souvenir, but it had vanished when I went to Orange Street to collect my belongings, and I did mean to ask you about it at the time’.

Most of volume III was work revised from 1908, although some material was new. Page decided that it should include Northampton, and for this he required an author. In February 1926, at the suggestion of Joan Wake, he approached Helen Cam, of Girton College, Cambridge. Miss Cam had graduated from Royal Holloway in 1907, and published her first book in 1912. She went to Girton in 1921 and was successively research fellow (until 1926), fellow, and lecturer in history at the college, and for the university from 1929. Later she spent six years at Harvard before retiring in 1954. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, and appointed CBE in 1957. She died in 1968.

Page asked her for 20,000 words, modelled on Mary Bateson’s account of Peterborough, published in volume II, and exclusive of architectural material or charities which would be collated in London. He added: ‘If you can say a few words in particular about the lay out and general development of the town I should be glad, showing the position of the original borough and the extensions and the causes of them’.62 In the end she wrote 43,000 words, and Page was so impressed he agreed to publish the whole piece, and to pay her at the appropriate rate of 25s per 1,000 words, £53 15s.63

Page now found that the architecture was his main concern. The architectural work for the volume had not been done before 1914. This involved visiting and describing the churches and other major buildings in the hundreds to be included in the volume, and this work was undertaken by F.H. Cheetham and Hamilton Thompson who was also, coincidentally but significantly, Serjeantson’s executor. Page complained that the pace of progress on the volume was slow because of ‘the difficulty in getting the architectural descriptions from

59 VCH A15, Miss Jamison to Page, 30 Jan 1930.
60 VCH A15, Page to Miss Jamison, 3 Feb 1930. In 1929 she was working on Wellingborough, although this appeared in IV without specific attribution.
61 ODNB 32254.
62 VCH A15, Page to Miss Helen Cam, 25 June 1926.
63 VCHA15, Page to Cam, 14 Nov 1930. A collection of manuscripts relating to Northamptonshire was located in Kent too late for Miss Cam to use them in her account of Northampton: The Times, 28 March 1929, letter from Joan Wake.
Prof. Hamilton Thompson’.  

In November 1928 Hamilton Thompson finally sent off to Page ‘my account of Drayton for the VCH and I hope that it will do. It has taken me a long time to work out, as, although I know the house well, its story is extremely complicated. The measurements which I have given are mainly approximate, as I had to depend upon a small-scale plan but I think that they are fairly accurate.’ The letter continued at some length about what he had left out, and why, which apparently exasperated Page who annotated it ‘a typical letter from Prof Hamilton Thompson’.

Eventually everything was finished and volume III appeared in 1930 with fulsome praise of ‘Miss Joan Wake, for her untiring help in overcoming difficulties and in obtaining local information’, and of J.A. Gotch, then the chairman of the Northamptonshire Record Society. The book had been funded by the £1200 advanced in instalments by Manfield’s executors between July 1925 and November 1930. Page repaid £225 by July 1931 from early sales. Thereafter it was a slower business. After 1933 the University of London became responsible for the debt, and by 1952 it had paid back a further £218 in annual instalments, so that £443 out of £1,200 had been repaid. By 1964 sales had been sufficient to pay off £712 of the loan, leaving £488 still outstanding. When this was paid is not known.

Nothing further had been done on Northamptonshire, presumably because no benefactor could be found, when in 1933 Page transferred ownership of the VCH to the University of London, which located it in the Institute of Historical Research (IHR). Page remained as general editor, but he died in 1934, and was succeeded at the beginning of 1935 by L.F. Salzman. The new editor found himself in an awkward position: the IHR was funding him to do the work, but not the potential publishing programme. In other words, unless he raised the funding for publishing, nothing would appear. Salzman complained that this made the post untenable, and in March 1935 the University of London agreed to provide £3,800 working capital, from which he could meet publishing expenses and then repay the loan from sales. The first volume to be published under this new dispensation was to be Northamptonshire IV.

Salzman had to make this new arrangement work. An inventory of material prepared when the University of London took over the VCH in 1933 listed manorial descents prepared for 12 parishes in Higham Ferrers hundred, 15 in Orlingbury, 8 in Hamfordshoe, 11 in Spelhoe, and 18 in Guilsborough, a total of 64 parishes in 5 hundreds. For all of them the architectural descriptions were described as recently prepared. All of the parishes for Higham Ferrers, Orlingbury, Hamfordshoe and Spelhoe were subsequently published in volume IV, which came out in 1937. They had been written and paid for (at a cost of £196) before the First World War, and were described as ‘general descriptions and manorial descents compiled by the staff of the late William Page, revised by L.F. Salzman’, with architectural descriptions by F.H. Cheetham. Apart from Brixworth and Old, ascribed to Margery Fletcher, nothing further was said about them.

Guilsborough Hundred was omitted from volume IV, even though the manorial descents and architectural descriptions had been prepared. Wymersley Hundred was substituted instead. Material for this hundred was not transferred to the IHR in 1933; in fact, we have...
to assume that it was researched and written specially for volume IV. There were 20 parishes in the hundred, of which five were written by Margery Fletcher, eight by Ada Russell, and seven by Marian K Dale. Salzman wrote the introduction, and J.A. Gotch contributed descriptions of Castle Ashby and the manor house at Yardley Hastings. Marian Dale, assistant secretary at the IHR, was signed up by Salzman in February 1935, and wrote 13,000 words for which she was remunerated £16 5s.69 Miss Fletcher was paid £11 5s and Miss Russell £4 7s 6d. We do not know why Wymersley was preferred to Guilsborough Hundred for this volume, but it seems likely that it was because Miss Wake lived at Courteenhall, in Wymersley Hundred.

In May 1935 Salzman told the VCH committee that ‘I have revised the manuscript of four out of the five hundreds of Northamptonshire IV and expect to send some to the printer early in June so that publication this year may be expected’.70 The very next day he wrote to Miss Wake to request her assistance – ‘as in the past’ – by looking over the accounts of Raunds and Ringstead, as ‘the manorial descents of the manors, particularly those of Cotes, are very confusing’.71 While being ‘delighted to hear that you are working on the Northants VCH’, Miss Wake replied: ‘I fear I know nothing about the descents of the manors of Raunds and Ringstead’.72 Both were in Higham Ferrers hundred. In September 1935 Salzman sent Miss Wake the proofs of Orlingbury Hundred.73 Courteenhall went to her for checking in September 1935. This was by Marian K. Dale, and in returning the text Miss Wake noted that she had ‘pulled it about somewhat, but you may as well have it right’. By January 1936 she was reading the complete manuscript of Wymerse Hundred,74 but she evidently found much to disapprove of since Salzman felt obliged to thank her ‘for all the trouble you are taking over Wymersley Hundred’. He also asked if it was possible to see the manuscript history of Little Houghton by ‘Mr Davidge’.75 Miss Wake also helped Salzman to acquire photographs for the volume.76

Unfortunately, given the innovative financial arrangements, the volume kept slipping. Salzman had promised it for 1935, but it was still nowhere near completion in November 1936. When in December 1936 Salzman sent Miss Wake the complete proof copy to read, he had it returned by the clerk of the Northamptonshire Record Society with a brief note saying she had gone abroad for three months and no correspondence was being forwarded.77 She was back by July 1937 when she got wind of the book’s publication and immediately requested a copy: ‘May I say how greatly this Society would appreciate a copy of the volume for its own library. We have not, of course, a spare halfpenny for the purchase of books.’78 ‘Special thanks’ were recorded in the preface to volume IV ‘to Miss Joan Wake, who again put her own enthusiasm and local knowledge and the documentary resources of the Northamptonshire Record Society at our disposal’.79 The IHR was not amused when it

69 VCH B10, Salzman to Marian K. Dale, Feb 1935, 16 Apr 1937; Dale to Salzman, 21 April 1937. She was a graduate of the University of London.
70 VCH National Committee Minutes, 14 May 1935.
71 VCH B10, Salzman to Miss Wake, 16 May 1935.
72 VCH B10, Wake to Salzman, 20 May 1935.
73 VCH B10, Salzman to Wake, 10 Sept 1935.
74 VCH B10, Salzman to Wake, 30 January 1936.
75 VCH B10, Salzman to Wake, 5 Feb 1936. C. Vere Davidge’s work is acknowledged in several footnotes. His son, Christopher Davidge, current chairman of the Record Society, confirms that it has never been published.
76 VCH B10, Wake to Salzman, 28 July 1936.
77 VCH B10, Clerk to the Society to Salzman, 4 Dec 1936; VCH National Committee Minutes, 17 Nov 1936, 17 March, 15 June 1937
78 VCH B10, Wake to Salzman, 30 July 1937.
79 VCH Northamptonshire, IV (1937), preface.
turned out that the volume had cost more than twice as much to print than had been estimated.\(^{80}\)

Miss Wake’s contribution to the VCH is reflected in the acknowledgement of her in volumes III and IV. She was not an author, but her influence was considerable. She had, after all, done so much to rescue records in the county and bring them into the hands of the Record Society, and at the same time to recognise the importance of local records for the study of villages, something of which the VCH had not always been particularly aware.\(^{81}\) These records have been consulted by the contributors particularly to volume IV (Salzman refers in letters to his own visits to the county to see the records). She read contributions for volume IV when they were in MSS, and probably for volume III although there is no extant correspondence to show whether or not this was the case.\(^{82}\) Her long standing commitment to local history, notably through her Women’s Institute project, is testimony to her interest in studying past communities.\(^{83}\)

The VCH has, necessarily, had to change over time. Northamptonshire was in from the beginning with two volumes published before the First World War, but it was caught up in the financial crisis of 1908, after which no funds were available to revive the work in the county. As in many counties including, in the East Midlands, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, this might well have proved to be the end of the road, had it not been for the philanthropy of James Manfield. An attempt was made after the Second World War to encourage Northamptonshire to set up a VCH office in the county, a new way of working pioneered in Wiltshire, Warwickshire and Leicestershire, but despite the support of Earl Spencer this did not happen.\(^{84}\) No further work was undertaken until the modern VCH county history trust was formed in 1997.

The VCH both nationally and in Northamptonshire, has enjoyed or endured a rocky ride since 1899, but with volumes published in 2002 (volume V, Cleley), 2007 (volume VI, Modern Industry) and 2013 (Corby and Great Oakley), work continues under the supervisory eye of the VCH Trust under its chairman Lord Boswell. The fact that Her Majesty the Queen was graciously pleased in 2012 to rededicate the VCH on the same terms as Queen Victoria reminds us that it remains a significant and ongoing part of writing our local and national history.

\(^{80}\) VCH National Committee Minutes, 14 June 1938.
\(^{82}\) ODNB, 38807; The Times, 23 Jan 1974.
\(^{83}\) The Times, 12 Jan 1926; Joan Wake, How to Compile a History and Present-Day Record of Village Life (1925).
\(^{84}\) VCH Q14, R.P. Pugh to Earl Spencer, 15 Dec 1950; Spencer to Pugh, 17 February 1951; Pugh to Miss Wake, 14 March 1952; The Times, 24 May 1956, ‘Northamptonshire Records’; English County Historians, 300.
The First Northamptonshire County Council Revisited
KEITH BROOKER

Introduction
An important implicit theme of Professor Gordon’s article in this journal on Northamptonshire’s first county council1 is the extent to which landed county society was able to retain political power locally as oligarchic Quarter Sessions gave way to the more democratic processes of the new County Council. Yet the gradual eclipse of that authority and power was by the late Victorian period inevitable in the face of the rising political influence of the urban bourgeoisie and the broadening of the county’s electoral base. Indeed, part of the pressure for such a radical change in local governance was the desire of the business class to take their place in the political process. Thus, what we can observe in this county, as elsewhere, is that whilst prominent members of the entrenched landed power base still exerted strong influence over county affairs, there began a steady incursion of businessmen into local political life.

In Northamptonshire, to write about an urban bourgeoisie in this period is inevitably to write substantially about footwear manufacturers. In this note I wish to provide a brief narrative about these businessmen and their role in the governance of both the county and its towns. Important amongst these men were those manufacturers who used the power base of land ownership to develop their political position. And lastly, I wish to record the achievement of some of Northampton’s footwear manufacturers, exemplars of a new generation of dynamic men who sought elected office to the new county parliaments of England from 1889.

I
It was not until the third quarter of the nineteenth century that the political dominance of landed society was finally challenged by the growing political and financial strength of urban Britain. In recent years there has been an interesting debate amongst historians about the nature of the political power held by the landed county society and the extent to which this can be regarded as a closed or open society, one which accommodated the entry of new people of wealth and authority into its ranks, or not. These new people came overwhelmingly from the ranks of successful urban people in commerce and industry.

For many of Britain’s Victorian industrialists the wealth brought by business success may have provided security for their families, but many sought to capitalise upon that success in other ways: for success alone had limited appeal for some in a society that prescribed a low status to it. As Adam Smith concluded: ‘…To what purpose is all the toil and bustle of the world? It is our vanity which urges us on. It is not wealth that men desire but the consideration of good opinion that wait upon riches…’2

Dominant local industrialists in many Victorian towns nurtured those social and political characteristics within a process of urban gentrification calculated to assure their ascendancy to positions of political and social authority amongst their fellow townspeople3. Similar processes were played out in Northamptonshire’s leading manufacturing towns4. And that

ascendancy legitimised their material success. For the pre-eminent amongst them this was the opportunity to enter county society. Yet cultural differences kept them and county society at a distance, and the extent they were able to breach this gulf should not be exaggerated, for very few broke the parochial small town mould into which they had been cast.

Entry to county society at this time still relied upon the acquisition of land, the possession of a county seat. Land ownership provided both an investment and a pleasant place of residence, but more crucially it gave both social acceptance and conferred power and authority:

...Land had brought the gentry the prestige of local leadership. It also made them literally Lords of Creation; the local landscape was made and remade (by them)...They were as much a political as an economic class; their estates constituted effective local spheres of political influence and electors were expected to vote so as not to disoblige their landlord...

The average size of their landed estate locates these new entrants within what L. Stone has described as the parish gentry. Nevertheless, this sufficed, with its own country house, to provide an estate able to support traditional rural sports and pleasures required for fuller acceptance into county society; the rural power basis for any who sought to exercise power locally. However, politics was to be at a point of transition from the 1880s. Both electoral reform and the introduction of county councils were part of a longer process of change that was to see the balance of power in the twentieth century shift away from landed proprietors. But for now, land owners in rural counties continued to hold sway. It would be at least another generation before urban interests eclipsed rural in county politics. There existed still the cult of the land.

Indeed, this county of 'squires and spires' had long witnessed a process of assimilation. Indeed, some of the premier aristocratic and old-established families traced their origins...
back to similar commercial and manufacturing beginnings. This trait was noted throughout the country, for as F.M.L. Thompson comments, ‘...it has long been recognised that the rise of the new gentry is a permanent feature of the English social scene...’ However, recent studies argue that the extent of assimilation has been exaggerated. Closer study points to a consistent resistance to in-comers by core landed families, forcing many in-comers into a shallower process of cultural mimicry rather than dynastic family formation. Additionally, limited country house building at this time suggests that new entry was not extensive. This said, the political and social collaboration within the county between some traditional families and in-comers after 1880 deserves more emphasis.

In the two centuries after the Restoration the rural landed leadership was scarcely challenged. Power became markedly institutionalised, parliamentary representation nationally and service on the Quarter Sessions bench locally. Within the county this power formed a virtual indivisibility between the county magistracy and landownership, a position that had changed little over time. Writing of the seventeenth century D. Mathew notes that acceptance into the local gentry was through a ‘...process which was sealed by the attainment of a place on the Commission of the Peace...’ And F.M.L. Thompson comments of the nineteenth, ‘...to serve in the magistracy and to form marriage alliances with established county families, these were the twin symbols of the merger of a new family into the general life of county society...’ It was into this conservative, entrenched society that the county’s manufacturers entered in the later Victorian period.

There were two considerations facing a businessman wishing to enter county society: (i) the continued dominance of powerful, established landed families; and (ii) the general decline in power of the landed class itself after 1880. R.W. Shorthouse’s study of early nineteenth century justices helps our understanding of the county’s Quarter Sessions nature in the decades before its absorption into the County Council.

First, anyone entering county affairs found their way circumscribed by this tightly interwoven phalanx of landed families. New entrants with suitable skills were useful and made an impact, but Shorthouse cautions the ‘...county bench was at the time one of the most socially exclusive in the country...’:

...most of the peers active on the bench were local grandees, whose families had lived in Northamptonshire for centuries and had presided over the county’s affairs. The same was

true of the gentry. Nearly two thirds of this group of magistrates were Northamptonshire (county) families and sons of resident country gentlemen…16

Despite this, relative newcomers to county society from professional and business backgrounds formed a third of all justices. Yet despite this continued infusion of new blood, he notes this

…should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the county gentlemen who sat on the bench were principally descendants of many generations of men who had likewise been the rulers of the county…17

A Northamptonshire contemporary too observed little change:

…the public authorities I knew seventy years ago…were a curious jumble. County Quarter Sessions, biggest of them all, was in the main hereditary – a sort of House of Lords – for the Justices of the Peace who comprised it were landowners and when their heir succeeded to the estate he became a justice almost as a matter of course…18

When the civil and administrative powers of Quarter Sessions were absorbed into the county councils in 1889, for some years after large numbers of councillors continued to be drawn from the ranks of local landed society, bolstered by landownership, reinforced by inter-marriage and established traditions of rule. Many had a long tradition of both parliamentary representation and active work on the bench, and later in the county council:

…Through the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth, Northamptonshire county gentlemen steered a course of fierce independence in politics. Their principal aim was to thwart the rising ambitions of local aristocratic intrusions into this traditional preserve of the gentry …, most notably in the case of Lord Althorp, the ordinary county gentry managed to retain the reins of county government very tightly in their hands…19

But Greenall notes, such internal dissensions, ‘…were merely the rivalries of an increasingly narrow caucus of families who dominated the shire, whose differences were less than their shared similarity in outlook…”20

The second consideration facing a new entrant was the general decline in power of the landed class itself after 1880. Agricultural depression; government reforms in both electoral and taxation law; an increasing aura of political liberalisation, together with a growth in working class political consciousness and a rearrangement of political power balance

16 ibid, p. 132.
17 ibid, p. 133.
18 W.W. Hadley. ‘Northamptonshire Memories II’ NPP (1957) II:4 p. 175.
19 R.W. Shorthouse. loc. cit., I p. 136: A full account of this struggle for power appears in E.G. Forrester Northamptonshire County Elections & Electioneering 1695-1832 (1941). Cf. Shorthouse loc. cit. p. 244 on the influence of local aristocrats on the bench: ‘…Magistrates from aristocratic families were prominent on the bench of quarter sessions. Earl Spencer as chairman, the Marquis of Northampton and the Earl of Euston attended this court frequently and played an active part in its deliberations. Other peers came only on ceremonial occasions, or when some special matter of county business lay on the agenda. None was especially active at petty sessions. They appeared from time to time, prosecuting minor offences, but it seems unlikely that their participation at this level was ever of much consequence…’
20 Greenall. op. cit., p. 167: Cf. Thompson op. cit., p. 134 ‘…The county families were on terms of equality with the magnates and generally took for granted as part of the inevitable and pre-ordained natural harmony of society the leadership of the aristocracy in government, sport and pleasure…”
between rural interests and urban ones within the county; all served to fuel this decline, slow though it was. Thus, the decade after 1885 witnessed a major restructuring of those institutions upon which county society’s oligarchical power was based and sustained. As J. Howarth has noted:

...Between the general elections of 1880 and 1895, the structure and organisation of county politics changed more rapidly than at any other time in English history. This period saw the institution of household suffrage and single-member constituencies, the dethronement of Quarter Sessions and the parish vestry in favour of elected County and Parish Councils, the democratisation of the Poor Law authorities and the arrival of popular constituency party organisations...21

Howarth views this short period as the passing of the old system of class government ‘... and by 1898 whichever party was in the ascendant, Northamptonshire politics could never revert to their traditional pattern of landed oligarchy...’22 There occurred a sufficient incursion of democratic ideals into county matters to ensure that some non-landed men were able to assume political responsibilities. The importance of holding land, whilst not disappearing overnight, ceased to be the sole precursor for the exercise of that authority, though it still sent crucial social signals to county society. As Table 1 shows, few Northampton footwear manufacturers were to seek the amenity value and political leverage conferred by land ownership. This then was a transition period when old values and new political prescriptions were to coalesce together for some years. Old loyalties to land-based politics and new political ways forged in the county’s towns played themselves out as the people of Northamptonshire worked out the legacy of the new legislative measures. These new men from the county’s commercial bourgeoisie were able to give both a political and financial transfusion into the body politic.

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Table 1: County Estate Ownership of Northampton Manufacturers 1880-1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Estate</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H.E. Randall</td>
<td>Monks Park Hall</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>48 acre urban estate: reduces to 8 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Turner</td>
<td>Upton Hall</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>655 acre park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Manfield</td>
<td>Moulton Grange</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>800 acre park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Manfield</td>
<td>Weston Favell House</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>100 acre park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Cooper</td>
<td>Delapré Abbey Estate</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Lease of 1000 (?) acres: house and land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.H. Marlow</td>
<td>Sedgebrook Hall</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>150 acres park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.E. Marlow</td>
<td>Preston Deanery Hall</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>950 acre park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.G. Sears*</td>
<td>Collingtree Grange</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>259 acre park and farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.T. Sears</td>
<td>Stud farm</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>500 acres farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.W. Panther</td>
<td>Boughton Hall</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>1,464 acre parkland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
(i) Date = date of acquisition.
(ii) Acreage figures derived from a mix of Return of Owners of Land (c.1097), 1874, LXXX11, Pt. 2; Bateman 1883; and information at the time of manufacturer purchase.
Source: Kelly’s Handbook; Burke’s Landed Gentry; or Walford’s County Families; and information available at time of purchase.
*In 1914, Sears built Westone Manor at Weston Flavell; he died in 1916.

Change, then, signalled a decline not a final eclipse for county society’s dominance and influence over the county affairs:

...Some...had felt that the establishment of the County Councils in 1888 was a revolutionary measure which meant the “dethronement of the squirearchy”, but in practice the nobility and gentry provided most of the chairmen of the new councils...

This democratisation started in the county magistracy, but did not immediately threaten county society. The first three bourgeois JPs were appointed in 1882 and included J.T. Stockburn, a Kettering corset manufacturer (first chairman of the county’s Liberal Association); and N.P. Sharman, a Wellingborough footwear manufacturer. A year later, George Turner, a Northampton shoe manufacturer, joined them on the bench. As W.W. Hadley has commented:

...their appointment was for a time bitterly resented in some quarters. I was there when they first appeared at an administrative meeting of Sessions and remember how isolated

23 Howarth (1969) loc. cit. p. 91: ‘...The great men of the county remained influential but were no longer in (total) control...’ See also Thompson (1963) op. cit. Chapter XI, especially p. 324 et seq., where he notes that their transfer of power to the County Council chamber was never complete, Gordon loc. cit. passim.
24 Thompson (1963), p. 325: Despite the peppering of industrial towns and villages within the county, many within rural communities retained a traditional deference and conservatism common in rural areas.
25 Despite the alteration and partial reform of local government prior to 1880, the county quarter sessions remained the cornerstone and arguably the most powerful element of local administration in rural areas. Magistrates were nominees of the Crown and in Northamptonshire county society held sway at least until the Great War. See Hadley, loc. cit. p. 175.
they seemed to be, until Robert Spencer, whose political friends they were, left his place and sat by them...26

The landowners’ reaction was initially sharp and rested upon two central points: that such magistrates were ill-fitted to wield power, and that such appointments undermined the prevailing smooth operations of Quarter Sessions.27 Later, an accommodation set in.

George Turner was the first bourgeois Northamptonian to make the transition to county society. He was born the youngest of four sons, on 31 October 1833 at Northampton into a working shoemaker’s family. His father, Richard senior, was a master shoemaker from Kettering.28 George Turner’s dominance in industry and county society pre-dates that of the seven oligarchic firms listed in Table 2. He was ‘one of the great shoe manufacturers of Northampton’29, who with his brother Richard, led the most conspicuously successful of the pre-1887 generation of shoe manufacturers30. The firm of Turner Brothers, Hyde & Company commenced trading in 1859, being a partnership between George, his brother Richard31, and Henry A. de Ros Hyde32. Richard had earlier traded as a sole trader in Commercial Street from 1852, and following that a brief partnership existed with his three

27 See Hadley. ibid. p. 177 where the strident and hostile views of prominent landowners are examined.
28 Richard, born in 1801; married Dinah Simkin of Northampton in c. 1820: she was born in 1805. They initially lived in Kettering where their two elder sons were born. Sometime before 1834 they migrated to Northampton. By 1841 they are recorded as living in Austin Street, All Saints, Northampton. John, aged 20, and Richard 15, together with seven-year-old twins George and Charles, a 15-year-old apprentice shoemaker, and a 13-year-old domestic servant: 1841 Census Enumerator Returns Northampton (CERN).
29 Northamptonshire County Magazine 4 (1931) p. 83 (NCM).
30 BSTJ 20/3/1897, states of Richard, ‘They were two of the foremost pioneers of modern shoe manufacturing’. Originally George was in partnership with his brothers Richard and John. By 1851, John, the eldest, resided at 7 Western Terrace, Northampton with his wife Elizabeth and his brother Richard; both are shoe manufacturers at this time. Members of his wife’s family also resided in the house along with two female servants. Within a few years John and his family had moved to St George’s Place, where he died in c.1858.
31 Richard Turner JP (1826-97): Active Liberal/Liberal Unionist politician; councillor and alderman 1866-97; contested parliamentary seat 1886; prominent member of Manufacturers’ Association. By 1861 Richard had taken the lease of Western Terrace, residing there with his growing family until the late 1870s, when they moved to The Limes, Cliftonville. There were three female servants by the 1880s. He died at Cliftonville, 12 March 1897: Effects at probate £60,669/11/6d gross. Both his sons – William and Ernest – entered the firm. (CERN 1861 to 1891).
32 H.A. de Ros Hyde (1821-93): Australian merchant of Kensington Court, London: he died 24 March 1893: effects £73,072/19/8d.
brothers, trading from premises in Marefair. Turner Bros. was ‘for years the biggest shoe manufacturers in the district’ 33. Their original warehouse at Campbell Square was extensively enlarged and they employed large numbers of outworkers under the control of shoe agents in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire villages. Such successful trading stretching over 30 years was unusual in the pre-1887 footwear industry.

George, a shrewd and astute businessman, had a large share in promoting this success. He purchased Upton Hall in 1883 34. Previously in the ownership of Sir Thomas Samwell, whose forebears had bought Upton in 1600 from the Knightleys of Fawsley, owners from 1419, by 1830 the Hall had passed to Thomas Watson-Samwell JP by marriage. His father ‘came from the colliery regions of Northumberland, (and) married the younger daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas, the last representative of the family.’ 35 By the time of the 1872–73 government landownership inquiry the then owner, G. Wright Esq. occupied the remaining 655 acres of largely parkland that surrounded the house. 36 As an obituary notes, George Turner quickly assumed the mould of a landed country gentleman:

...He spent his time (at Upton Hall) in the discharge of his duties as Justice of the Peace of the County of Northampton and in the pursuits of a country gentleman... 37

Earlier in his life he had been an ardent follower of the hounds, a pastime he now resumed. He used this, along with his magistrate’s duties, as a means of cementing his place in county society. He approached his time on the bench with considerable seriousness, being both painstaking and impartial in the discharge of these duties.

For many years he was an active Liberal politician in Northampton, representing East Ward (1867–76); an alderman (1876–89); and mayor (1876–77). He took no active part in county politics, but was for many years active in the volunteer movement, retiring with the rank of Hon. Major; but again this ceased upon arrival at Upton Hall. He died there on 13 October 1892, after a short illness attributed to long standing health problems: he left £71,387/9/0d 38. George’s wife remained at Upton Hall until her death in September 1900, when the property was purchased by William Hudson JP.

33 BSTJ 1 November 1912, p. 144. Successive census enumerator’s returns for Richard Turner gave details of employee numbers of the firm. In 1861 he was described as ‘...a master employing 800 hands...’; in 1871 ‘...employing 1900 persons...’; in 1881 ‘...employing 1,500 men...’ By the 1870s it was regarded as the biggest shoe firm in the world, and press articles of this period placed employee numbers as high as 4,000 people. Whether the census figures are for indoor employees with outworkers providing the balance is not certain.

34 BSTJ 14/6/1884 p. 384, reported his serious illness followed by semi-retirement: ‘...having purchased an estate two miles out of Northampton, for...£60,000, with the hope of enjoying some years of well-earned rest...’. Prior to this he had lived at 26 Derrgate, Northampton, and The Elms, Billing Rd: at both residences three female servants were maintained (CERN 1871 & 1881). He was the consultative, senior partner of the family firm, but the business was run by his youngest son, Thomas George and two nephews. One, William Henry (born 1857), son of Richard, ran the Northampton factory with Thomas, whilst J.A. Turner (1854–1912) was the firm’s London merchant, trained by Hyde. Popular in London society, he had been a famous cricketer playing for Northamptonshire and MCC. (BSTJ 1/11/1912 p. 144, NPP (1975) V, 4, p. 363). He died at Bexhill-on-Sea: Effects £3,134/13/3d gross.

35 R. W. Shorthouse, op. cit. p. 132. The Knightleys and Samwells had been owners of Upton village and Lords of the Manors and it is probable that Turner was also. (NCM loc. cit.).

36 BPP Return of Owners of Land (c.1097), 1874, LM1, Pt 2, gross annual rental £1,750 13s 0d.


38 Probate Calendar 1892 Volume 7, p. 322. His eldest son, Charles Simkin Turner, did not enter the family firm. He is recorded as being a barrister in his father’s probate record. He served in the South African War with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (BSTJ 15/9/1900 p. 352).
The manufacturing ranks that George Turner came from remained extensive, diverse and complex after his death. Traditionally the industry was heavily made up of small masters functioning within a predominately handcraft, outwork basis. But as the industry slowly moved to mechanised factory production, the new economic demands for higher levels of capital and efficient production levels witnessed the emergence of larger scale firms. The most influential oligopolistic firms formed an elite that dominated the industry, and political and associational affairs locally in the decades before the Great War. They numbered seven firms out of the sixty four Northampton wholesale manufacturing firms trading in 1914. (Table 2).

Table 2: Listing of Elite Wholesale Manufacturing Firms at Northampton in 1914

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Firm</th>
<th>Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.E. Marlow &amp; Co.</td>
<td>16,750pairs** + 1,200 workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. &amp; E. Lewis &amp; Co.</td>
<td>15,000 pairs + 1,200 workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sears &amp; Co. Ltd*</td>
<td>12,500 pairs + 1,000 in Northampton factories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manfield &amp; Sons*</td>
<td>12,000 pairs + 1,200 workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crockett &amp; Jones*</td>
<td>7,000 pairs + 1,100 workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.E. Randall Ltd*</td>
<td>2,200 pairs + factored stocks; c.300 factory workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Bostock &amp; Co. Ltd*</td>
<td>6,000 pairs and 450 factory workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *Manufacturers who developed retail outlets; **the output of his three firms.

From the seven elite firms, three outstanding figures emerge who became notably involved in county affairs: Harry Manfield, Albert E. Marlow and Sir Henry Randall. Their newly-found place in county society and political affairs was at once typical of this group of upwardly mobile manufacturers, and of the emergence of gentrification amongst leading members of Northampton’s bourgeoisie. Two were sons of the founder of their family firms; the third the son of successful draper.

Harry Manfield was one of the leading new men of his generation to enter county politics and social affairs in our period, and despite ill-health, shyness and living under the shadow of his father, he enjoyed an extensive public life. He served as a county councillor and

39 Footwear emerged as a batch production, not a mass production industry as is commonly portrayed in popular post-industrial histories today.
40 Table 2 is based on each firm’s weekly nominal output production capacity. This data is taken from G.B. Butnam, *Shoe and Leather Trade in the UK.* (1912: special agent’s series number 49, US Government Department of Commerce and Labour) p. 76. H.E. Randall Limited’s high position in relation to the pairage produced acknowledges the extensive use of sub-contracting production and his prominence as a wholesale retailer.
42 Harry Manfield (1855–1922). Born at Northampton on 1 February 1885; educated privately; partner in the firm from 1877.
43 *BSTJ* 27/10/1900, p. 558. His brother James remained the mainstay of the business, freeing Harry to have a public life.
later alderman from 1891 to 1922\textsuperscript{44}: he was a county magistrate from 1900. Harry quickly made his mark on the council, becoming one of the Liberal leaders. In the chamber ‘...his practical sense and zest made him useful, and for many years, before his health failed, he was amongst those who counted for most in the responsibility of county government...’\textsuperscript{45} The financial and administrative skills he had acquired in business were especially highly valued. His considerable influence was dependent, initially, not upon his position in county society, but upon the new democratic political climate generated by local government and electoral reforms. Yet this notwithstanding, Manfield did ultimately seek the status and respect that continued to accompany landownership. In 1909 he purchased the Moulton Grange estate\textsuperscript{46} and a year later married Louise Barran of Leeds\textsuperscript{47}; both symbols of his success and prestige. Already by this date he had absorbed many of the cultural traits of county society: he was a field shooter and had for many years been well known in the hunting field. (\textbf{Figure 3})

Underscoring his considerable influence was the close political association between the Manfield family and the Hon. C.R. Spencer\textsuperscript{48}. The Spencers were the only Gladstonian Liberals amongst Northamptonshire’s aristocratic families. C.R. Spencer strongly favoured and became a staunch ally of the new bourgeois faction in county affairs\textsuperscript{49}. Manfield’s father had done much to secure the political acceptance and election of Spencer\textsuperscript{50} in the Mid-Northamptonshire constituency. Harry Manfield continued this work by extending both

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{figure3.png}
\caption{Harry Manfield at his election as MP for Mid-Northamptonshire in 1906. (\textit{www.british-towns.net})}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{44} He was initially elected at a by-election for the Hardingstone Division. Ill health preceding his death forced his retirement in 1922.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Northampton Mercury} [NM] 9/2/1923 p. 23: In addition to general practical duties, he served as Chairman of the Education Committee, where he introduced a crèche to the Northampton Domestic Economy School; assisted in the administration of the Berry Wood Hospital; and was particularly involved in county financial matters.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Northamptonshire Independent} [NI] 10/2/1923 p. 6 ‘...an eight hundred acre estate in a well-timbered deer park, celebrated for...(its classical Regency styled house and)...gardens situated five miles from Northampton...’. The Grange had a staff of butler, footman, and four female servants, in addition to outdoor staff who lived in the estate. He and his brother James had been brought up in the family home, for many years at 2 Royal Terrace and subsequently at Redlands, Cliftonville, Northampton (CERN 1871-1911).
\textsuperscript{47} She was the daughter of Sir John Barran, of Roundhay Park Leeds, a key figure in the development of the Leeds wholesale clothing industry.
\textsuperscript{48} Despite P. Gordon’s references to this collaboration (loc. cit., passim), the important alliance between the county’s leading industrial family and its premier landed family has not been given the prominence by historians that it deserves.
\textsuperscript{49} See W.W. Hadley passim.
\textsuperscript{50} C.R. Spencer (1857-1922): Liberal MP Mid-Northamptonshire 1880-1906, when he was created Viscount Althorp. In 1910 he became the 6th Earl Spencer. In 1887 he married Margaret, second daughter of Edward Baring, 1st Lord Revelstoke. They lived for many years at Dallington House, which later became the Margaret Spencer Home of Rest.
the Liberal Party organisation there. He followed Spencer as MP for the division in 1906. His political agent at the time has noted:

…At the time (1906) and for many years afterwards he had many public duties in connection with the county’s government, which occupied whole days and other interests. To all these he added the onerous work of Parliament…^51

He did not, however, seek parliamentary office, remaining an influential backbencher: he sat on the Local Legislation Committee.^52 Above all, he was rated as a good and popular constituency MP, who was very active in the interests of his constituents:

…The sessions were strenuous times… (In 1910) he had to fight two fiercely contested elections in one year. Added to all of this was the necessity of keeping in touch and visiting the electors in some eighty villages. In one period of three months a series of forty meetings were held…^53

Similarly, the Great War brought an ever increasing burden of work for Manfield. He was active in local recruiting committees, and later war pensions committees. Never a robust man, these added duties forced his retirement from Parliament in 1919. An obituary tellingly notes:

…He over-tasked his strength in public work especially in the war, and shortly after his retirement from Parliament he had various illnesses and never fully recovered…^54

A man of much energy and forcefulness, despite a delicate constitution, which caused so much of his ill-health in his adult life, ‘…he inherited his father’s force of will and political convictions…’^55, and, also, traits of his mother’s shyness and sensitivity. Sir Ryland Adkin’s MP, a friend and fellow Northamptonian, made the following obituary assessment:

…Harry Manfield, one of the most marked personalities and one of the most useful of well-known men, began life with some great advantages. His parents were people of influence and interesting character…Like both his parents he had an unfeigned interest in a great variety of subjects…there were few houses in Northampton where the duties and privileges of citizenship and public service were more ingrained in the minds of father and mother…^56

Indeed, Sir Rylands argues that much of his upbringing and early experience of life was but a preparation for public service. At Manfield’s home

…neither the pursuit of wealth or pleasure nor even the realm of domestic affection could be allowed to impair the incessant obligation of working for all that was best in the

51 NI loc. cit.
52 NM loc. cit. where it was noted ‘…although not exceptional…he achieved distinction as a private member…’
This, of course, was the period of the influential Liberal social reforms, the People’s Budget and the confrontation with the House of Lords. Throughout, Manfield emerges as being consistently in favour of reforms. He derived much personal pleasure from the introduction of Old Age Pensions in 1909.
53 NM ibid.
54 NM 9/2/1923 p. 9: cf. SLN loc. cit.
55 His frail childhood constitution resulted in prolonged convalescent visits to the south-east coast and to southern Africa.
56 NM 16/2/1923 p. 9: His mother undertook much philanthropic work and was a sometime member of the Northampton School Board.
community of which they were part...all of the time, though occupied in business with
skill and success in business, he was really training for good public work...57

Like his father, he was a Gladstonian Liberal, who leaned ‘...towards the Manchester School,
alike in its pacifist and its individualist sides...the fierce and strident Radicalism of
Bradlaugh...was something with which he had no special affinity; and he knew Mr
Labouchere far too well not to despise him heartily...’58 Yet Harry lived to some extent
under the shadow of the reverence in which his father had been held in the town and
county.59 He inherited many of his father’s public duties on the latter’s death in 1899, and,
in all things, he was very much his father’s son in both temperament and outlook. During
his formative years ‘...he had the advantage of a careful training (from his father) both in
business and civic matters...’60

In the same year that Harry Manfield took up residence at Moulton Grange (Figure 2),
A.E. Marlow, head of the most successful new enterprises to enter the Northampton footwear
trade in the thirty years prior to 1914, purchased Preston Deane Hall from Major James
Hoole.61 (Figure 1) Marlow was cast in the same entrepreneurial mould as the Manfields,
though he was somewhat less urbane. Born into a shoe manufacturer’s family, he worked as
an apprentice clicker in his father’s firm prior to assisting in the business. He left the family
firm in 1899 to found his own firm.62 Within a few years he was a dominant Edwardian
industrialist. Marlow had tenacious and boundless energy and his life has been described as
the ‘...exemplification of the gospel of work...’63 Known as the chief, he was no figurehead,
but took a central and active role in all his business undertakings. This achievement alone
was singled out for comment in an obituary; ‘...it was a great feat for one man to have three
such important concerns...’64 That such a man could not be contained by business life alone
is not surprising. It was inevitable that he should come to play a major role in the industry
and in the region’s public life.65 His ability to quickly achieve a ready success with three
companies and an extensive public life was attained by having good operational managers in
charge of his business as his public duties increased in range and responsibility.66 William

58 NM 16/2/1923 p. 9.
59 NI 17/2/1923 p. 18. A memorial appreciation of Harry carried with it a large portrait of Philip, not him!
Cf. NM ibid. p. 10. An obituary appreciation by Adkins stressed, at considerable length, the qualities of his
revered parents.
61 Preston Deane Hall stood in the village of that name in rolling parkland four miles from Northampton
on the road to Newport Pagnall. The lordship of the manor passed with the land title.
62 A.E. Marlow (1870-1922). He entered the family firm in 1884, was a partner by 1890, and joint managing
director from 1896. His father, John Marlow (1839-1909), was a significant force in the Victorian footwear
industry. Their family home was in the shoe workers suburb north of the town centre; initially in Victoria
St, and later at 52 St Michael’s Rd. Only when the family moved to 102 Abington St does a female servant
appear on the census enumerator’s return. The size of John’s workforce suggests the modest lifestyle of the
family: in 1871 there were 13 men, 4 boys and 14 girls; 1881 24 men and boys. This refers to indoor workers.
By the time when all employees worked in the factory there were 300 employees (CERN 1871-1891).
63 Shoe Trades Journal [STJ] 14/7/1922 p. 47.
64 In addition to A.E. Marlow & Co, he acquired B.E. West & Co (Mounts Co.) and Cave & Sons Rushden.
65 Ibid. ‘...a life of tremendous energy and enthusiastic public service (He possessed) the born leader
temperament to high degree...that personality that commends respect and achieves harmony and
unanimity...’ Cf. Brooker (1986), op. cit. p. 752-59, where his numerous positions in business and public
life are listed.
66 He became Northampton’s youngest mayor within four years of founding his firm and was heavily
committed to town affairs between 1901 and 1907 at a time when many young footwear firms were vainly
trying to cope with the pangs of business start-up.
Parker, his manager at the Mounts Company, was one of these men, and F. Carter, cashier, another. But the central figure was George Webb. As a trade journalist noted:

...Mr Marlow is able to surround himself with young energetic men, each an expert in his own department and by his personal magnetism is sure to get the best out each worker, and by his great organising powers is able to direct the energy he displays into the best channels...There are no drones or ornamental figureheads at this firm, but all are animated with the desire to emulate their chief in sound business-like enterprise and devotion to the best interests of the firm... (Figure 4)

Intensely ambitious, the purchase of Preston Deanery Hall, then, was a prelude to his prominent participation in county affairs. His strong nonconformist beliefs and ‘robust individuality’ inevitably made him politically Liberal, and greatly contributed to his political success. Yet, like Manfield, equally important to that success were the financial and business qualities and skills he brought to local civic governance. Initially, he gave active support to the Mid-Northamptonshire Liberal Association, which covered Harry Manfield’s constituency. In 1912 he was elected a county councillor and county magistrate. Six years later he was elected a county alderman, and in 1922 became the chairman of the public health and local government committee. A free trader, in 1920 he was adopted as the Liberal parliamentary candidate for Wellingborough. His speeches there gave consistent support to prevailing industrial

67 George Webb was his central mainstay; he joined the company in 1899 and rose to be the principal manager. He took over the business on Marlow’s death, forming his own company, which traded from 1927.
68 BSTJ 25/6/1909 p. 531.
69 At this time he resided at The Avenue, Duston St James with his young family and two female servants. By the time the move had been made to the Hall he also had a residence at Quinton. Five indoor servants then met the needs of his growing family (CERN 1901 &1911).
70 He was a Congregationalist, like his father, and for many years a deacon of the Dodderidge Chapel and head of the town’s largest Young Men’s Bible Class. However, in later life he became an Anglican. He gave generously to the local YMCA.
71 NI 25/10/1919 p. 20.
72 His prominence and usefulness in public life date from his membership of the Northampton Borough Council (1901-07): ‘...he has won the esteem of all sections by his business focus and devotion to the work of the town. All efforts towards progress and the keeping of Northampton’s name to the front have received Mr Marlow’s ungrudging support, and the future of the town will be safe in his hands. He has proved himself one of the most level-headed members of the town council and he has a great capacity for detailed work of all descriptions...’ (BSTJ 11/11/1904 p. 279).
73 He also actively supported the Northampton Liberal MP McCurdy; a close personal friend.
74 His work on the bench did not come easily to him: ‘...his kindly nature made his magisterial duties rather adverse to him...’ (NI 15/7/1922 p. 5).
reorganisation ideals,\(^\text{75}\) and to Lloyd George’s coalition position. In March 1922, at the personal insistence of Lloyd George, Marlow unsuccessfully fought an acrimonious by-election at Leicester East: Labour won by a landslide.\(^\text{76}\) At the time of his premature death he stood poised on the threshold of a parliamentary career and a knighthood. He was never able to realise these rewards of years of local grassroots political activity, nor able to assume the role of elder statesman, which eminently suited him.\(^\text{77}\)

### IV

The final example of a manufacturer penetrating county society presents a different focus. Beyond Henry Edward Randall’s importance in the development of the modern footwear industry\(^\text{78}\), he claims our attention here because of his active political life. Although his small estate was swallowed by the town, he fostered his love of horse racing and undertook the prestigious role of High Sheriff, normally reserved for county insiders. Born at Northampton on 26 December 1847, by the Edwardian period he had become a leading business and public personality. As for many successful people, contemporary biographies stressed humble origins:

…A native of the town, he has risen from the ranks (and) by sheer grit carved his way to the front until today he is the head of one of the most important boot manufacturing and distribution companies in the country…\(^\text{79}\)

But reality shows him as the son of a successful draper: the only son of Henry Ross Randall, of Bridge Street, Northampton,\(^\text{80}\) and Elizabeth, a daughter of Stephen Dickens Esq., farmer of Wootton Grange. His education was probably superior to that of most shoe workers. After attending a private school in the town,\(^\text{81}\) he went briefly to Northampton Grammar School, before completing his education privately at Coventry. At 14 he was apprenticed, at 2/6d a week, to William Jones JP, his uncle, a prominent manufacturer of Newland.\(^\text{82}\) Jones, though married, had no children and Randall’s apprenticeship was probably like that given to a manufacturer’s son and not that of a working apprentice.

He began his own manufacturing business at 21 ‘on a very modest capital’.\(^\text{83}\) A partnership with Thomas Wickes, a fellow apprentice, was agreed and a small warehouse in Regent’s

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75 For his views on the need for industrial reconstruction see ibid., p. 6.
76 \(\text{NI 18/3/1922 p. 2, and the local Leicester Mercury of the period. Cf. A. Fox History of the National Union of Boot & Shoe Operatives (1957) p. 457.}\)
77 In this respect, as in his dominance of footwear industry affairs, many likened his public position to that of Sir Moses Manfield a generation earlier. He was widely regarded as Manfield’s natural successor. See, for example, \(\text{NM 14 July 1922 p. 5; NI loc. cit. p. 6; STJ 21/7/1922 p. 73.}\)
78 As an innovative manufacturer, Randall captures the historian’s attention because of his development of retailing in the industry and the use of imaginative marketing.
79 \(\text{NM 9/12/05 p. 4. Cf. Gaskell ‘Sir Henry is one of those forceful determined Englishmen who would carve their way to the front in any sphere and in any circumstances of life, who are the builders as well as the architects of their own fortunes’. NI 13/12/1919 p. 38: Randall’s speech at the 50th anniversary of the founding of the firm.}\)
80 \(\text{BSTJ 28/6/1901 p. 900, died on 20 June aged 80 at Brixton.}\)
81 \(\text{NM 25/7/1930 p. 2: St. Gregory’s School, described as ‘dilapidated’. The schoolmaster was the Revd Charles Lutterwell-West, Vicar of Upton, Northamptonshire.}\)
82 \(\text{William Jones (1815-1889). Prominent export only business founded in the late 1840s and failed in early 1894 some years after his retirement. A prominent local figure, he was elected Mayor in 1872. He died at his home Sidney House, Billing Road, aged 73 on 14/4/1889. A widower, he had no issue. He left £32,066/0/6d.}\)
83 \(\text{NI 18/2/1922 p. 9 and NI 13/12/1919 p. 39 refer to an insufficiency of capital and the assistance provided by Northamptonshire Banking Company.}\)
Square rented. Six years later larger premises were acquired in Lady’s Lane and Wood Street. From 1881 Randall continued the company as a sole proprietor. A disastrous fire in November 1887 found his stock inadequately insured, but production was maintained and new premises occupied within a year. By this time, large home and export markets had been developed, which relied on heavy marketing and the securing of awards at world trade fairs.

Continuing business success rested partly on the controlling family shareholding of 52%, with voting rights, and partly upon the presence of able professional managers or directors, who undertook much of the daily management and decisions. This new professional class was beginning to permeate the board rooms of several of the larger footwear firms from the late 1890s: this reliance placed by industrialists upon trusted friends and relatives as business associates should not be lost sight of. In a speech celebrating the firm’s 50th anniversary, fellow director F.W. Hirst, stressed the ability, experience and guidance of Randall:

…They (the directors) desired…to express their gratitude for the manner in which he had made it easy for his co-directors…they had never yet had occasion at any directors’ meeting to vote. They had always in some manner or other arranged that all their resolutions were unanimous…(and where there were) differences of opinion,…they had talked it over until they had all agreed to a certain course of action. In this matter Sir Henry’s experience and guidance had been invaluable and when he had brought forward propositions they had always been such that nobody could possibly disagree…

It was a unanimity born out of Randall’s force of personality and imposition of will and board loyalty to him. Thus he held the reins as firmly as ever through into the 1920s. The initial board was composed of Randall and three prominent public figures. All three were London men well placed to influence potential investors, and with valuable business experience: all three were personal friends of Randall. The second generation board was likewise composed of close personal friends, two of whom were long-serving managers with the company. These men were to sustain the inter-war firm. Collectively they were described as ‘some of the keenest business brains of the day’. Unlike the initial board, they were local men, whose business experience was rooted in the industry.

The company secure, Randall was able to enjoy a full and influential public and social life. He was never purely a man of business. He was ‘admirably capable of discharging (his

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84 The date given is November 1869. Some sources stated premises were in St Andrew’s Street.
86 H.C. Percy Randall, eldest son of Sir Henry, he was born at Northampton and was educated locally at the Technical and County School. A trained concert violinist, the demands of the family firm largely thwarted his music career. He became a director of the firm in 1902; though competent, business life remained irksome to him. Yet on Sir Henry’s death in 1930, he became chairman and managing director, retiring in 1941. He remained a leader in local cultural and sporting circles. From 1926, he represented St Michael’s Ward as town councillor. He died at home, 29 Holyrood Road, Northampton, on 3 August 1943, being survived by his widow Phyliss (née Moser) of Redhill, Surrey. His effects were valued at £407/2/9d in 1953.
87 NI Ibid. p. 4.
88 Henry Charles Richards MP (1851-1905); Adolphus Drucker, LLB, MP (1868-1903); Charles Marcus Westfield (1860?-1903).
89 NI 13/12/1919 p. 35: Phineas Hayman; Frederick William Hurst (?-1941); and Beresford Norman Dawson (1889-1949), from the prominent London/Northampton firm.
90 NI 13/12/1919 p 35 ‘…he has never allowed himself to develop into a typical captain of industry. He has enthusiasms outside his business…having the happy faculty of dismissing from his mind business worries and anxieties. Had he devoted all his energy to his business and none to the social side…H.E. Randall Ltd. might have been a greater commercial force than it is today, but [he] might not have lived to enjoy his triumph…’
public duties) with requisite dignity and ability⁹¹, that was very much part of a central
driving force within him, for here was a man who pursued and acquired his lifetime goals.
Gaskell wrote of him:

…(He) is an outstanding figure in the social and political life not only of the county capital
but of the whole shire He was a thorough Tory – a staunch supporter of the constitutional
cause…As a worker, speaker and benefactor he has done great things for conservatism in
the county…⁹²

He sat as a Conservative member of the local school board 1885/89 and of the Town
Council from 1886, being successively councillor, alderman and Mayor on two occasions
(1893/94 and 1897/98).⁹³ From 1894 he served as a borough magistrate, being for many
years chairman of the Brewster Sessions: he was a lifelong abstainer. He did much to
promote the work of the Northampton and County Conservative Club and was a director
of the Northampton Conservative Building and Land Society. He was also a strong and
generous supporter of technical education. He unsuccessfully contested Northampton at
the General Election in 1900⁹⁴, but saw his gradual estrangement from the official
Conservative position on protectionism, which was shared by the local Conservative
Association. His almost certain nomination in the 1906 General Election was rendered
impossible because of his support of Free Trade policies. Speculation existed as to whether
he would stand as an Independent, but in fact he never did. He had already retired as a
councillor in 1901. It was noted:

…The bitterness of party strife in those days drove Sir Henry out of municipal life, as it
has done many another public-spirited men who would not face the dirt through which
people had in those days to plod and attain or retain civic dignity…⁹⁵

Nevertheless, he did receive political honours. In 1905 he received a knighthood in
recognition of his political and public services. In 1909/10, he served as High Sheriff of the
county, the first Northamptonian to do so in living memory…⁹⁶

A philanthropic man, he took a keen interest in all aspects of Northampton’s welfare and
trade, giving liberally of both his time and substance. Contemporaries noted approvingly:

…Few members of the trade have had such interesting and varied experience and none
have striven harder for the welfare of the town and trade of Northampton…there has
been no movement for the good of the town of Northampton during the last 30 years in
which Sir Henry has not played a prominent part…⁹⁷

His many private acts of benevolence were highlighted by the founding of the significant
Randall Annuity in 1919⁹⁸. He helped direct the activities of many local charities and

⁹¹ NI 4/11/1908 p. 4.
⁹² Ibid. Cf. NI 26/7/1930 p. 1; ‘…He was probably more closely knit to the life and industry of the borough
during eight decades of his life than any other man of his generation…’
⁹³ During his second term he was centrally responsible for the donation by Lady Wantage of Abington Park to
the town.
⁹⁴ A postscript suggests that by 1919 Randall commented that “He was a strong Conservative (though) he was
not sure he was so strong a one today’. NI 13/12/1919 p. 36.
⁹⁵ NM 25/7/1930 p. 2; cf. NI 21/11/1908 and BSTJ 26/6/08 p. 1484.
⁹⁶ BSTJ 25/6/1909 p. 532.
⁹⁷ BSTJ 25/6/1909 p. 532.
⁹⁸ NI 13/12/1919 p. 36.
hospitals, as either founder or trustee.99 A welfarist, he provided a range of benefits for his employees. In his will he provided all old serving employees between 1896 and 1930 £1 for each year’s service.100 He was a member of the Northamptonshire Territorial Association, and from 1911 President of the Northampton Natural History Society.101 His love of music, assured long support of the Northampton Musical Society.102 A devout churchman, he was churchwarden of St Paul’s, Northampton. He helped found the Northampton Amateur Athletic Association and County Cricket Club.

His spare time was devoted to gardening, but his real passion was horse racing. A lifetime devotee and a prominent amateur racehorse owner and breeder, in 1903 he secured more winning horses than any other UK owner. The following year, he won both the Ascot and the Goodwood Stakes: in 1906 he won over £2,800 in prize money. His son Herbert was a prominent amateur jockey.103

A robust and colourful character, Randall pursued an active business and public life until shortly before his death on 18 July 1930104 at his residence, The Hall, Monks Park, Northampton, following a severe heart attack. He had married Elizabeth, a daughter of John Wright of Northampton, on 31 May 1873.105 They had three daughters and three sons: Percy, Herbert and Ross, who had emigrated to Australia many years previously. All survived him.

V
Throughout the nineteenth century, authority and power in Northamptonshire, as in other counties, was vested very substantially in its leading landowners. This historic indivisibility between land ownership and political control was, however, gradually challenged and partially eclipsed by an energetic rising urban bourgeoisie. Successful men of trade and commerce now sought to share political power on an equal footing. An important milestone in the broadening of power was the County Council Act of 1889.

The importance of businessmen in the early history of the County Council centres round the new set of skills that they brought to their role, in addition to the political balance they provided for the Liberal party against the dominance of landed Conservatism, and the ways in which they collaborated with established county families politically. The financial and administrative capabilities they brought to the council chamber and committees increased their prominence. In this, as in other ways, they were to act as a breath of fresh air in the political affairs of the county, pointing the way towards the changes in the power balance of the later twentieth century. In contemporary county politics, two contrasting matters stand out prominently: first, the indivisibility between the county magistracy and land ownership; the position of land ownership at this time was still an entrenched one. Secondly, there was the vigour and energy of the rising bourgeoisie. Like wealth-makers before them, their aim was not solely the amassing of wealth, but rather the social position and the authority that wealth conferred. In Northampton, as elsewhere, the rising urban bourgeoisie began to dominate the political and social townscape, whilst the more ambitious and able amongst them were able to fulfil wider ambitions within Northamptonshire’s county society.

99NI 13/12/1919 p. 56: Northampton Good Samaritan Society; Northampton and Municipal and St John’s Charities; Weston Favell Nursing Home; Boot and Shoe Trades Benevolent Institution; district’s two nursing organisations; as Mayor, he introduced the Poor Children’s Christmas Dinner Fund.
100NI 25/8/1950 p. 10.
101JNHS. Vol. 25 (1929/30) p. 190.
102NI 18/2/1922 p. 9: Hon Treasurer and President.
104Aged 83: wealth at death was £72,101/8/10d.
105Grant op. cit. (1904) gives surname as Wright; Kelly’s Knightage (1923) p. 149 as Knight.
BOOK REVIEWS

AN ATLAS OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY-MODERN LANDSCAPE
by Tracey Partida, David Hall and Glenn Foard
ISBN 9781842175118
Hardback, 150 pp., 94 figs; ix + 86 pp. maps; ii + 86 pp. maps
Price £35.00

In considering the Cure of Melancholy, Robert Burton (1577-1640) stated that there was no exercise ‘so fit and proper to expell idleness and melancholy as that of study’, and amongst numerous subjects: Me thinks it would well please any man to look upon a geographical map…, chorographical, topographical delineations; to behold, as it were, all the remote provinces, towns, cities of the world, and never go forth of the limits of his study; to measure, by the scale and compasse, their extent, distance, examine their site…. What greater pleasure can there now be, than to peruse those elaborate maps of Ortelius, Mercator, Hondius &c, to peruse those books of cities put out by Braunius and Hogenbergius?

[Burton Anatomy of Melancholy (1621 etc.), Part 2, Sect. 2, Memb. 4.]

But it is not just maps of faraway places that provide enjoyment, and there is a long tradition of English local studies, or chorography, running through Camden’s Britannia (editions of 1610, 1695, etc.), and successive county histories, where the maps (though often regarded as items to be removed, coloured and framed) were actually presented as part of the discourse and became an essential aspect of how England understood and rediscovered herself. Today, whether as ‘Historical Geography’, ‘Landscape History’ or indeed ‘Landscape Archaeology’, mapping of the English landscape has remained a key exercise at the core of geographical, historical, ecological and archaeological studies that we perhaps should once more be calling ‘chorography’. Recent mapping endeavours in the heritage sphere have concentrated on mapping character as a short cut to understanding what is present in today’s landscape, and yet as fascinating as that process may be, the complex patchwork that results is often not only bewildering but hard to put to any practical use. More often we need to know what a place was, as its former status (e.g. as open field or common pasture) is a more ready guide to its significance and potential; and while prehistoric colleagues may be loathe to admit it, the historic landscape can also inform our understanding of the distribution and survival of ancient sites.

Scale is also important, and while county and regional mapping is informative (e.g. that of Darby’s Domesday Geography volumes, or David Hill’s ground-breaking Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England (1981), and the recent series of county historical atlases have expressed a vast amount of information in single-page county maps, there remains a need to examine the grain of the countryside more closely, while standing some way back from micro-mapping of individual parishes, so that the flow of land-use from parish to parish can be seen as a whole. This is what is now provided by the remarkable Atlas of Northamptonshire, which, together with the Rockingham Forest Atlas (2009), provides a complete coverage of the county at the scale of the OS 2½-inch map, mapping the pre-enclosure landscape of the whole county in two series of maps covering the medieval and early modern periods. This has placed Northamptonshire in the forefront of English counties for landscape studies, and provided a model that others can only view with envy. That this is at all possible comes from a happy series of coincidences: the county has a classic county history, partial coverage by the Victoria County History (and a current Trust promoting its continuation), and a full field survey by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in several volumes and an Archaeological Atlas (1980). Furthermore, the work of the last decades in the county on all aspects of
settlement, field systems, forests and battlefields, and the archaeological presence of Northamptonshire Archaeology, has allowed a coherent process of discovery and assimilation that is again unusual. Not least amongst these contributions was David Hall’s *The Open Fields of Northamptonshire* (1995) with its analytical gazetteer of villages, based on half a century’s voluntary work and enthusiasm. Even with the data collected, the production of the superb colour maps has been a monumental task in itself, where Tracey Partida’s work with the GIS plotting was aided by an AHRC grant, while Oxbow backed the publication (*Rockingham Forest*, like the *Open Fields*, had been published by the Northamptonshire Record Society).

The volume has a generously illustrated introduction of 150 pages with sections on Forests & Woodland, and Open Fields (Hall), Enclosure (Partida) and Rural Settlement (Foard), all of which have information and insights that will be of value to those studying the English landscape. Topics such as the difficulty of plotting early roads, and the reliability of the maps we so often rely on (estate, enclosure and tithe maps) are discussed, while a series of county maps show distributions of e.g. deserted settlements and early enclosure, place-names and taxation. Hall deals with the types of medieval woodland and their management, and their relation to forests and parks. His chapter on open fields reveals a depth of a lifetime’s consideration of ridge and furrow, with insights on ‘late’ examples (and the notorious ‘steam plough’ varieties), townships with aligned strips, and individual examples of townships with concentrated and dispersed demesnes. The loss of so much ridge-and-furrow between the 1940 RAF air photos and 1990 is graphically displayed (Figs. 32–33). Partida gives a detailed view of the process (and statistics) of enclosure, with a number of distribution maps giving comparative county plots (e.g. of acreage) that are only possible with colour printing. The extracts of early maps given throughout are delightful, no more so that the earliest English enclosure map for Haselbech (1598) (Fig. 41). Foard’s discussion of rural settlement analyses overall patterns with consideration of village plans, a re-examination of the distribution of dispersed settlement and geographical/geological provinces in relation to early settlement and place-names.

It is the maps of the *Atlas* itself that provide such pleasure, as the eye sails over the landscape, watching the corduroy of fields and furrows sweeping over roads and township boundaries, and the long fingers of common pasture snaking along streams between the furlongs. Never before has it been possible to inspect the landscape of England in this way, and of course it raises as many questions as it answers. Why did Northamptonshire have such unusual arrangements for common pasture (but was it actually unusual?); why were woodlands so few, even in a well-forested county? Why are the township boundaries so little respected by furlongs and furrows? Comparison between the medieval and early modern maps is also instructive, e.g. the mapping of Salcey Forest (map 70) where the context of the medieval forest is clearly shown without the forest interior, and the later mapping gives the internal arrangements of the forest. There is much here to discover, and yet more to be found out. The *Atlas* will be treasured for its inspiration and insights (not least the gloriously English place-name ‘Upslope Tickley’, p.104). In short, the *Atlas* is a pinnacle on all the achievements of Northamptonshire to date, a triumph for English chorography, and an encouragement for others to do the same elsewhere – though it is hard to see how it could be bettered.

Julian Munby
Before the Great War there was a long tradition of German sailors working on British merchant ships. With the onset of war, the British authorities had to confront the problem of what to do with enemy aliens in the merchant fleet. The National Sailors’ and Firemen’s Union, driven by its long-standing concerns for its members’ welfare, lobbied the government to maintain a camp to house sailors who could not be returned to their home country. This is the background to an engaging book which tells the story of the camp at Pattishall from its origins as a detention centre for alien merchantmen to a prisoner of war camp housing German soldiers taken on the Western Front.

The style is lively as a result of the tight economy that the authors bring to the narrative. Using material drawn from a range of local and national sources, including oral history and prisoners’ letters, the reader is given a good insight into the conditions experienced by the prisoners held in the camp. Conditions in the early part of the war appear to have been relatively favourable but anti-German feelings intensified after the Lusitania incident in 1915 and management of the camp was transferred to the War Office. While living conditions became more austere and more closely monitored, they still appear to have been more comfortable than those experienced by British prisoners in Germany.

Like so many local history projects, this book is heavy with detail and illustrations but light on interpretation. After outlining what became of the camp after the war, the book ends a little abruptly and it is at this point that I was hoping to find some insights into the wider social significance of the camp in the area. Nevertheless, the authors provide a short but detailed and welcome addition to our understanding of this county’s involvement in the Great War.

Stephen Swailes

GENEALOGICAL FINDINGS FROM THE DIARY OF THOMAS CARTWRIGHT, BISHOP OF CHESTER (1634-1689), Vol. 1
Vol. 2: 16th & 17th Century Family Charts
by Gillian Ford
2013
Illustrated, xxxii, 352 pages
Illustrated, x, 119 pages

Gillian Ford will be familiar to NP&P readers for her scholarly papers in number 62 (Where’s Whalley?) and number 63 (The Wastells of Northampton). Gillian lives 10,000 miles away in Australia, but she has made the internet work for her in a spectacular way. To read her lists of notes is to be made aware of what is possible in conducting research at such a distance. Gillian’s maiden name was Wastell and in 1822 William Wastell married Agatha Whalley who was born in Warwickshire. In due course, Gillian discovered Cartwright’s diary while researching the Peter Whalley family of Northampton. The diary leads to links
with Thomas Cartwright, the Puritan; Anne Vaughan Locke; John Manningham and many more. In Vol. 2, Gillian has produced an astonishing collection of genealogical charts. I have the utmost admiration for her.

Barbara Hornby

A HISTORY OF THE NORTHAMPTON AND COUNTY CLUB, GEORGE ROW, 1873-2013
written and compiled by Enid Jarvis
The Northampton and County Club 2013

The Northampton and County Club operates from premises in George Row, immediately opposite All Saints Church. Those who are not members will know its building by its columned porch next to County Hall. Enid Jarvis has put together an impressive history of the club. This is made all the more fascinating by accounts of many of its members over the years, forming an anecdotal history of the town and county. She relates the history of the property from medieval times, illustrating its important fourteenth-century vaulted cellar, one of the few remnants of medieval Northampton; the rebuilding of the property following the Fire of Northampton in 1675; its use as part of the first general hospital in Northampton; and, finally, its acquisition by the club in 1873. It may not sound like a book for sports enthusiasts but amongst its pages are accounts of cricket, squash and, most important, billiards, the club still having a fine Victorian billiards room. So many well-known names of the past are recorded here: the shoe manufacturers Crockett and Jones; McKinnells, the chemists; the Vials and Mobbs families, and the artist Henry Bird. It is a lean volume but packed with information, illustrations and delightfully written. It should be on the shelves of anyone who has an interest in the history of Northampton and the county.

Bruce Bailey

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE SPIRES AND SQUIRES
by Derek F. Blunt
EddyLynNorthampton, 2012
Illustrated, 480 pages
Price £25 from www.derekfblunt.com

This book is packed full of information about Northamptonshire and its many villages, their churches and stately, and not so stately, homes. The book is arranged alphabetically by village and includes many ‘asides’ about special features such as drovers’ roads, crosses and family details. The illustrations are drawings by the author; they do much to enhance this delightful gazetteer to the county. Too big for the glove box, but a good book to study before you set out.

Barbara Hornby

ESTATE LETTERS FROM THE TIME OF JOHN, 2nd DUKE OF MONTAGU 1709-39
transcribed by Alan Toseland, eds. P.H. McKay and D.N. Hall,
Northamptonshire Record Society (Northampton, 2013)
ISBN 978-0-901275-70-7
Hardback lix, 411 pages
Price £20 + £7 p&p from NRS

This handsome volume constitutes the third collection of early eighteenth-century estate papers published by the Society, and will doubtless receive a warm welcome from county historians. The collection encompasses five series of letters between various employees and correspondents of the 2nd Duke of Montagu, and together they provide a lively and detailed
portrait of county life in the early Georgian period. Although published under the title of ‘estate letters’, the Duke and his agents range across a very broad array of concerns, and students of eighteenth-century society will find a great deal of interest beyond the daily routines of estate management.

The volume opens with a most helpful editorial introduction, which provides a comprehensive account of the Duke and his employees, as well as of the estates that remain the central focus of their correspondence. The editors also include a whole series of superlative estate maps from the collections at Boughton House, which in themselves attest to the care with which the Montagus supervised their lands. The editors are also to be commended for the introductions to each section and their exhaustively-researched footnotes, which should enable any reader to navigate the technicalities of eighteenth-century law and local government.

Alongside its many services to the history of the county, the volume should help to revitalize interest in the 2nd Duke himself. Although a privy councillor, Duke John has received comparatively little historical attention, and the editors rightly argue that he deserves greater recognition. In the period covered by these letters, he not only undertook substantial development of his core Northamptonshire estate, but also built a new mansion in Whitehall, and ploughed huge investment into a (failed) imperial project. He thus represents many of the improving energies of early Georgian Britain, and it should be no surprise that his talents brought him to the attention of premier Sir Robert Walpole. Predictably, the letters do not cast much light on his role in public life, but they demonstrate that his metropolitan business did not lead him to neglect county matters, and often highlight the synergies between London and provincial affairs. In particular, the fourth and fifth sections show the Duke at the heart of discussions regarding his Northamptonshire interests, fighting for his perceived rights and conscious of the importance of his county for his status as a leading magnate.

While the Duke’s presence is felt throughout, the editors are right to begin with the collection of his agent Rev. Charles Lamotte, whose letters ground the reader in the quotidian administration of the Duke’s estates. In common with the letters of his successor Elias Walter, this correspondence highlights the enormous effort involved in the maintenance of a great estate in this period, and there appears little let-up in the stream of business heading for the Duke’s in-tray. Battles with tenants over repairs and rents will be familiar fare for most students of the period, but the never-ending demands for aid from distressed families suggest that the status of landowner continued to bring great responsibilities. It is hard not be touched by many of the stories of personal grief, and it is clear that the Duke was expected to act as the good lord in such cases. In return, he showed compassion for cases of genuine hardship, and this concern for local welfare must be set alongside the intolerance shown towards less deserving individuals, especially poachers.

While the scope and detail of the agents’ letters provide many insights into the daily challenges of estate management, their content and tone illuminate personal relations at all levels of Georgian society. As servants of the Duke, the agents were naturally dutiful and solicitous of his interests, but relations with their master could become more cordial, especially if they shared common interests such as Lamotte’s passion for history. As middlemen on the ground, however, they were often mindful of the need to temper magnate power to preserve neighbourliness, and they recognised the inherent reciprocation of interest between the Duke and his tenants/employees. The agents were thus important brokers for the Montagu interest, and the Duke was often concerned that they did not misrepresent him. Indeed, Duke John often exhibited a knowing weariness when seeking to bypass more troublesome agents to discover the true origins of a local dispute. He clearly
depended upon their diligence and loyalty to ensure the smooth running of his estates, but he was not blind to their fallibilities, and recognised their important role as mediators within local society.

The agents were also key intermediaries in his often-tense relationships with other regional magnates, reporting on possible infringements of local property rights and on the general mood of the county on matters of public concern. The second section provides some very interesting letters on this theme from the Earl of Cardigan, who hoped to secure the services of Duke John as a mediator. Although Cardigan employed a language of good neighbourliness, he often likened local property disputes to the drama of high politics. The importance of resolving these rivalries amicably is highlighted by the extensive last section, where battles to secure the Duke’s rights threatened at times to enflame the county, and ultimately led to a hearing before the Attorney-General. The Duke’s metropolitan contacts were evidently very useful in such contests, but it is clear that he wished to avoid such confrontation, in the interest of local harmony as much as his own pocket. In the early 1730s a dispute over the right to nominate high constables was thought to threaten a party rift within the county or even to endanger his status at court, thereby highlighting how the Duke’s national prominence could represent a twin-edged sword.

In sum, these collections faithfully represent the multiple perspectives of the early-Georgian peer. Much recent historiography has focused on the metropolitan activities of the national elite, as London’s many delights tempted leading landowners into a more amphibious social existence. These letters conclusively demonstrate that these changes did not preclude the close supervision of their estates, abetted by their local and metropolitan agents. The compilers of this volume have thus provided a timely question-mark against the pace of socio-cultural development in this period, and it is hoped that its appearance will encourage similar collections to be published for other regions.

Perry Gauci

We have received the Spring 2013 number of *Cake and Cockhorse*, journal of the Banbury Historical Society. It contains an article of great interest to Northamptonshire historians, ‘Navvies in Banburyshire’ by Barrie Trinder. Also received is the Summer 2013 number, which contains two articles of interest to us in Northamptonshire: Deborah Hayter on a ‘snippet’ or part of a map of south and south-west parts of Chacombe, 1630, and a parson’s recollections of Moreton Pinkney in the 1830s when it was ‘A Very Rough Place’. Volume 33 of BHS publications was in the same post and members will find it of great interest: *Victorian Banburyshire: Three Memoirs* edited by Barrie Trinder. One of the memoirs is by Thomas Butler Gunn, who was from Chacombe and travelled extensively in the United States around the time of the Civil War there, but also wrote about Banburyshire.

Mr H.J.K. Jenkins has sent us some excerpts from the newsletter of the Society for Nautical Research. They concern the River Nene, known to old-time lightermen as the ‘Awkward Old Brute’, and a French privateer-captain who was a prisoner-on-parole in Peterborough. More information can be obtained from the Fenland Lighter Project on www.gla.ac.uk/~aj12x/flip.html.

We learn from Oxbow Books that *The Anglo-Saxon Church of All Saints, Brixworth, Northamptonshire: Survey, Excavation and Analysis, 1972-2010* by David Parsons and Diana Sutherland has been published, ISBN 9781842175316, price £90. A full review will appear in the 2014 number of *NP&P*. 
Older members will undoubtedly recall Mrs Elsie Lewis who has died in her hundredth year. She was for so many years a stalwart to Miss Joan Wake and successive Honorary Secretaries of the Society. Born in Northampton in 1913, the former Elsie Kate Ayres married William Hubbard in 1951 and they lived at Brafield-on-the-Green. Mrs Hubbard was the link which kept Miss Wake informed of NRS affairs wherever she happened to be – at Oxford – Cosgrove – in Africa or the USA!

During the 1956 Campaign to save Delapré Abbey, some 21 functions were held all over the county; Mrs Hubbard’s morning coffee party at the Angel Hotel in February started the ‘ball rolling’. By 1962 she had already worked in the secretarial department of the Society for nine years when the President, Sir George Clark, presented her with a set of books on flower arranging, an appropriate present for someone who was greatly lauded by Miss Wake for the lovely floral decorations she achieved at the Delapré meetings. Mrs Hubbard was the one who rallied the band of volunteers who came annually to the aid of the Society to pack the publications going out to the 1,000 members.

After the death of her husband in 1963, Mrs Hubbard became Assistant Secretary to the new Hon. Secretary, Mr P.A.J. Pettit. She was responsible for engaging with our advertisers, the large number of local businesses who were pleased to have their firm’s products displayed in *Northamptonshire Past and Present* which greatly contributed to its financial viability. In 1967 Miss Ruth Marsden became the Hon. Secretary and Mrs Hubbard continued as Assistant Secretary. In August 1969 she resigned on her marriage to Art (Arthur) Lewis and removed to Ardington Road, Northampton.
At the Annual General Meeting in 1971, in recognition of outstanding services to the Society, Mrs Lewis was made an Honorary Member. In November later that year, on the occasion of the royal visit, she was presented by Miss Marsden to HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother at Delapré Abbey. (Figure 1) Over the years she remained in close contact with the Society and regularly attended its lectures. She was short in height with a bubbly personality; as Bruce Bailey remembers, ‘She was always wonderfully smart with greatly admired hats!’

Rosemary Eady

**John Rigby 1930-2013**

John Rigby died in Northampton General Hospital in late April. He is survived by his sister, Lucy. John had a wide range of interests and was part of a number of local groups, including Northampton Industrial Archaeology Group, Northamptonshire Record Society, and the Friends of St Peter’s Church (FOSTP). It was his involvement with the last group that led to his interest in local history. He was involved with the FOSTP from its formation in 1995 and held the role of honorary secretary until 2010. As a volunteer said recently, ‘…John had an amazing memory and knew far more about St Peter’s than anyone else’. John’s working life was spent at Plessey Caswell, where he was an analytical chemist.

From the *Chronicle and Echo* for 13 June 2013

For several years John was the librarian for the Record Society. It was in this capacity that he worked with Wendy Raybould who has written the following:

After John’s funeral on 15 May, his sister Lucy commented that she never knew that John knew so many people. He was not a sociable person who looked for company, certainly. But he was a man who was intensely interested, and drawn to groups of people who shared his interests. I first met John in the early 1980s when we both enrolled on the Diploma in Local History course that Leicester University ran at Barrack Road. It was a three-year course in those days, and in those three years we progressed from a nodding acquaintance to the exchange of information about useful books. During that time he faced the blow of redundancy from his job as an industrial chemist, and I had the impression that the course became something of a lifeline for him. He went on to work as a volunteer at the County Record Office, and I caught the odd glimpse of him on visits there. But we were back to nodding again. Until one day, many years later, I ran into him in the coffee area at the Record Office and spoke to him. By this time he had taken on the role of Librarian for the Record Society. Frustrated by ill-health and declining energy, he was determined to complete ten years’ service in this role and he accepted my offer of help, as I was then a recently retired professional librarian. During the two years we worked together I discovered a man with a great respect for precision and getting things right. He felt keenly the responsibility of caring for a collection containing many fragile items, and took advice on the use of archival materials to protect and conserve them. It seemed like a natural extension of his scientific work in Plessey’s ‘clean room’. Two months before he died, he had the satisfaction of completing his ten years of service.

**Derrick Durham 1926-2012**

Derrick Durham died on 6 December 2012. He had been a member of the Record Society since 1957, a Council member between 1966 and 2007 and Hon. Librarian from 1975 to 2002. He was formerly Dean of Nene College.
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_Cover illustration:_
The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Canons Ashby
*(Photo: John Roan)*