NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PAST & PRESENT

All Saints Brixworth, about 1820

The journal of the Northamptonshire Record Society 60p

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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PAST AND PRESENT
1979

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Particulars of the Society	overleaf
Past History and Present Research at All Saints' Church, Brixworth. *David Parsons*	61
Bocase Stone. *Trevor Hold*	72
Northampton in 1524. *Alan Dyer*	73
Kettering Schoolmasters in the Tudor and Stuart Period. *D. K. Shearing*	81
The Demolition of Northampton's Walls, July 1662.	83
Voluntary Schools and Basic Education in Northampton 1800–1871. *John Lawes*	85
Northampton Boot and Shoe Arbitration Board before 1914. *J. H. Porter*	93
The Origins of Engineering in Peterborough: The Queen Street Iron Works. *Richard Hillier*	101
Rural Life and the Camera in the Twenties. *R. L. Greenall*	107
Book Reviews	111

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Published by the Northamptonshire Record Society

Vol. VI Price 60p. No. 2

ISSN-0140-9131

Printed in Great Britain at the Alden Press, Oxford

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RECORD SOCIETY
(FOUNDED IN 1920)
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AIMS AND OBJECTS

The objects of the Society are the furtherance of the study of history and of historical literature by the publication of historical records relating to Northamptonshire, and the stimulation of interest in historical studies.

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Thanks are expressed to

Northamptonshire Libraries, the late Sir Gyles Isham, the Leisure and Amenities Committee of the Northamptonshire Council for permission to reproduce archive material, and the Chief Archivist and his staff at the Northamptonshire Record Office.

NOTES AND NEWS

It is a pleasure to record, in this thirty-first issue of *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, that at the Annual General Meeting on June 3rd 1978 Sir Hereward Wake, Bart., M.C., was elected President, the fifth to hold that office in the 58 years of the Society's existence. Well known for the part he plays in the life of the County he is a nephew of the Society's founder, Miss Joan Wake. We wish him every success in his appointment, which he declared he accepted with enthusiasm.

The sale of books on Northamptonshire surplus to Library requirements arranged for members in October 1977 aroused great interest, so much so that queues of eager buyers formed outside Delapre Abbey before opening time. The amount raised (£1,400) proved that the effort was worthwhile, though sadly some late-comers had to go away disappointed as they had been forestalled by others.

1978 has seen the Centenary celebrations of Northampton High School, and the publication of 'The First Hundred Years', reviewed on another page, to mark that event. The Record Society has a particularly close link with this school, as it is now a time-honoured custom for a group of girls to come to Delapre Abbey as volunteers to help pack and dispatch members' copies of this journal. We are greatly indebted to the school for this help—long may it continue, and may the school continue to flourish over the next 100 years!

The Annual General Meeting was rather poorly attended (perhaps because it was one of the few really hot days of the year), but those present greatly enjoyed the excellent lecture on Charles Bradlaugh and Freethought given by Dr. Edward Royle, of the University of York, who has specialised on the subject of 19th Century freethinkers.

For the autumn of 1978, after this has gone to press, members are looking forward to hearing a lecture by Professor Christopher Brooke, formerly of Westfield College, London, and now at the Faculty of History at Cambridge. He is to speak on Saints, Relics and Dedications in Northamptonshire, which should be of great local interest. It has been possible to arrange for this lecture to be given in the Tithe Barn at Wellingborough, now restored and converted into a very pleasant hall for meetings and other functions. Some members will recall that this Society assisted in the 1960's in raising funds for the restoration of this fine old building, which once belonged to the Abbey of Croyland. It is consequently particularly appropriate to be able to hold a meeting in it.

We are happy to report that work on the restoration of the Queen Eleanor Cross on the main road near Delapre Abbey has been completed, some of the cost having been met by the Department of the Environment, though the actual work was done by a local stonemason.

There is also good news about Canons Ashby church, on the road between Northampton and Banbury. It was originally part of an Augustinian Priory, with a beautiful 13th century west front, but had fallen into a very bad state of repair. Now the Department of the Environment has assumed responsibility for restoration work on it, and the task has already been tackled.

Increasing numbers of students and pressure of work in the Record Office at Delapre Abbey has necessitated some rearrangements, and visitors will find that the Exhibition Room (known as the "Shilloon", or Saloon in 18th century plans of the house) has now been renamed the "Index Room", and houses indexes and technical equipment used by researchers, thus freeing more space in the Research Room itself. The Record Society Library, which is reached via the Index Room, remains reserved for use by Society members, who are reminded that books may be borrowed from it for reasonable periods.

Before this journal is printed Vol. XXVIII in the main series of volumes—*The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey*, by Janet Martin—will have been dispatched to members who subscribed for 1975. We hope that Vol. XXIX—*The Correspondence of Philip Doddridge*, edited by Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall—which is a joint publication with the Historic Manuscripts Commission, will follow in the Spring of 1979. Meanwhile Vol. V of this journal is ready in bound edition, details of which can be found on the inside cover of this issue.

In our last number we attributed the authorship of the article on Chester-on-the-Water solely to A. E. Brown. In fact the piece was written jointly with C. C. Taylor and we apologise for this oversight to Mr. Taylor.

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PAST HISTORY AND PRESENT RESEARCH AT ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, BRIXWORTH

DAVID PARSONS

Introduction

Northamptonshire boasts many fine historic churches. Each of the medieval styles has at least one representative in the county which is important in a national context: Whiston and Fotheringhay in the Perpendicular, Cotterstock in the Decorated, Warmington in the Early English, St Peter's Northampton in the Romanesque. The pre-Conquest period is well represented compared, for example, with neighbouring Leicestershire, and several of the Anglo-Saxon churches are well known outside Northamptonshire. In June 1972 the tower of Earls Barton church gained national recognition when it appeared on the fourpenny denomination of a special issue of postage stamps. Despite all this richness All Saints' Church, Brixworth, has a real claim to particular attention on the part of all those interested in ancient churches and to special research efforts by historians, architects and archaeologists. It is the oldest foundation in the county and the most substantial building preserved of its period; it was little altered in the Middle Ages and a large proportion of its standing fabric dates back to Anglo-Saxon times. This paper is an attempt to summarise what is already known about the church, what problems we should like to find answers to, and how researchers are going about finding them.

We know little enough about the beginnings of the church, but there is one medieval reference to it which is often quoted and has been much debated. Hugo Candidus, a monk of Peterborough, who wrote a chronicle in the twelfth century, said that daughter houses were founded from the important Peterborough monastery at many places, including Brixworth. There is at the moment no reason to doubt this statement, and All Saints' church is widely accepted as the surviving remnant of this early monastery. Hugo did not give the supposed dates of the foundations he referred to, but he mentioned them in connexion with two Peterborough abbots of the late seventh century. This implies, but by no means proves, that the monastery at Brixworth was founded at that period; unfortunately there is no other evidence which might serve as a check.

Why Brixworth was chosen is not known. There are hints that it was a royal site in the early Middle Ages, and it may have been the location of ninth-century church synods held at a place then called *Clofesho*, but all this is little more than speculation. All that can be safely said is that All Saints' Church appears to derive from a monastic foundation that may go back to the first century of Anglo-Saxon christendom. When it ceased to be a monastery is not known. Knowles and Hadcock (1971, 468) represent the common assumption that the monastery went out of use in the late ninth century and became a parish church *c.* 960-70. There is no evidence for either of those dates, and historians are now less inclined to attribute widespread destruction and dislocation to the period of Viking invasion and settlement. Nevertheless, Brixworth—along with many other monasteries—may well have been in decline at this time. It is perhaps significant that there is no record of Brixworth's being refounded during the monastic revival of the late tenth century, though its mother house, Peterborough, was re-established *c.* 966, and Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire, a sister house, may have been revived at about the same time (Parsons 1975–76). There is no evidence for a monastic house at Brixworth after the Norman Conquest, and the reduction in size of the church (see below) suggests conversion to parish use by the twelfth century at the latest.

General description (see Fig. 1 and Pl.1)

The church as it stands today consists of a nave, choir and sanctuary, and a west tower with spire and attached rounded stair turret. The nave, choir and the lowest part of the tower seem to be the oldest parts of the church (Fig. 1, A, B & D), dating from the Anglo-Saxon period, though it is impossible to give an exact date. Even if the information given by Hugo Candidus could be shown to justify the assumption that the monastery was founded in the late seventh century, there is nothing to indicate that the present nave, choir and tower base are parts of the original church of that date. Information assembled since the last war by continental archaeologists, especially in

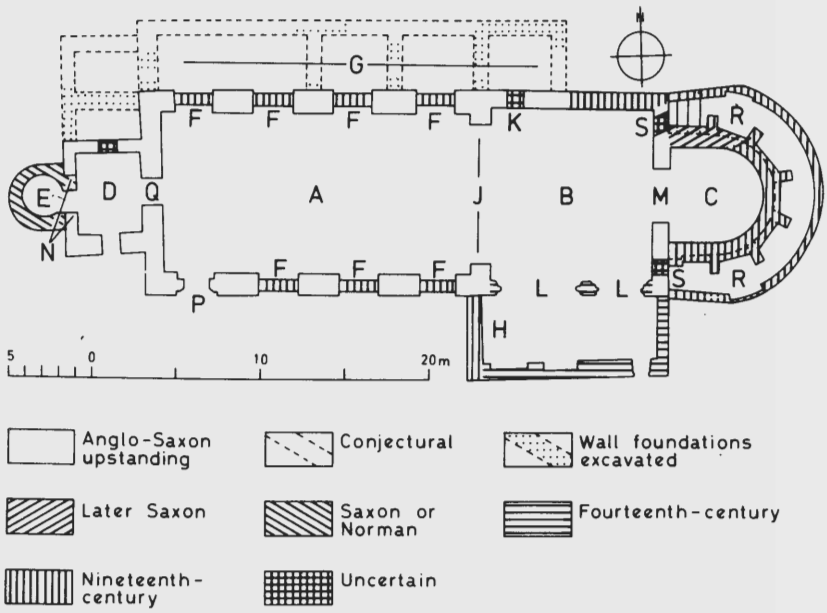

FIG. 1. PLAN SHOWING PRESENT STATE OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH, WITH BUILDING PERIODS INDICATED.
Based on BARC survey by E. A. Roberts.

Germany, suggests that the earliest church at Brixworth may well have been much smaller than the present nave, and possibly built of wood. The earliest surviving structures are in any case not in their original condition. In the first place, the side walls of the nave each contain four large arches (Fig. 1, F) with heads made largely of thin bricks set in two concentric rings. These arches now contain windows together with their masonry surrounds, but originally they were open, and formed arcades leading into side aisles (G). These aisles, which were taken down probably by the twelfth century and certainly by the fourteenth century (see p. 66), were not the long, narrow structures with which we are familiar in many churches today. There is evidence from excavations that the aisles were subdivided by cross walls into ranges of individual chapels, usually called *porticus* (see Fig. 3, and p. 69), but whether these were part of the original plan or arose from a conversion of open aisles is not yet known. One of the dividing walls of the southern range of *porticus* runs almost exactly beneath the west wall of the Verdun Chapel (H), and may be seen through a trap door in the chapel floor (Burford 1967).

The nave is now separated from the choir by a broad double-chamfered arch (J), probably of the fourteenth century. It replaces an earlier arrangement in which the dividing wall was supported by an arcade of three arches. Just beyond the arch, in the north wall of the choir, are the remains of a small door with a round brick head (K). The door is blocked up, but its position is clearly indicated inside the church, and most of its arch is visible outside, immediately below a large window of later medieval date. This is probably one of the earliest features in the church, and it led from the choir into the end *porticus* of the northern range. The bumps in the churchyard outside the church at this point indicate where the *porticus* walls originally stood. The small door seems very appropriate as a means of access to such a small chapel (12 ft × 10 ft 6 in./ 3.66 × 3.2 m), and I think it is possible that the nave originally had similar doors leading into the other *porticus*. This would mean that the large arches of the nave arcade (F) were inserted in a rebuilding campaign, perhaps when the cross walls of the *porticus* were destroyed to make open aisles. There are indications that the nave arches may not be original (Parsons 1977, 180–1), but the hypothesis is far from proven.

Returning to the choir, there are few original Anglo-Saxon features apart from the blocked

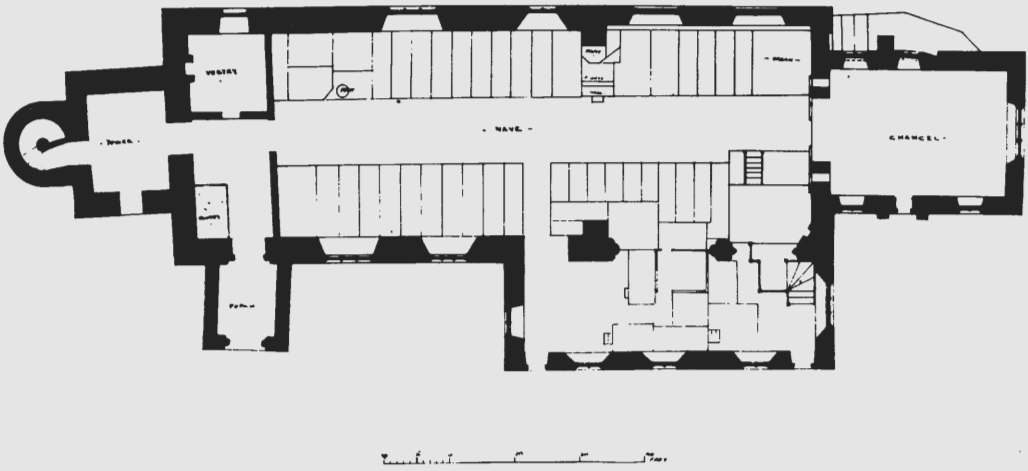

FIG. 2. PLAN SHOWING THE STATE OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH IN 1863, BEFORE RESTORATION.
Compare with Figure 1. Drawn by Slater and Smith, architects for the restoration.
Northamptonshire Record Office: Brixworth Parish Records, no. 219.
Reproduced by courtesy of Brixworth Parochial Church Council.

door. The two windows in the north wall were inserted in the medieval and Victorian periods respectively. The two arches in the south wall (L), in one of which stands the organ, were also inserted to give access to the medieval south chapel. Above the eastern arch can be seen part of a blocked window with a brick head and splayed jambs; the exterior aperture, visible from the Verdun Chapel, is smaller than the interior aperture, visible from the choir. The window is probably Anglo-Saxon, but in size and shape it is unlike any other window in the church, so its exact chronological position is unclear. It does indicate, however, that the south wall of the choir, or at least its eastern part, was once an outside wall.

The east wall of the choir appears to be an Anglo-Saxon structure, though I should not be suprised to find that it is not an original part of the choir fabric. The major arch to the sanctuary (M) has been largely rebuilt, but the two small windows flanking it high up in the wall seem to be original, though they have been refaced on the outside. Below them, and just above the present choir floor are indications of the heads of doors (S) that once led to the external ambulatory, which will be described below.

At the opposite end of the church, the lowest part of the tower (D) seems to belong to the earliest building period represented in the present fabric. Inside the tower can be clearly seen the masonry of a large brick-headed arch still preserved in the west wall (N) though almost entirely blocked up. This was presumably the grand west door to the church in its early days. On entering the church by this door, the Anglo-Saxon visitor would have found himself not in a tower, as one now does, but in a *narthex*, or complex entrance hall. This appears to have been a broad structure of five small compartments; four of these, two on either side of the present tower base, have disappeared. Excavations by David Hall in 1971 on the north side of the tower revealed a wall which continued the north wall of the nave in a westward direction, as well as an extension of the tower west wall (Hall 1977). These then are the walls of the first compartment to the north, entered by the door, now blocked, in the tower north wall. Irregularities in the ground suggest further walls making up the second compartment. If this pattern was repeated on the south side, then the narthex as a whole was almost as wide as the nave with its side 'aisles'.

How high the narthex was originally is not entirely clear. In the side walls of the tower, about 9 ft (2.74 m) from the ground, are short sections built of brick, a few courses high; the rubble infill between these seems to mark the position of joist holes, which went right through the walls. On this evidence there must have been a substantial upper floor to the central compartment and at least the two immediately flanking it. A feature in the nave of the church appears to confirm this. In the west wall of the nave, above the door to the tower (Q) and below the triple arch in the present ringing chamber, there is an arched recess. Traces of this can also be seen in the east wall of the tower. It is normally interpreted as a door

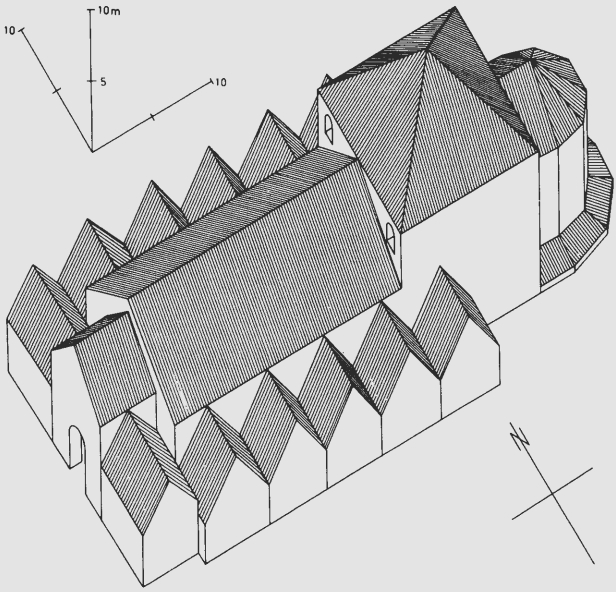

FIG. 3. ISOMETRIC RECONSTRUCTION SHOWING HOW BRIXWORTH CHURCH MAY HAVE LOOKED AT AN UNSPECIFIED DATE IN THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.
At the west end a broad 'narthex' incorporates a central porch of two storeys. The nave is lower than at present and is surrounded by individual *porticus* or chapels. The drawing shows them with separate roofs to emphasise the difference between this arrangement and the aisle shown in Figure 4; there is slight evidence in the present fabric for this form of roofing. The choir rises above the nave by the height of the present clerestorey and forms a low tower. For lack of any evidence of an earlier east end the seven-sided apse is shown, though this is thought to be a late Saxon feature; it is surrounded by the roof of the underground ambulatory.
Author's reconstruction.

serving the upper floor of the narthex, probably leading to a western gallery in the nave. It is just possible, however, that this feature is actually the top of the west door into the nave, and that the present arch is a later construction. This would make a very tall west door, though Anglo-Saxon doors about 15 ft (4.53 m) high are known, and if this is a correct interpretation, then the central part of the narthex cannot in its original form have had an upper floor, since the floor would have cut across the upper part of the door.

At a later stage the central compartment was made into a tower by the addition of more masonry to its already existing walls. Whether the side compartments were removed at the same time is not known, but this rebuilding was presumably the occasion for the insertion of the triple arch between the ringing chamber and the nave. At the same or a later date the stair turret (E) was added against the west face of the tower. It is entered from the interior of the tower, where its door is contrived in the blocking of the grand west entrance, which clearly now went out of use. The staircase itself is not built in the common manner, in which each step is cut in a keyhole-like shape and supports the step immediately above, with the rounded parts at the centre overlapping to form an integral newel. The Brixworth structure consists of a separate rubble newel around which winds a barrel vault: without the stair treads it would be like an enormous stone-built helter-skelter. On the back of this vault rest the stair treads, often composed of several stones; the treads are not bonded into the wall or newel, and do not serve to support the tread above. This technique has been thought to be an Anglo-Saxon peculiarity, but recent research has shown that it is common in major Romanesque buildings from about 1000 A.D. on the continent and in Anglo-Norman cathedrals and castles up to the end of the twelfth century (Parsons 1978). A few examples have been recognised in the early thirteenth century. On the basis of structural technique alone, therefore, it is not possible to date the addition of the Brixworth turret but a date in the twelfth century is as likely as one in the eleventh century.

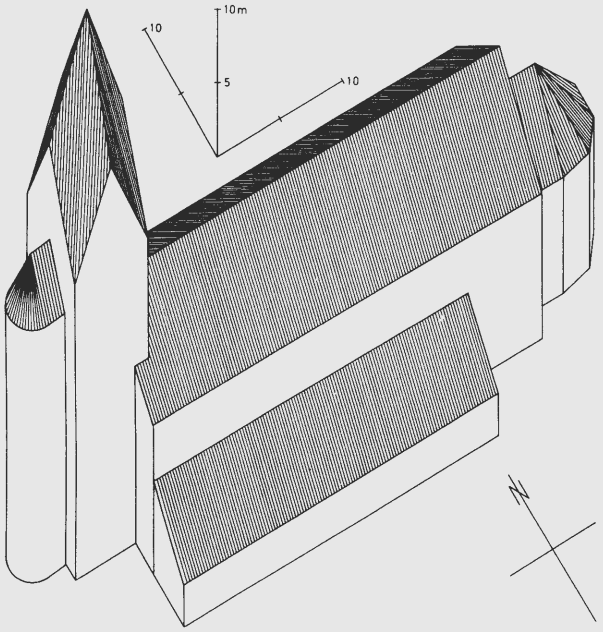

FIG. 4. ISOMETRIC RECONSTRUCTION SHOWING BRIXWORTH CHURCH ABOUT THE YEAR 1100. The *porticus* have been thrown together to form side aisles and a clerestorey has been added to the nave, bringing the walls up to the same height as the choir. The side chambers of the narthex have been demolished and the porch raised to become a tower, against which the stair turret has been built. The height of the tower is shown as it is at present; there is no evidence for the Rhenish helm which is shown capping it. The height of the turret has been determined from the evidence of vaulting still preserved beyond the point at which the stairway now stops. The ambulatory at the east end is assumed to have been filled in.
Author's reconstruction.

The turret was originally higher than it is now, as can be seen inside at the top, where the line of broken vaulting shows that the staircase went up at least one turn beyond the present door to the clock chamber. The original tower was therefore about as high as the existing tower—indeed all the tower masonry may be Anglo-Saxon except the fourteenth-century belfry lights and the refacing of the surrounding walling. The refacing makes it hard to see, however, not only what is the original date of the tower but also whether the turret was built at the same time or later. There is no doubt, of course, that the spire is later: it may be dated to the fourteenth century.

It remains only to describe the apse, crypt and Verdun Chapel, all of which are best seen from the outside. The crypt takes the form of a passage running round the eastern apse below present ground level (R). It was originally covered by a barrel vault, but is now open to the sky, so that one can see the outer reveals of the doorways in the east wall of the choir mentioned above (S), and some of the steps which led down from choir floor level to the crypt floor. The purpose of this passage is not entirely clear, but it may have been to give access to tombs housed in recesses in the outer walls or to a tomb or reliquary in a chamber under the apse itself; the presence of such a chamber has not yet been archaeologically proved, however. The crypt appears to be contemporary with the east wall of the choir, and an eighth- or ninth-century date would be acceptable for it (Taylor 1969; Fletcher 1974).

Most of the apse (C) is a nineteenth-century reconstruction, but on the north side most of the first two panels is Anglo-Saxon work. Unlike the crypt, however, the apse represented by these two panels seems to have been an addition to the east wall of the choir, since the masonry at the junction of the two parts of the building covers part of the fabric of the choir window. The outer faces of the apse walls rest on the remains of the barrel vault which originally covered the passage, so that the fabric of the apse oversails the inner wall of the ambulatory. The apse, or at least its outer facing,

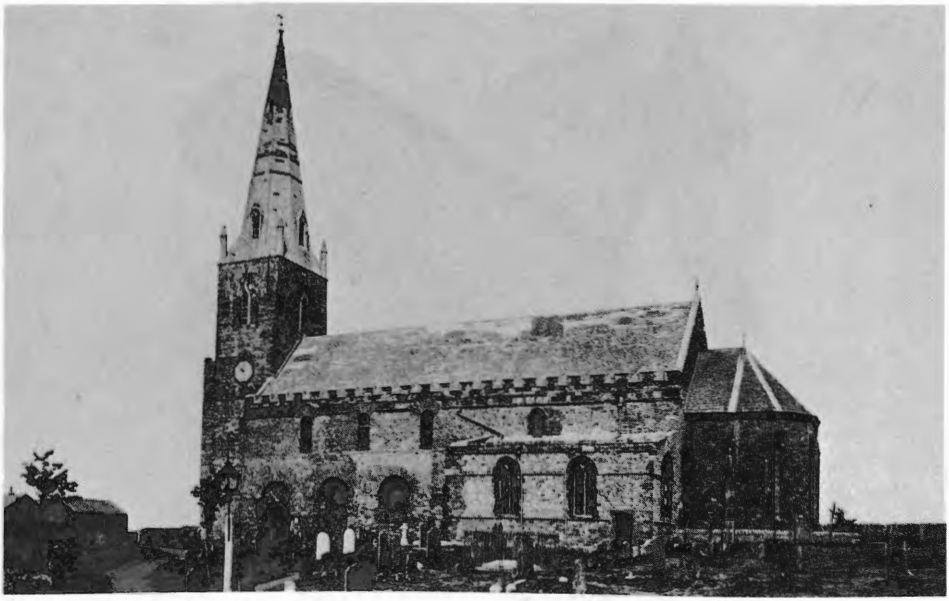

PLATE 1. PHOTOGRAPH OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, AFTER RESTORATION. The appearance of the church (though not of the churchyard) is much the same as it is today. Compare this picture with Plate 2, a drawing taken from an almost identical viewpoint, but before the restorations. *Reproduced by courtesy of Northamptonshire Record Office.*

is likely to have been built after the vaulted passage, perhaps even after it went out of use. The date of the apse is not known but it is generally accepted as Anglo-Saxon.

To the south of the choir is the Verdun chapel (H). It is without doubt an addition to the main body of the church: looking at its east end from the exterior one can clearly see the straight joint between the chapel wall and the south-east quoin of the choir. Judging by its windows and south door the chapel seems to have been added in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Its west wall was built in the nineteenth century (see below). It follows that the south aisle or *porticus* must have been demolished by the fourteenth century, if not before. The insertion of a characteristic Norman doorway (P) in the most westerly south arcade arch suggests, however, that the aisle was removed by the twelfth century, though some writers have argued that the door properly belongs elsewhere and was moved to its present position at a later date.

The church before the restorations

A series of documents, some published and some preserved in the Northamptonshire Record Office at Delapre Abbey and elsewhere, gives us a fairly good idea of what the church looked like in the early nineteenth century before the restorations took place. This archive is represented here by Plates 2 and 3 and Figure 2.

Apart from the furniture the most striking feature inside the church was that the floor ran through on the same level from the nave to the choir and the chancel (Pl. 3). The present steps up in the choir and into the apse are entirely the result of work done in the last hundred years or so. Much of the jambs of the sanctuary arch had been cut away to make a wider opening. In front of this arch and against the east wall of the choir stood the medieval screen, part of which now fills the eastern arch into the Verdun Chapel. The chapel itself was longer than at present, and the most easterly south arcade arch led into it (Fig. 2). The other arcade arches had been filled up flush with masonry and a variety of medieval windows, both Decorated and Perpendicular, inserted at different levels, cutting both the blockings and the original masonry. None of the early clerestory windows appears to be have been in use (Pl. 2).

Outside the church could be seen several features which disappeared in the restorations (Pl. 2). The Norman south door was concealed by a porch. As is so often the case, the porch was not built at right angles to the south wall, but was roughly aligned with the approach path

PLATE 2. INK AND WASH SKETCH BY GEORGE CLARK OF SCALDWELL OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH BEFORE RESTORATION, *c.* 1820.
In addition to the features mentioned in the text—porch, windows, three-bay Verdun Chapel, square-ended chancel—this drawing shows that the nave and choir had a low-pitched roof.
Reproduced by courtesy of Northamptonshire Libraries.

from the south-west corner of the churchyard (Fig. 2). Further east, the Verdun Chapel was one bay longer, as noted above, so that it covered the eastern arch of the south arcade. But the principal difference compared with the present church was at the east end. The Anglo-Saxon apse had been largely destroyed and the remains converted into a straight-sided, square-ended chancel, which stretched about as far as the present outer ambulatory wall east of the apse. This conversion must have involved the filling in of the crypt, but would otherwise have been quite simple to carry out. The angle between the two surviving apse panels is very slight and there would have been no difficulty in incorporating them into the straight north wall of the new chancel. When this reconstruction was done is not known. Most of the windows shown in the early drawings were Perpendicular, but one on the north side seems to have been Decorated in style. The conversion must therefore have been complete by the fourteenth century. The position of one of these windows, blocked up in the restoration, can be seen in the panel of the apse on the north side nearest the choir. Its low level confirms the position of the floor inside the chancel before the restoration. There is no guarantee, however, that this was the original floor level of the apse.

The nineteenth-century restorations

The Reverend Charles Frederick Watkins became Vicar of Brixworth in 1832. All the major restoration of the church took place at his instigation during a long incumbency of more than forty years. His first known act of restoration was to rebuild the eastern half of the north wall of the choir, which had become ruinous. According to some early drawings this section of walling had contained a window with a depressed arch; Watkins (1867, 54) referred to it as 'a miserable little nondescript of a square form'. In the reconstruction it was replaced by a copy of the adjacent window with intersecting tracery; both windows survive. This work was carried out in the 1840s.

PLATE 3. INK AND WASH SKETCH BY W. H. BARTLETT OF THE INTERIOR OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH, FACING EAST, BEFORE RESTORATION, 1825.
This view shows the furniture indicated in Slater and Smith's plan (Fig. 2), the mutilated sanctuary arch, the level floor, and—extreme right—the Anglo-Saxon arcade arch leading into the Verdun Chapel before it was shortened.
Dryden Collection. Reproduced by courtesy of Northamptonshire Libraries.

In the meantime Watkins had discovered the form of the apse and passage-crypt below and outside the existing square-ended chancel. This he first discovered in the course of grave-digging in the chancel in 1841; he continued to investigate and found the ambulatory steps and arches in the choir east wall, but not until he had carted away 200 loads of earth surrounding the chancel. Some of the early views of the church confirm the huge accumulation of earth around the building. According to Watkins it reached nearly to the windows on the north side. In spite of this obstruction he succeeded in 'laying open' the series of *porticus* to the north of the nave and 'made sufficient investigations' on the south side to satisfy himself that a similar series existed there. Finally another interment, this time in the body of the church, provided the opportunity for an excavation which revealed the bases to two piers between nave and choir; these are the evidence on which rests the hypothesis that a triple arch once divided the nave from the eastern parts of the church.

The main restoration was carried out in 1865. The porch was removed, and nearly all the medieval windows, despite some antiquarian opposition. The Verdun chapel was shortened and all the nave arches and clerestory windows unblocked. The damaged parts of the arches (where the medieval windows had been inserted) were repaired and thin screen walls with round-headed windows were fitted into the arcade arches. At the east end the chancel was demolished and the apse and underground passage rebuilt according to the evidence uncovered in 1841. Some of the rebuilding was done in Boughton stone, which blends with the iron-stone of the old fabric, but is clearly different from it; in the arch heads it contrasts with the original brick, so that the modern visitor can readily see the extent of the nineteenth century work. It is greatly to Watkins's credit that he distinguished his restoration in this way

and made no effort to imitate in detail the Saxon fabric.

Further work was done on the church in 1885, 1905, etc., but nothing as far-reaching as Watkins's restoration

Excavations around the church

Since the time of Watkins many of the Vicars of Brixworth have taken an equally keen interest in the history and archaeology of the church. The Rev. A. K. Pavey (1896–1917) contributed papers on the history of the parish and some of his material has been discussed recently by me (Parsons 1977, 174-9); in his time excavations took place not only inside the church in the course of inserting a heating system (1909) but also outside the church in connexion with a drainage scheme (1909–10). The archaeological value of these excavations has still to be assessed.

The Rev. W. L. Freeman (1938–52) is said by parishioners to have 'done a lot of digging about'. He was responsible for reviving the theory that the church was originally a Roman building. This theory still has its adherents, and it is quite possible that the older parts of the church incorporate fabric from a Roman building which was still standing in part when the monastery was founded. Other loose Roman building materials, especially bricks, have been re-used in the church, so that unravelling the true story of Roman origins is likely to be a complicated business.

The Rev. J. W. Burford (1952–68) carried out a large number of small investigations, which ranged from the finding of skeletons under the lawn of the former vicarage to the uncovering of the north-east *porticus* of the church. Some account of his activities has been lodged with Northamptonshire Record Office. Burford's excavation on the north of the church in 1958 was extended by the late Dudley Jackson and Dr (now Lord) Fletcher, who established that cross walls existed in the north 'aisle', but doubted whether they were original (Jackson and Fletcher 1961).

More recently, an excavation was carried out by D. N. Hall north of the tower; the results of this have been mentioned briefly above. In 1972 Paul Everson excavated the site of the present vicarage, then part of the garden of the old vicarage. He discovered a ditch running roughly north-south along the Station Road frontage, which is interpreted as the boundary of the monastery; radiocarbon dating of bone found in the ditch indicates a date in the late seventh or eighth century, which seems to confirm the story inferred from Hugo Candidus. Inside the line of the ditch several burials were uncovered. The dates of the skeletons centre on the middle of the ninth century, and it is thus likely that Everson found the edge of the Anglo-Saxon monastic cemetery. A full report of this excavation has been published (Everson 1977).

Current research

Everson's excavation was carried out under the auspices of the Brixworth Archaeological Research Committee, which was founded in 1972. Among its aims were the complementary tasks of discouraging indiscriminate digging of the sort that has gone on in and around the church for over a hundred years and of conducting a co-ordinated programme of research on a scientific basis. This research is expected to go on for at least a decade and it is hoped ultimately to publish a lavishly illustrated volume of the Committee's findings, which will illuminate all aspects of the church's construction, reconstruction and use by the community from its foundation to the present day. It is a great pleasure to record the Committee's indebtedness to the present vicar, the Rev. J. N. Chubb, and the Parochial Church Council, who not only permit but actively encourage its work. Mr Chubb was the Committee's first Secretary and is now its Vice-chairman.

The first job has been to prepare accurate drawings on which to record information. A new plan of church and churchyard has already been surveyed and drawn; it forms the basis for Figure 1. More laborious and time-consuming is the preparation of stone-by-stone drawings of all the standing walls. Some of the exterior elevations have been recorded by photogrammetry (drawing from accurate photographs) but this technique is not suitable for irregular surfaces, such as the stair turret or the apse, for the underground passage or for the north elevations, where the light is not ideal for good photography. So a programme of manual recording has been begun. In September 1976 the apse was drawn and in June 1977 the west face of the tower and the stair turret. The method is to erect scaffolding over the area to be drawn; to set up a grid of one-metre squares over the wall surface, using nails and string; and then for the volunteer workers (of all ages!) to draw the stones, square by square, at 1:10 scale on suitable graph paper. My winter job, as co-ordinator of the project, is to reduce all the drawings further to a manageable size (1:20) and fit all the bits together to show a complete wall.

The completed drawings are used in a number of ways. First they are the means of recording the stone identifications carried out by Dr Diana Sutherland, a local geologist and a member of the Brixworth Committee. Dr Sutherland fol-

lows the drawing team, and as each working sheet is completed labels each stone with a code which indicates its geological origin. The church fabric is made up of a wide variety of different stones; forty types have been identified so far and the distribution of each type should give us a good idea of the phases in which the church was built. On the final drawings the stones will be colour-coded, and distribution patterns should emerge quite clearly. Brick is a very noticeable element in the fabric, and is the subject of an investigation in its own right (see below). Equally interesting is the use of granite in the church. Granite is the most obvious non-local stone in the church, and the plot of its distribution throughout the building is expected to be particularly significant.

One of the advantages of spending several weeks each year in close contact with the masonry is that features may be recognised which would not be apparent either from photographs (however good) or by inspection from ground level. As a result of identifying anomalous material in their packing, Dr Sutherland was able to identify in 1977 several series of put-log holes in the turret wall. These are holes which originally held horizontal scaffold-poles during the construction of the wall. When the building was complete, the poles were withdrawn from the wall, and the holes plugged with whatever material came to hand. In this case the material used was waste from the last building phase, a porous limestone called tufa. The surrounding walling consists of mixed limestone (*not* tufa) and ironstone, and the specialist can easily see the difference between these and the tufa packing. From a distance, however, the two limestones, which are superficially similar in colour, are indistinguishable and the scaffold-holes would never have been recognised from the ground.

A further series of put-log holes was identified in November 1977 at clerestory level when some work was done on the south wall of the nave and choir. In one of these were the remains of some timber. It was not always possible to withdraw the wooden scaffold-poles from the wall, and they had to be cut off flush with the wall face, leaving a section in the socket. The ends of these pole remnants were usually plastered over and are sometimes preserved to this day. The remains of such a sawn-off pole are what was discovered at Brixworth. It should be possible to subject this wood to a radiocarbon test, and thus find out fairly accurately when the clerestory was built, but unfortunately our wood is badly affected by dry rot, and at the time of writing there is some debate amongst the experts as to whether or not it is a valid sample for a carbon-14 determination.

The second immediate use for the stone-by-stone drawings is the accurate recording of the positions of mortar samples. So far about 200 samples have been taken from various parts of the walling at roughly two-metre centres. These are being analysed by Dr F. W. Anderson and it is expected that it will eventually be possible to distinguish between building phases on the basis of mortar characteristics plotted on the elevation drawings. It is also becoming possible to date lime mortar by a variant of the carbon-14 method previously applied to organic materials. Some samples from the church are currently being examined to determine whether they are suitable for testing in this way.

Finally, the bricks in the fabric are themselves being subjected to scientific analysis. It is possible to date various materials using the principle of thermoluminescence (measuring radiation released from heated samples) and in May 1975 samples from eight bricks in the church walls were sent to be analysed in this way. Results are available for four of them, and they show that one brick was almost certainly Roman, two were made in the Saxon period, and one was late medieval. The other four results are eagerly awaited. When they are known the Committee will have to decide whether brick sampling will need to be a central item of future research.

All these lines of enquiry are in their infancy. When they and others (e.g. the planned excavation programme) have been completed, it should be possible to write a more definitive account of All Saints' Church and the former monastery. The Committee looks forward to making a substantial contribution to Northamptonshire history.

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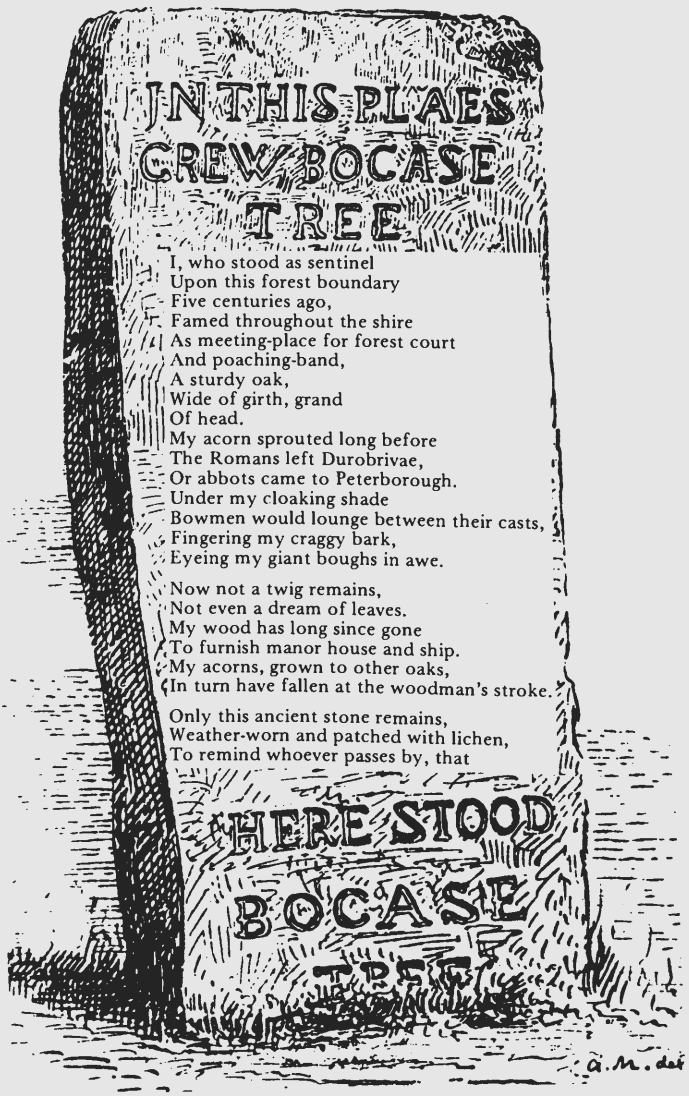

The BOCASE STONE (Harry's Park Wood, Nr. Brigstock, Northamptonshire), marks the spot where a famous old oak tree—the Bocase Tree—used to grow. The significance of the tree has never been satisfactorily explained. Local Brigstock legend is that this was the tree on which the ubiquitous Robin Hood used to hang his bow and arrows. Another explanation is that the nearby field, called 'Bocase' or 'Bow-cast', was the place where local foresters and keepers assembled for archery practice. Another theory is that, in Saxon times, the tree was the meeting-place for two adjacent hundreds, where the calendar of forest rights (or 'Bocas') was called over. Whatever its function, it was important enough, when it finally succumbed to old age (? middle of the 17th century) to be commemorated with its own special tombstone. The stone is there for anyone to see, on a public bridleway that runs along the edge of Harry's Park Wood (Map. Ref: OS 1:50 000 Sheet 141: SP 950875). It stands almost four feet high—or would do if it didn't lean at its present rakish angle. Originally it must have been even taller, for the lower inscription is now almost at ground level. If Bocase Stone doesn't topple over beforehand, it will probably sink even further, taking its inscriptions with it.

TREVOR HOLD

* the unwritten words between the inscriptions on the stone.

NORTHAMPTON IN 1524

ALAN DYER

Despite the interest in urban history which has recently developed, we still know all too little about English provincial towns before the nineteenth century. Northampton is only one of scores of county capitals which still await a thorough and comprehensive history. Often the history is missing because the records are defective, but sometimes the chance preservation of an especially revealing manuscript allows us a clear, if brief, glimpse of a particular town at a particular time. Such a rare survival is the assessment for Northampton's contribution of taxation towards the great subsidy of 1524–5.[1] Not only was this tax one of the very few in medieval or early modern times which gives a fairly comprehensive view of the whole community, but in the case of Northampton the collectors exceeded their brief by recording the occupation of nearly every citizen, an eccentricity which is virtually unique. The documents allow us to tell with a fair degree of accuracy the size, and social and economic structure of the town at this date, features which are otherwise obscure both for other towns at this time and for Northampton itself at other periods.

How big was Northampton in 1524? In round terms, 480 people contributed to the tax. It is generally accepted that these represent heads of households, and that a significant proportion of the population is still omitted through desperate poverty: such pointers as there are indicate that this missing group comprised a quarter or third of the total population, although we shall never be able to get nearer than this rough estimate. Taking the proportion of at least a quarter for Northampton, we arrive at 640 households for the total population: medium-sized towns at this time seem rarely to have exceeded an average of 4.5 persons per household, so we may conclude with as much certainty as is ever possible in this type of exercise that between 2,800 and 3,000 people lived in Northampton in 1524.[2] Although small by modern standards, this is a very respectable level for the many county capitals that lay in size between the great regional centres like Bristol, York and Norwich, with 5–7,000 people and the majority of ordinary country market towns with less than a thousand souls apiece. Northampton very clearly dominates the other towns in the shire: its 480 taxpayers should be compared with the 212 which its nearest rival, Peterborough, could muster, followed by Wellingborough with 188, Oundle 164, Kettering 142, Towcester 118, Higham Ferrers 117, and Daventry and Brackley with 67 and 66 respectively. The nearest towns which rival Northampton in size are Coventry with 725 payers, Leicester with about 400, Ely with 382, Cambridge with over 500, St. Albans 640 and Oxford 431.

If we assume that the size of a town generally reflects its rôle in the economy of its area, which seems reasonable enough, then we can here see Northampton dominating a region whose limits lie about fifteen miles away towards the north-west, and up to twenty or twenty-five miles away in other directions. The size and prosperity of this dependent region, and the nature of the trade that flows through it, normally determine the size of a town like this, though Northampton was not solely reliant on its importance as a regional market centre. The town undoubtedly had commercial problems, the most conspicuous being its failure to connect itself with the national network of navigable rivers; but it enjoyed a number of balancing advantages, of which the most prominent were the prosperity of its surrounding countryside and the lucrative trade along the roads to London, factors which combined in the supply of food to the ever-growing capital.

The subsidy provides a glimpse of the social structure of the town, with the two vital provisos that it probably omits the poorest quarter of the population and that it was designed to extract hard cash from a reluctant people, not to aid the historian. The social structure of most towns at this time can be imagined as a pyramid, with a narrow apex supplied by a small number of relatively very rich men and a wide base representing the poor. In Northampton the taxpayers can be divided into four groups—a minute class (2.2% of the total) whose goods are assessed at £40

[1] Public Record Office, E179, 155/124, 155/138.

[2] If as many as a full third were excluded, the total population would be 3,240.

[3] This analysis ignores the small number of people assessed on income from land.

PLATE 1. CARVING OF A MEDIEVAL SHOEMAKER ON THE MISERERE STALLS, ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

and over, a middle group (10.3%) with goods worth between £10 and £39, and an intermediate and similarly-sized class (11.4%) worth between £5 and £9. The base is provided by 346 payers who are the better-paid wage-earners and the poorest of the self-employed; they represent 76% of the names on the lists. It is probably unwise to distinguish within this group between those assessed on wages of between £2 and £4 per year and the self-employed with goods of a similar value, since the collectors were in any case required to assess people by the means which produced most revenue: some of the richer wage-earners would have been assessed on their goods since these were taxed at a higher rate. Thus the taxpayers can be divided into a small 'upper class' of very wealthy people, two intermediate groups with rather more members and distinctly less money, and a large group of citizens just above the poverty line. If we include the poor omitted from the tax lists altogether, then the three groups comprise only 1.6% for the richest group, 18% for the two middle groups combined, 54% for the poorest taxpayers and 27% for the remaining group too poor to be taxed: if we combine the last two groups we arrive at a base for our pyramid made up of over 80% of the town's population.[4]

How does this picture of the structure of Northampton's population compare with other towns? A group of very rich men, substantially wealthier than anyone in Northampton, does occur elsewhere—no-one is assessed here at over £100 in goods, but the merchants of the ports like Exeter, Bristol or Yarmouth, and the clothmaking centres like Salisbury or Norwich could produce between 1% and 3% of their taxpayers in this group of 'super-rich'. Apart from this discrepancy, Northampton's society as seen by the taxman closely resembled that of many other towns of a similar size, except that it seems to have been a little poorer, with the proportion of its taxpayers in the lower groups marginally greater than in many other places. It is significant that its structure is mirrored most accurately by that of Lincoln, a city notoriously in decay at this time.[5] This impression of relative poverty is confirmed by a comparison of the total amount raised by the taxes of 1524–5 in Northampton and in other towns of a similar size: the £91 raised by the first levy is substantially below the sums raised in smaller towns like Newbury or Gloucester, both prosperous places, while Leicester, never a very flourishing commercial centre, managed to raise at least £104 from fewer payers. All this suggests that Northampton was passing through a phase of depression during these years, connected perhaps with a long-term contraction from its temporary medieval prominence.

The unique feature of this survey is the record of the occupations of nearly all Northampton's taxpayers. This information is summarised in the table below, but is complicated by the fact that although the two surveys are apparently only separated by one year in date, there are surprising discrepancies when the two are compared in detail. This is quite a normal situation. Some of the changes may well be genuine, reflecting rapidly-changing circumstances, but the majority must be due to the fact that such a high proportion of the population lived just above—or just below—the poverty line arbitrarily imposed by the tax collectors that a modest change in their circumstances could move them over that line; in the same way the margin between the

[4] Those assessed on land are difficult to equate with those assessed on goods, and they have here been assigned in equal proportions to the two middle groups.

[5] J. W. F. Hill, *Tudor and Stuart Lincoln*, 1956, pp. 19, 22.

poorest of those assessed on their goods and the better-off wage-earner was equally indistinct and arbitrary, so that small changes could effect an apparently substantial alteration in the figures.

A town like Northampton at this time was dominated by its self-employed shopkeepers and craftsmen, who supplied magistrates and councillors, elected members of parliament and paid for activities of local government. This social and political dominance was based on an economic preponderance: not only does this group possess most of the property and capital within the town, but it is also numerically large—it is represented by the 54.5% of the taxpayers assessed on goods, and even taking account of the excluded poor, it still must account for over 40% of the whole population. Since very few commodities at this time were carried any distance, the town made most of its own requirements and supplied the surrounding countryside with the few luxuries which could be imported from the outside world. Most of these traders combined manufacturing and retailing activities on their premises.

Some seventy trades are represented here, reflecting Northampton's status in being rather less numerous than the great provincial capitals but substantially more varied and specialised than the mere country market town. The table groups these seventy occupations in eight broad divisions, reflecting a general similarity between the trades concerned, although in some cases the classification must always be rather arbitrary. The distributive shopkeepers come first, a pre-eminence based on their wealth rather than their numbers. The common factor possessed by these trades was that they dealt in the minority of goods imported from beyond the immediate locality: these could only be afforded by the richer classes of town and country, inevitably the source of most of the town shopkeepers' profits. Although the apothecary sold drugs, the draper woollen and linen cloth, the grocer spices, sugar *etc.*, ironmongers ironware and mercers the imported fabrics and haberdashery not sold by the draper, these distinctions were far from strict. The mercers in particular tended to dabble in the specialities of all the other distributive trades, so that too much credence should not be placed on the small numbers apparently involved in the specialised occupations like grocer or ironmonger. The chandlers, who made and sold candles and retailed a range of raw materials and commodities imported from the countryside, belong less naturally to this group, like the one or two wool merchants, the sorry remnant of what must have been a flourishing medieval occupation. While these traders were the wealthiest of all, they employed relatively little wage labour.

The next division is the food and drink trades, mostly self-explanatory. The fishers must have drawn their catches from local ponds and rivers, while the fishmonger sold imported salt or dried fish. In some towns the brewers form as large a group as the bakers, but Northampton was one of the many towns in which most people brewed their own liquor, the poor buying from alehouse keepers, who do not appear, since this was always a by-occupation and people are given only their 'official', principal occupation in the tax list. Next come the trades concerned in working metals. The furber worked at the repair and servicing of arms and armour: here we have the curious fact that while there are nine wage-earners in 1525, there is only one recorded in the previous assessment. Either a new and very large business had been set up in the town in the interim, or a group of migrant furbers had been attracted to work on some local

PLATE 2. CARVING OF A PATTEN OR GOLOSH MAKER ON THE MISERERE STALLS, ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

arms contract. The goldsmiths belong uneasily to this group, for their wealth aligns them with the distributive shopkeepers; the pewterer was an important tradesman, for most of the domestic utensils of the rich and middling households were made in his workshop. The pinners (= pinmakers) were a small and probably dwindling trade, while the wiredrawer was associated with the textile industry, as will appear below.

The cloth trades may well have been more prominent in the past, but they were still the third largest group of craftsmen. By this date towns were becoming finishing centres for cloth woven in the countryside, as indicated by the predominance of shearmen (who cropped cloth), fullers (who thickened and prepared it for dyeing) and dyers; but there still remained a significant number of weavers. It is interesting to note the substantial colony of cappers, the famous speciality of Coventry at this time, and the presence of a single woolwinder, who packed wool for transport. The next grouping is the building workers, probably under-represented because some lived in the countryside and travelled into the town to work. The relatively large number of painters is of interest, for they decorated walls with murals as a major part of their work. Glaziers were rare, for this survey was made half a century before window glass began to be widely used in 'middle-class' houses. The hilliars were slaters.

The largest trade grouping of all was the leather workers, supplying a quarter of all the taxpaying craftsmen. They were in turn dominated by the corvisers, whom we should call shoemakers. They were also the largest employers, with an average of over two wage-earners per master, a proportion only rivalled by the bakers. The demand for leather which these trades created encouraged the tanning industry, while the producers of other leather goods, like gloves, purses and saddles, seem also to be unusually numerous. Although it is easy to explain the availability of the skins through the stock-raising and fattening agricultural speciality of the East Midlands, it is more difficult to explain how all these leather goods were sold, for the town and immediate region could not alone support such a specialised industry. They must have been supplying the London market, and possibly other areas in Eastern England where leather was more expensive, but we know very little about how this unusually early inter-regional trade was organised. In any case, it is interesting to see the establishment of Northampton's footwear industry pushed back to such a well-documented early date.

There follow two last and miscellaneous groups. The first is supplied by the remaining craftsmen who both made and sold a specialised article: one notes here the bowyer and fletcher, who made bows and arrows respectively and were due to be replaced by the gunmaker during the next century; the collar-maker, who made horse harness; the cooper, making barrels; and the soaper, who used animal fats to produce his soap. A link with other groups is provided by the cardmakers, who used the wire produced by the wiredrawer to make tools rather like wire brushes to prepare wool for spinning. Last of all come the trades supplying services of some kind—as usual, the tailors are much the most numerous; and it is interesting to note the numbers of innkeepers and their ostlers and tapsters, exploiting the town's strategic position in the road system, an activity due to become much more important as the century progressed. Labourers are also prominent, and should be regarded not as an unskilled general class but as independent tradesmen offering a service in construction and haulage. The number of millers would suggest considerable use of the Nene for grinding cereals, and possibly for finishing cloth by machinery. The early fame of the town as a centre for specialised horse trading is shown by the horsercorser (= horse dealer). It is also interesting to note the surprising number of pardoners in the second survey, a trade which would shortly be extinguished by the Reformation.

The second table summarises the position of the various groups and indicates the relative proportions of the self-employed and wage-earners. It should be observed that with the exception of the wealthy distributive trades and poor building and service workers, there is a general similarity between the average wealth of most of the town's craftsmen. However, this examination by groups tends to conceal the fact that there were considerable variations within individual groups, so that for instance the apothecary or chandler were no richer than the average, despite their inclusion among the distributive shopkeepers, and the wealth of the plumbers stands out from the poverty of the builders—the same contrast can be found in all groups.

This analysis has been chiefly concerned with those taxpayers following a recognised urban trade, but it would be wise to remember that there were other groups completing this picture of Northampton society. There were 27 widows recorded in the first survey, women who must often have continued their husbands' businesses and functioned as a source of loan capital; the excluded poor must have contained a far higher proportion of widows. The lists also include a cowherd and shepherd, who probably looked after the stock on the common town fields; some husbandmen—for whom 'small-

holder' would be perhaps the closest modern synonym—and a significant number of yeomen, 28 in the first survey and 62 in the second. Although not all of these yeomen may have been involved in agriculture, it is likely that most were, and they bring the proportion of taxpayers who may have been farming as a major activity to 6.6% in the first survey and 14.0% in the second,[6] an indication that even in a relatively large town like this there was still considerable direct involvement with agriculture; many of the other tradesmen would have been dabbling in farming as a by-occupation, if only by running a cow, or two or three sheep, on the town fields.

This relatively comprehensive picture of the occupational structure of a large town is difficult to place in its context because it is unique. There exists a similar, but not identical, survey of Coventry in 1522; but Coventry's stress on capping, and the fact that it was being racked by a severe economic crisis at the time, render the comparison a most misleading one. Our knowledge of other urban economies is based principally on the registers of admissions to the ranks of the freemen, which tells us only of the self-employed, and not even all of them. By comparison with Northampton, these other records would distort by omitting the wage-earners—and we have just seen that their numbers vary considerably from trade to trade—and those occupations like carters, millers, ostlers and labourers which did not involve opening a shop do not appear in the freemen's records of other towns because their practitioners rarely needed to become freemen. If we take these factors into account, it would seem that Northampton's economy was exceptional in the prominence of its leather workers and the strength of the textile industry in an area which was not noted for its clothmaking. When a detailed history of Northampton eventually appears, its view of the economic development of the town will have to treat this cross-section of traders as a basic point of reference, tracing the decay of medieval industries and the outline of emerging modern ones in the patterns revealed by the taxcollectors of Henry VIII.

[6] These percentages are based on the total number of taxpayers, unlike the figures for the trades which are derived from the total of specified tradesmen.

TABLE 1. TRADES IN THE 1524–5 SUBSIDY SURVEYS

Numbers at heads of columns:

1 and 4: Number assessed on goods (on land in brackets).
2 and 5: Number assessed on wages.
3 and 6: Totals.
7: Average assessment on goods per head (second survey only).

	First Survey			*Second Survey*			£
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Distributive Shopkeepers							
Apothecary	2	—	2	2	—	2	8.2
Chandler	3	1	4	3	2	5	8.3
Draper	9	—	9	9	1	10	12.0
Grocer	2	—	2	1	—	1	40.0
Ironmonger	1	—	1	3	—	3	15.0
Mercer	13	1	14	16	—	16	15.2
Merchant	2	—	2	1	—	1	40.0
Food and Drinks Trade							
Baker	7 (1)	15	23	5	10	15	6.0
Brewer	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Butcher	12 (1)	3	16	13	7	20	4.9
Fisher	3	1	4	1	1	2	2.0
Fishmonger	1	—	1	3	—	3	31.6

TABLE 1. (*continued*)

	First Survey			*Second Survey*			£
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Metal Working Trades							
Furber	1	1	2	2	9	11	4.5
Goldsmith	2	–	2	2	–	2	15.9
Pewterer	2	1	3	1	1	2	5.0
Pinner	1	–	1	–	2	2	–
Smith	4	5	9	6	5	11	6.0
Wiredrawer	1	2	3	1	1	2	2.0
Textile Trades							
Capper	3	4	7	4	1	5	2.8
Clothier	–	–	–	1	–	1	6.0
Dyer	2 (1)	7	10	1	3	4	5.0
Fuller	9	4	13	5 (1)	5	11	11.6
Hatmaker	1	–	1	–	1	1	–
Hosier	2	1	3	1	1	2	2.0
Shearman	5	3	8	2	3	5	6.5
Weaver	8	13	21	9	9	18	5.7
Woolwinder	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Building Trades							
Carpenter	3	3	6	3 (1)	4	8	1.3
Glazier	–	1	1	–	1	1	–
Hilliar	4	7	11	5	2	7	3.2
Joiner	1	1	2	2	1	3	3.0
Mason	3	2	5	2	1	3	2.0
Painter	2	3	5	2	1	3	2.0
Plumber	3	2	5	3	1	4	13.3
Sawyer	1	3	4	1	2	3	2.0
Leather Trades							
Cobbler[7]	–	1	1	–	–	–	–
Corviser	15	32	47	19	27	46	7.1
Currier[8]	2	3	5	–	–	–	–
Fellmonger	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Glover	8	5	13	4	11	15	4.8
Purser	2	1	3	2	2	4	6.0
Saddler	4	4	8	4	4	8	3.8
Shoemaker	–	1	1	–	–	–	–
Skinner	1	–	1	1	–	1	2.0
Tanner	12	3	15	11	6	17	12.8
Whittawer[8]	–	–	–	–	1	1	–

[7] Probably normally included among the corvisers.

[8] 'Currier' and 'whittawer' ('white-tawer') are probably alternative names for the same trade, *viz.* the curing of skins by methods different from those of the tanner, giving a more supple result. The 'white-tawed' skins were used particularly for gloves.

TABLE 1. (*continued*)

	First Survey			*Second Survey*			£
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
'Miscellaneous'							
Bowyer	2	–	2	2	1	3	8.5
Cardmaker	2	1	3	2	3	5	3.0
Collarmaker	3	–	3	–	3	3	–
Cooper	2	–	2	2	–	2	2.5
Fletcher	2	2	4	2	2	4	2.7
Pattenmaker[9]	–	1	1	–	1	1	–
Roper	3	–	3	2	–	2	12.5
Soaper	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Service Trades							
Barber	6	1	7	4	2	6	4.5
Carter	2	4	6	–	3	3	–
Cook	1	2	3	2	1	3	2.5
Horsecorser	1	–	1	1	–	1	10.0
Innkeeper	2	–	2	2	–	2	5.9
Labourer	–	8	8	1	11	12	4.0
Miller	3	4	7	5	6	11	4.1
Minstrel	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
Notary	–	–	–	1	–	1	45.0
Ostler	1	4	5	–	2	2	–
Pardoner	1	–	1	3	1	4	4.0
Sergeant[10]	3	–	3	3	–	3	6.2
Scrivener[11]	1	–	1	2	–	2	3.0
Singingman[12]	1	1	2	1	–	1	2.0
Tailor	10	10	20	13	4	17	3.2
Tapster	–	2	2	–	–	–	–
Farming							
Husbandman	1	2	3	1	2	3	
Neatherd[13]	–	–	–	–	1	1	
Shepherd	–	–	–	–	1	1	
Yeoman	11 (1)	16	28	15 (2)	45	62	
Widow	23 (2)	2	27	13 (4)	8	25	
Others	9 (3)	19	31	14 (4)	2	20	

[9] Pattens are overshoes.
[10] The mayor's officials, chiefly serving the town courts.
[11] Scriveners prepared legal documents, and might also be moneylenders.
[12] Professional adult chorister.
[13] Cowherd.

TABLE 2. TRADES IN THE 1524–5 SUBSIDY SURVEYS

Numbers at heads of columns:

1 and 3: Total number assessed.
2 and 4: Percentage of total number of tradesmen.
5: Average number assessed on goods and lands in both surveys.
6: Average number assessed on wages in both surveys.
7: Percentage of group assessed on goods and lands.
8: Percentage of group assessed on wages.
9: Average assessment of goods per head (second survey only).

	First Survey		*Second Survey*		*Average of both Surveys*				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		%		%			%	%	£
Distributive	34	*8.9*	38	*10.3*	33.5	2.5	93.1	6.9	14.8
Food	45	*11.7*	40	*10.9*	23.5	19.0	55.3	44.7	8.6
Metals	20	*5.2*	30	*8.2*	11.5	13.5	46.0	54.0	7.0
Textile	64	*16.7*	47	*12.8*	28.0	27.5	50.4	49.6	6.3
Building	39	*10.2*	32	*8.7*	18.0	17.5	50.7	49.3	4.4
Leather	95	*24.7*	92	*25.0*	43.0	50.5	46.0	54.0	7.9
Miscellaneous	19	*5.0*	20	*5.4*	12.5	7.0	64.1	35.9	5.8
Service	68	*17.7*	69	*18.8*	35.0	33.5	51.1	48.9	5.1

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KETTERING SCHOOLMASTERS IN THE TUDOR AND STUART PERIOD

D. K. SHEARING

In the article 'The Origins of Kettering Grammar School' (*Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (1978), pp. 21–27) the author, B. A. York, with regard to filling gaps in our knowledge, twice refers to 'the lack of existence of extant sources', but he appears to have overlooked the records of the Church of England. As B. Simon points out, 'Among the important documents for early periods, when other sources are few, are the Visitation and Subscription Books. Their particular significance is that they cover all schools and schoolmasters . . . and so provide information for a reconstruction of the total educational scene".[1] Using the Peterborough Diocesan Papers at Northamptonshire Record Office, Delapré Abbey, as the main source, I have compiled two indices of masters and schools in Northamptonshire and Rutland from 1560 to 1700, numbering circa 650 and 200 respectively.

Concerning Kettering, the first master I can trace is one Henry Fawcus or Fawkes whose name is given as *ludimagister* for the years 1585, 1588 and 1589.[2] By 1592, a Mr. Briger was holding that office.[3] Then, from at least 1609 to at least 1613, the master was a Mr. Miller or Myller who is listed on nine occasions.[4] A man of this name was *hypodidascalus* or usher at Uppingham in 1592.[5] Possibly this was the same man.

In June 1614, a Mr. Turland(e) paid fourpence by way of procuration fee when appearing before the bishop as Kettering schoolmaster and he remained in the post until at least Oct. 1617.[6] Either he or a namesake taught at Hannington in 1609 and at Old from 1610 to 1613, where he also acted for part of the time as curate.[7] This could have been Francis Turland who became vicar of Earl's Barton in 1622.[8]

As Mr. York writes, a man named Seaton was teaching in Kettering in 1635. He presented himself to the bishop in May of that year.[9] However, he had apparently held the position for some time, because he attracted the attention of William Laud during his visitation of the diocese in 1634. We are fortunate to have the Archbishop's own account of the incident, which runs thus: "The schoolmaster at Kettering, a Mr. Seaton, who was complained of unto me for a nonconformist did protest that he is absolutely conformable and zealously given that way and no man could be found that would accuse him in any particular".[10] According to my index of masters, a Mr. J. Seaton was licensed on 3 Oct. 1623, to teach in the diocese, no place being stated;[11] a Mr. Seaton too was usher at Oakham from at least May 1626 to at least May 1629;[12] a Mr. John Seaton intruded at Twywell during the Interregnum, was ejected in 1660, and then taught in schools at Islip and Thrapston until his death in 1684.[13] We can only speculate as to whether these Mr. Seatons were one and the same.

By May 1663 Robert Clipsham was the Kettering schoolmaster and he was still there in October of that year.[14] He subscribed on 7 Aug. 1662 to a declaration of conformity to Church of England liturgy and repudiated on oath any desire to change the government of church or state.[15] He described himself as curate of Rushton as well as schoolmaster of Kettering. The Act of Uniformity, 1662, required all clergy, dons, tutors and schoolmasters to subscribe in order to obtain a licence and they frequently wrote down their qualifications and other personal details.

Mr. York assumes that from 1674 to 1679 the Rector and schoolmaster at Kettering was Mr. Fowler. This would be William Fowler, BA, who in fact was instituted on 2 Aug. 1670 and stayed for ten years until taking up his appointment as Rector of Cranford St. Andrew,

[1] See 'Leicestershire Schools 1625–40', *British Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. III, No. 1 (Nov. 1954), p. 42.
[2] Ep[iscopal] Vis[itation] B[oo]k 4.
[3] Ep. Vis. Bk. 5.
[4] Ep. Vis. Bk. 6.
[5] Ep. Vis. Bk. 5.
[6] Ep. Vis. Bk. 6.
[7] *ibid.*
[8] Longden H. I. (Rev.), *Northamptonshire and Rutland Clergy from 1500*, Northampton (1938), Vol. 2, p. 43.
[9] Ep. Vis. Bk. 8.
[10] Miscellaneous Documents, Box X 650, No. 1, 'Copy of an abstract of an account of the visitation of Archbishop Laud in 1634'.
[11] Miscellaneous Book II, f. 142R.
[12] Ep. Vis. Bk. 7.
[13] Longden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 12, p. 101.
[14] Ep. Vis. Bk. 10.
[15] Subscription Book I, Box X, 961.

on 11 Oct. 1680.[16] For the whole of the Kettering decade, Fowler was the *ludimagister* being listed with that title nine times.[17] He also occurs as Rector and *ludimagister* at Cranford St. Andrew from July 1692 to July 1699,[18] but he was no doubt active in both roles from Oct. 1680. He was succeeded as Kettering Rector, as Mr. York notes, by Samuel Sherwin. He gained his BA in 1676, his MA in 1679, was instituted on 10 Nov. 1680 and stayed four years. Incidentally, he may have taught for a brief period from circa 1676 at Higham Ferrers.[19] In Sept. 1680 he was actually the schoolmaster at Rothwell,[20] though by April 1683 he was stated to be Rector and *ludimagister* at Kettering.[21] We cannot presume, as Mr. York does, that Sherwin on commencing his duties as Rector of Kettering "received the mastership of the grammar school simultaneously". A Mr. J. Penn is given as Kettering *ludimagister* in Sept. 1680.[22] He most probably occupied the position for a time on the departure of Fowler, while Sherwin served notice at Rothwell. Just possibly he was a teacher at a school other than Kettering grammar school. The picture is further clouded because from Sept. 1680 to April 1683 a Thomas Lambe taught at Rothwell.[23]

Finally I think Mr. York is correct in contending that in Kettering Grammar School's early years "the number of pupils . . . must have been small". Not one teacher is described as an usher which is the clue which usually means that the number of boys has risen to more than thirty. Kettering before 1700 was therefore probably a smaller enterprise than neighbouring schools at Fotheringhay, Guilsborough, Oakham, Oundle, Peterborough (Cathedral School), Uppingham and Wellingborough.

[16] Longden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 5, pp. 111–12.
[17] Ep. Vis. Bk. 8.
[18] Ep. Vis. Bk. 18.
[19] Longden, *op. cit.*, Vol. 12, p. 153.
[20] Ep. Vis. Bk. 12.
[21] Ep. Vis. Bk. 14.
[22] Ep. Vis. Bk. 12.
[23] Ep. Vis. Bks. 12, 14.

FURTHER ON T.G. TUCKER: 'THE CLEVER BOY OF PITSFORD'

Mr. E. E. Kimbell of Boughton, Northampton writes:

In 'Memories of Pitsford a Hundred Years Ago' (*Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. VI, No. 1, pp. 49–52), the late Miss Joan Wake introduces T. G. Tucker who, at over 80 recounts his childhood there. But her last paragraph errs: I remember visits before World War Two, when he stayed with my father, a nephew (my grandmother was an elder sister).

He went from Cambridge to take the Chair in Classical Studies at Adelaide's new university, and also wrote on his subjects, getting much of his material from visits to Greece, possibly his best known book being *Life in Ancient Athens*.

I also remember T. G. Tucker's father, who had been the Wake family's coachman, and had a long beard and a collapsible tricycle—the collapsible part being his own invention. On this he would ride to London to see his properties and visit the British Museum. Another invention was a crosscut saw working in a frame, with a spring to pull it back; but it is doubtful if this saved much effort. He died in my grandfather's house in, I think, 1916. An awesome moment, was it then to see him. "A fine corpse", they said, "and so distinguished!" Aquiline features and a high forehead may have contributed: also with his son. "And", I was told, "both held themselves well".

THE DEMOLITION OF NORTHAMPTON'S WALLS, JULY 1662

For its resolute support of the Parliament in the Civil Wars in the 1640s Northampton was punished by being disarmed and having its gates and walls demolished at the Restoration. The story of how this was physically carried out is told in the following document from the Northamptonshire Record Office (Isham Correspondence 3555). There can be few more interesting one-and-a-half pages of accounts in those archives.

The 'Lords' referred to in the document were the Earl of Exeter and the Earl of Westmorland (to whose house at Apethorpe certain of the arms were removed) who were charged with the task of 'sleighting' Northampton's defences. The accounts clearly show how the labourers, so many per parish, were recruited by the 'chief constables' of the hundreds (Rowell or Rothwell, Huxloe and Orlingbury are specifically mentioned) into which the East and West Divisions of the county were anciently divided, and the references to the summoning in of the Trained Bands, the payment of drummers and for powder and match for the guards, make it clear that demolition was accompanied by a show of military force. The 'Great Church of Northampton' was All Saints —then larger than the present edifice (re-built after the Fire of 1675). Students of industrial relations will be interested in the payment made to the workmen for 'working longer than Ordinary'.

From ye 10th July 1662

An Exact Accompt of Moneyes Received and Payd by Mr. William Robinson in Sleighting the Towne walles of Northampton etc. and other Emergancyes in and about the same vizt.

Receipts

	li	s	d
Imprimis Received of Mr. Adames	100.	00.	00.
Item Received of Mr. Roane	048.	00.	00.
Sum total	148.	00.	00.

Disbursements

Imprimis Payd to A Messenger for fetching the drumes from Kettering to Northampton	00.	05.	00.
Item to a Messenger for conveying warrants to the Cheife Constables for summoning in the Labourers of ye west division	00.	05.	00.
Item more to a Messenger for summoning in Labourers in ye East division	00.	05.	00.
Item to Mr. Willowbey for Goeing to London with A Letter from ye Lords to ye king by ye Lords Order	05.	00.	00.
Item paid to ye Guards by Order from ye Lords	00.	05.	00.
Item paid ye next Night likewise to ye Guards	00.	05.	00.
Item paid for powder and match for ye Guards	01.	00.	00.
Item paid More to ye Guards and for Match	00.	05.	06.
Item paid the workemen and Supivisors for throwing downe the Towne walles ye first day	06.	10.	00.
Item paid for the 2 next dayes to ye workmen and supivisors	25.	03.	06.

Item paid for beer for ye Labourers by ye Lords Order	04. 00. 00.
Item more to ye Guards	00. 05. 00.
Item to Messengers for Carrying warrants to ye Chiefe Constables of Rowell Huxloe and Orlingbury for Summoning in the Trained bands	00. 10. 00.
Item to ye Drumers for beating Six dayes	01. 10. 00.
Item more to workemen and Supervisors for ye 3 next dayes	68. 09. 00.
Item more to ye Guards	00. 05. 00.
Item paid more to Mr. Willowby by my Lord of Exeters Order	02. 10. 00.
Item more for Another day to ye workemen and Supervisors	08. 13. 00.
Item to ye Men that Removed ye Armes out of ye towne hall to ye waggon	00. 02. 00.
Item paid for a Basekett to put ye Granadowes in	00. 01. 00.
Item more to ye Guards	00. 05. 00.
Item more to ye Drumers at 2s6d A peece A day	01. 00. 00.
Item payd to ye waggoners that Carryed ye Armes to Apethorpe	01. 10. 00.
Item to a Messenger that went to Higham for Major Pemberton	00. 04. 00.
Item payd to ye Carter for Removing the Armes out of ye Great Church of Northampton	00. 05. 00.
Item to ye Men that hope to Loade them	00. 03. 00.
Item to ye men that Carried ye Drumes and Halberds from Northampton to Major Pembertons at Higham	00. 05. 00.
Item paid for a Locke and key that Lockes up ye Armes	00. 01. 06.
Item to severall Messengers in carrying the warrants to ye Cheife Constables for ye whole County for the Reliefe of Constables out of purse etc	00. 15. 00.
Item ye Last day to ye workemen and Supervisors	04. 06. 00.
Item for halfe a hogeshead of beer for ye workemen working longer than Ordinary by ye deputy Lieutenants Order	01. 00. 00.
Item to ye Guardes more for 3 Nights	00. 15. 00.
Receipts in total	148. 00. 00.
Disbursements	135. 18. 06.
Remains	012. 01. 06.

R.L.G.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS AND BASIC EDUCATION IN NORTHAMPTON 1800–1871

JOHN LAWES

For too long, it has been generally taught and accepted that the voluntary schools of the nineteenth century were second-rate institutions and that until the Board Schools came along in 1871 their teaching was inadequate and inefficient. Sunday Schools have been regarded merely as agencies for indoctrination run by warring sectional interests to whom doctrine was more important than literacy. Dame or 'private-adventure schools' have been thought of as being 'baby-minding' institutions, and their contribution has been belittled by educational historians. A scholarly and well-argued attack on these unbalanced criticisms has been made by Professor E. G. West in *Education and the Industrial Revolution* (1975). Local studies can also supply information and statistics to re-examine earlier theories based on research on the metropolitan areas, and on the questionable contentions of nineteenth century reformers. Northampton presents a striking example of what voluntary and private agencies could achieve prior to 1871.

In the eighteenth century Northampton's position as a centre for education was first established by the Nonconformist academies of Philip Doddridge and John Rylands, while its situation on the coaching routes north from London, and its status as a county town meant that it was a good centre for boarding schools and visiting lecturers. Charity schools for boys and girls were financed, in keeping with national trends, but these did not keep pace with the rising juvenile population from about 1780. The presence of the publishing firm Dicey from 1720[1] producing and distributing newspapers and chapbooks, the popular literature of the eighteenth century, provided an incentive to literacy locally, while signs, notices, pamphlets and opportunities for advancement for the literate within the county town would stimulate a concern for obtaining education. However, in the last twenty years of the century the local nobility, gentry, churchmen and middle-classes, stirred by religious, social and personal motives, started to found new schools and the results, in terms of literacy, as Mr. Hatley has shown, rose in the period 1801 to 1870 from 71% to 89% for men and 47% to 84% for women.[2] These statistics (based on marriage register signatures) give some indication of the contribution made by the voluntary schools in the nineteenth century.

The Sunday School movement started in the year 1786 with two Anglican establishments, the first being opened at St. Giles in May, and the second at All Saints a few weeks later,[3] each catering for about a hundred children. There was also a Nonconformist General Sunday School[4] which started later and continued until about 1811. These were not merely classes for religious and moral teaching, but sought to make children literate. Since there were only four small charity schools in the town with places for less than a hundred children, these Sunday Schools had a role to play in basic secular education. The minute books of the early Sunday Schools show that they were run with care and foresight, catering for the parish or district, and not merely to promote the interest of the sect. The Nonconformist school was notable in that the children went to each meeting-house in rotation and each contributed staff and support.

The struggle of these early days was later recalled: "the expense of schools was something very considerable in those days. There were the materials for secular instruction as well as religion to provide. Slates, sponges, spelling books, desks . . . as the cash book of All Saints, Northampton shows".[5] It was also recollected that "The general classes [of Castle Hill Girls' Sunday School] were assembled in the Gallery and writing classes occupied the table pew in the summer and the vestry in the winter, and prizes consisting of clothing, books and other articles were distributed half-yearly".[6]

[1] W. W. Hadley: *History of the Northampton Mercury*, Northampton, 1920.

[2] V. A. Hatley: 'Literacy at Northampton 1761–1900. A Third Interim Report', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. V., 1976, No. 4, pp. 347–8.

[3] *Northampton Mercury*, Correspondence, Sept.–Oct. 1866.

[4] Reverend W. J. Bain: *Lessons from the Early History of Sunday Schools in Northampton*, Northampton, 1875.

[5] Letter, *Northampton Mercury*, October 13, 1866.

[6] J. Archer: *The Story of a Century, Doddridge Castle Hill Sunday School*, Northampton, 1910, p. 5.

PLATE 1. CORPORATION CHARITY SCHOOL BUILT IN 1812, Bridge Street, Northampton
[*photo: John Lawes*]

While the Anglicans pioneered the Sunday School movement, the first initiative in founding day-schools in the nineteenth-century came from the Nonconformists, in the person of Mr. Hickson of College Street Baptist Chapel, a London shoe merchant who had moved to Northampton to profit by the favourable labour market when strikes affected his business in 1805. He studied the methods of Joseph Lancaster, taught them to several friends at College Street Chapel, and, using children of members as monitors, he began a Sunday School[7] which was the proving ground for his day school venture. His success in the chapel from 1810, encouraged him to share his visions and ambitions with other local business men and men of influence. He visited Lancaster's Borough Road School in Isleworth, and then invited him to address a public meeting in Northampton on November 6, 1810 at the George Inn. Plans for a school were displayed and the large and attentive middle-class audience, together with some of the leading nobility, were very impressed. Times were propitious financially as the French Wars were encouraging farming and the shoe industry, and civic pride demanded a response to this venture, since other towns were already setting up similar institutions. The *Mercury* reported that the system was "Peculiarly calculated to produce habits of attention and application . . . with nothing of harshness and severity, nevertheless it is strict and uniform . . . adapted to the age and capacity of its subjects . . . will induce habits of regularity, obedience and industry . . . and the surest foundation will be laid for making progress in learning far beyond what it immediately aims at".

The meeting responded with enthusiasm and subscriptions were promised. The Mayor was requested to call a meeting and the advertisement in the *Mercury* was supported by sixty town and county men of importance.[8] Earl Spencer (twenty-five guineas) and Lord Althorp (twenty guineas) headed the subscription list, while the historian George Baker agreed to act as the secretary. The Anglicans and Nonconformist middle classes backed Mr. Hickson's scheme but soon county churchmen, led by Lord Lilford and the Bishop of Peterborough, had misgivings, and the *Mercury* soon bore notices of a scheme to found a rival school "for the education of the poor . . . in conformity with the views of the National Society".[9] The National Schools' movement, with the

[7] F. Bates: *Souvenir of the Centenary of College Street Sunday School 1810–1910*, Northampton, 1910, p. 8.

[8] *Northampton Mercury*, November 3, 1810.

[9] *Northampton Mercury*, March 14, 1812.

weight of the Established Church and the county gentry behind it, resulted in the opening of a local school within two months based on Dr. Bell's monitorial system. Lord Althorp, a national figure in promoting education, embarrassed as both a Whig and a churchman at the competitive spirit developing, declared "he would always do everything in his power to support the Lancasterian School for though, of course, he must prefer the system which educated the poor in his own principles, yet as a Christian he thought it his duty to extend the blessings of education as far as possible".[10] The town was thus presented with two day schools, initially only for boys, with a capacity for educating three hundred of them, adequate for all who would want a basic education up to the age of eleven.

In a competitive situation, it was hardly surprising that, with Anglican clergy encouraging parishioners to send their children to the National School and to support its fund, the Lancasterian School started to decline. In under a year, the number of children dropped from a maximum of one hundred and fifty to forty eight. There was also a debt of £1,000 and barely sufficient funds to meet running costs. Further, the master did not wish to teach girls on a day-school basis, and the committee became disunited under these pressures. However, in these depressing circumstances, some of the Northampton "middling and operative classes" decided to maintain the school with the 'Penny a Week Society'.[11] This provided finance from the "grass roots", with collectors visiting most houses in the borough and nearby villages, obtaining the support of six hundred householders while a new and active managerial committee obtained a new master, who soon had a very full school. The 'Penny a Week Society' provided an average of £100 per year from 1814–17, tiding the school over its early problem period, and it continued to function for several years thereafter, as the annual reports and accounts show.[12] There were eight hundred children a week receiving education in the day school for boys, the afternoon school for girls, and the Sunday Schools. Samuel Hall, the master, published a manual for the use of Sunday Schools on the Lancasterian pattern, with practical hints on management, while the Penny a Week scheme was publicised nationally. The education given was free and by 1816 there was also a school for adults, "freely taught".

While the Lancasterian School fought for survival, the National School became well established and was used as a show place and a centre for training teachers. Visitors were not only local subscribers but those who wished to establish similar schools in their own towns or villages in the county. The Annual Report of the local branch of the National Society says: "As the mainspring of the machine by which these benefits [of education] are spread throughout the county, the Central Schools' establishment at Northampton is the object of the greatest interest . . . [teachers] exhibiting orderly conduct, close attention to the business they are about . . . the proficiency of the children".[13]

Although funds fluctuated, progress was maintained and in 1824 girls were being educated on two afternoons a week[14] through the services of an experienced mistress,[15] who had previously taught at All Saints Sunday School and the Becket and Sargeant Charity School. However, a magnate with considerable concern for education, Sir James Langham of Cottesbrooke, pressed the local committee for a girl's school[16] to be built over the boy's department, and secured £300 from the parent society in London to assist in the project so that by 1826 a girls' day school had opened. Immediately, a third project was begun to establish an infants' school.[17] It was completed in 1829 and catered for over one hundred children staffed by a couple who had run the St. Giles' Sunday School, and had been trained in Bell's 'Madras system' in London prior to taking up appointment. At the same time, the Northamptonshire National Society was seeking to stimulate good teaching through Sir James Langham's prize scheme for teachers,[18] sending new staff to be trained at the Central Schools in Northampton, and by 1832 had encouraged and financed the setting up of forty-eight schools in the county, catering for 6,707 children. Thus, with Sir James Langham's encouragement, the Northampton National School was the hub of an active county society, setting standards and working to encourage good teaching. The master of the Central Schools inspected village schools and he was regarded as a man of importance.

However, the progress of the Central School was not without problems for the local com-

[10] *Northampton Mercury*, April 4, 1812.

[11] Broadside, Northampton Library, (Local Collection).

[12] NPL. Lancasterian Schools Annual Reports (bound), Vol. i. 1816.

[13] National Society Archives, Church House, Westminster. Annual Report of the Northamptonshire Society (1833).

[14] Northamptonshire Record Office—NCC. Ed. Bundle II, 1824.

[15] Minutes of the Northamptonshire Society, 1824.

[16] Minutes, 1824–26.

[17] Minutes and Letters, 1826–9, see especially October 1827.

[18] Inspection Report, October 1829 and Minutes, October 1829.

PLATE 2. ALL SAINT'S PAROCHIAL SCHOOL, OPENED IN 1839,
largely through the efforts of the Revd. W. Wales. It is situated behind Bell's, Gold Street.
[*photo: John Lawes*]

mittee. Sensitive to good moral standards and the reputation of their society, members, especially Sir James Langham, were scandalised when Mr. and Mrs. Billing resigned their positions in 1829[19] to take over a public house! Their successors, appointed in haste, proved a disappointment and were soon dismissed.[20] Acting more carefully, the committee made new appointments which revived the fortunes of the school so that by 1830 there were in Northampton about five hundred boys, girls and infants being educated on a full-time basis in the National Schools with the Lancasterian School taking about the same number.

The schools were never completely filled and the 1833 statistics in the Kerry Report indicate that the town also had a good number of 'private adventure schools' as well as Sunday Schools. However, the local National Society were intent on maintaining and improving the quality of education in the town. A library was provided by 1834[21] and contained a variety of works with biography, history, geography and natural science being regarded as equally important as works on theology, which caused some trouble with the S P C K.

In 1838, a new figure with considerable concern for education appeared as vicar of All Saints—the Reverend W. Wales. He was determined to have a parochial school which would serve the children of his large parish, despite this being a challenge to the well-established Central School. He was keenly aware of local needs and the importance of anticipating population rises in a growing town rather than meeting immediate needs alone.[23] His enthusiasm resulted in a handsome building of local stone being erected which, it was envisaged, would replace the old Central National Schools as the county model—"showing the system [Dr. Bell's] to perfection". It had sufficient space for one hundred and fifty pupils on a day school basis. No sooner was this established than the Reverend Mr. Wales became involved in adult education, instigating the establishment of a rival to the largely Nonconformist Mechanics' Institute (1833).[24] His Religious and Useful Knowledge Society soon had a library of two thousand five hundred volumes, a reading room

[19] Letter NRO., NCC. Ed. Bundle II, 1829.
[20] Correspondence October 1829, Langham-Thursby, and Minutes 1830.
[21] Annual Report, Northamptonshire National Society, 1834–5.
[22] Letters NRO, 1834, Bundle IV.
[23] NRO., NCC. Ed., National School Bundle V, Letter, Sept. 1838.
[24] NPL., Religious and Useful Knowledge Society, Annual Report, 1856.

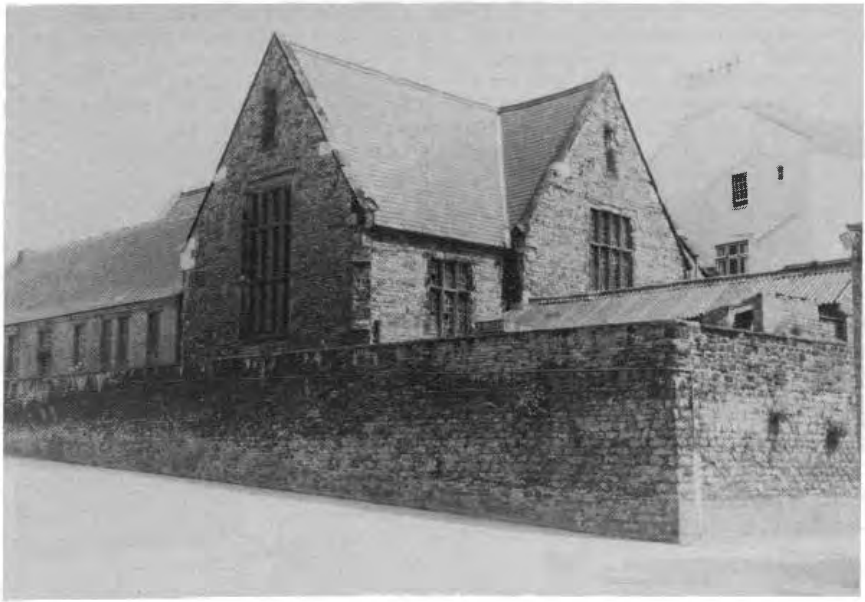

PLATE 3. ST. SEPULCHRE'S PAROCHIAL SCHOOL, OPENED IN 1851, now used as a warehouse. It is situated on the Barrack Road by the gate of St. George's Middle School. [*photo: John Lawes*]

for newspapers and periodicals, and a small museum. There were reading, writing, drawing, and mutual improvement classes, as well as popular lectures. However, this Religious and Useful Knowledge Society does not seem to have seriously challenged the Mechanics' Institute which had a strong borough support, many bequests and facilities, and catered for middle-class men with scientific and antiquarian interests.

The period from 1851 saw the founding of St. Sepulchre's (Mixed) Schools, four infants schools and the removal to a new site, with larger accommodation, of the Lancasterian school, now called the British School. At this time, the plight of the St. Andrew's district, caused by its rapid growth since 1820, concerned not only the vicar of St Sepulchre's but many local people and Sunday Schools were not felt adequate to cope witht the educational needs. In December 1843, the *Mercury* carried this advertisement:[25] "The Parish of St. Sepulchre's, formerly one of the smallest in Northampton has now become nearly the largest, its population amounting in 1801 only to 1,298 was, according to the last census, and inclusive of that on the adjoining extra-parochial ground 7,311. Its inhabitants consist, with very few exceptions, of poor working people, the chief part shoemakers, the rest labourers and mechanics. Up to the present period, this large and comparatively destitute population of nearly 8,000 has been without a Parochial School or School Room for instruction of the poor, saving a Sunday School, which for want of better and more appropriate accommodation, assembles in the parish church. The vicar of the parish is, therefore, most anxious for the erection of a School Room in connection with the National Society and thus provide, in some measure, a remedy for the evils from which the children in this parish are in danger . . . the building is intended to accommodate at least 500 children (boys and girls)".

The project went forward rapidly with contributions from local people, the National Society in London, and from funds now available to school builders from the Privy Council. By 1845, the new schools were opened, yet when an inspector visited in 1847, he observed: "The school house is a handsome and well arranged building. [But] The School has not met with the encouragement that it deserves".[26]

There was willingness to expend money on new schools but the problem was ensuring attendance, especially in a time of good business when juvenile labour was valuable. The local

[25] *Northampton Mercury*, December 12, 1843.
[26] University of Leicester Education Library, Report of the Committee of Council of Education. 1847–8 (Blandford), pp. 412–3.

PLATE 4. ST. GILES' CHURCH SCHOOL, 1859–1975, St. Giles' Terrace. [*photo: John Lawes*]

churchmen, spurred on by government grants and the prospect of a new and larger Nonconformist School had followed up their successful ventures in All Saint's and St. Sepulchre's with an infants school in St. Katherine's for children up to nine years old. There was also a project for the South Quarter of All Saints parish to provide infant and adult education (probably the demand for workers at an early age made a normal age school unrealistic). It was noted at a public meeting that (in 1851) "In the course of time . . . [there had been] a great desire for education on the part of the working classes but they withdrew their children from school most reluctantly for the sake of their trifling earnings".[27] Meanwhile, the Nonconformists had concentrated their efforts in a single large project, resulting in a new school in 1846 with a capacity for six hundred children (equal provision for each sex). In this government grants had been a great benefit and so had a gift of land from the council. The British Schools on the Mounts had a broad curriculum and, while teaching the three "rs", also taught Geography, History, Natural Science, and Grammar to older pupils. The other main effort of the Nonconformists continued to be in Sunday School education. The early formation of the Northamptonshire Sunday School Union (1803) ensured co-operation and mutual encouragement to those engaged in education of the young people. It provided materials for teaching, opportunities for discussion amongst teachers of methods and problems, funds for the foundations of libraries and the inspection of schools locally. In 1838, the union undertook a survey of attendance at all schools in the town and found thirteen Sunday Schools with an attendance of 2,547 children and sufficient space for all the children of the town in the buildings provided.[28]

The final phase of the voluntary provision of schools was from 1851 to 1871. In this period the Anglicans, not content with the establishment of St. Sepulchre's School, erected a new school in St. Andrew's Ecclesiastical District to cater for five hundred children in 1858, with an infant section being added in 1871. A second shoe-making area rapidly developing was St. Edmund's, and a school there to take five hundred children was also in operation by 1858. The old Central School, after fifty years of service, closed in 1861, and St. Giles opened a parochial school for four hundred children that year, following it with a mixed "Mission School" for an additional two hundred children, in Dychurch Lane, in the town centre. To the west, the old parish of St. Peter's (the smallest parish) got its own school in 1855. In the years before, All Saints Parochial Schools had coped with the demand from the neighbouring parish. The new school had places for

[27] *Northampton Mercury*, March 29, 1851.
[28] NRO., Northamptonshire Sunday School Union Minute Books and Statistics, SSU., 1–3, 33–35.

one hundred and sixty children. St. James's was provided with a separate school in 1871, since that area was developing and required separate facilities. Thus, two thousand more places were provided in voluntary schools between 1855 and the establishment of the School Board. The Board claimed there was a shortfall[29] of 2,249 places for children in the borough, but this was based on the number of children in the 3—15 age group, while most children left before their thirteenth birthday, and few attended under four years old. This meant that the 7,922 children in the estimate could realistically be reduced to about 6,000, which would leave a shortfall of just over three hundred places, when the 5,673 places provided by voluntary endeavour, apart from Sunday and Evening Schools are reconsidered. Nevertheless, a School Board was set up.

Thus, during the period 1801 to 1871, the voluntary schools provided for the basic educational needs of the borough children, apart from private adventure schools. There was enthusiasm and initiative enough to keep pace with, and even anticipate, population growth. The middle class parish of St. Giles and the better areas of All Saints pioneered the way and local enthusiasts such as Hickson, Wales and Langham were supported by middle-class manufacturers and professional people as well as the gentry. More significantly, the operative classes rose to the challenge of educational provision by means of the Penny a Week Society. The consequence of day and Sunday School provision was a definite and steadily increasing rate of literacy, which Mr. Hatley has charted with precision.[30] Literacy increased in step with the provision of schools, and the result was a close on ninety *per cent* literacy rate for both men and women prior to the School Board taking over and enforcing school attendance.

Appendix

Table to show the improvement in literacy in the decade following the opening of new schools, based on the premise that marriages would usually be entered into eight to twelve years after leaving school.

SCHOOLS		LITERACY		
Decade at School	*New Schools Provided*	*Decade of Marriage*	% *Brides*	*Grooms*
1791–1800	Sunday Schools	1801–1810	47	71
1800–1810	Sunday Schools	1811–1820	46	68
1811–1820	Lancasterian & National Schools	1821–1830	52	74
1821–1830	Girls Central (full-time), SS Union	1831–1840	54	75
1831–1840	All Saints Parochial Schools	1841–1850	62	77
1841–1850	4 Infants; New British & St. Sepulchre's	1851–1860	69	81
1851–1860	St. Andrew's, St. Edmund's, & St. Peter's	1861–1870	78	85
1861–1870	St. Giles's, St. James', & St. Giles's Mission	1871–1880	84	89
1871–1880	Board Schools from 1874	1881–1890	92	91

Acknowledgements

I wish to record my thanks to Dr. David Reeder of the University of Leicester School of Education, Mr. Victor Hatley of Nene College, Miss Marion Arnold of the Northampton Public Library, and to the staff of the Northampton Record Office for their suggestions and help in the research for this article.

[29] *Northampton Mercury*, November 25, 1876.

[30] V. A. Hatley: 'Literacy at Northampton 1761–1900. A Third Interim Report', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, Vol. V., 1976, No. 4, pp. 347–8.

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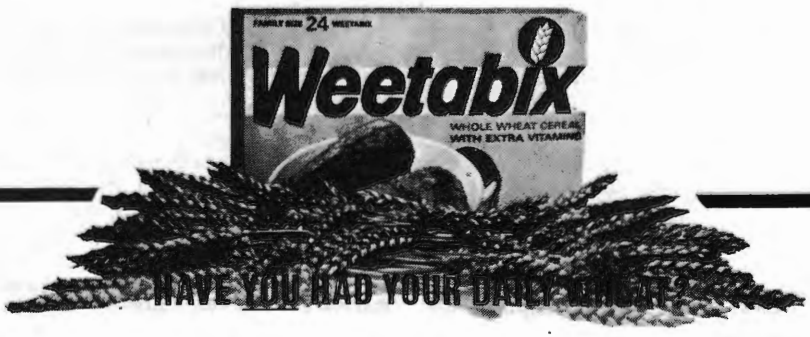

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR DAILY WHEAT?

THE NORTHAMPTON BOOT AND SHOE ARBITRATION BOARD BEFORE 1914*

J. H. PORTER

After the Northampton staple trade's first conciliation board of 1883–84 had collapsed a new board was formed in 1885. The first two years of the history of this board have been outlined previously in this journal, and in a sequel by J. M. Swann.[1] Generally the work of the conciliation board can be divided into two, the settlement of minor disputes which involves merely the question of the interpretation of existing agreements, and second, the drawing up of new agreements on such major questions as wages, hours and conditions of work. The latter questions will be the main concern of this article. This is not, however, a denial of the importance of the volume of minor matters which had to be settled by the Board. Wages in the boot and shoe trade were initially determined by piecework statements which were complex lists of 'ground work' and 'extras' payable on each type of work. Consequently each class of work and new style had to be classified by the Board whenever there was any disagreement.[2] The classification of work, and hence the rate at which it should be paid, was a sensitive issue, so sensitive that the employers' representatives, led by M.P. Manfield, temporarily resigned in 1889 when some of their fellow associated manufacturers criticised their judgement. Such work as classification was laborious, and Henry Wooding attacked their critics because, "He thought when the members sat there night after night their friends ought to accept the decisions without abusing those who did their best for them".[3]

* *I am grateful to Mr G. D. Franklin for permission to use the Arbitration Board Minutes, Mr V. A. Hatley for the Welted Work Committee Minutes, and the General Secretary of the NUBSO. for the Monthly Reports and correspondence.*

[1] J. H. Porter, 'The Northampton Arbitration Board and the Shoe industry dispute of 1887,' *Northants Past and Present*, IV, 3 pp. 149–154; J. M. Swann, 'A sequel to the Shoe Industry Dispute of 1887,' *ibid*, IV, 4, 1969–70, pp. 247–8.

[2] Northampton Arbitration Board Minutes, vol. 1, p. 1, 2.

[3] Minutes, 31 Aug. 1889; *Boot & Shoe Trades Journal*, 5 Oct. 1889.

The formation of the National Conference

Before discussing general issues it will be useful to sketch in the outline of the employees' and manufacturers' organisations. The operatives' union had been formed in 1874 as the Rivetters and Finishers but in 1890 changed its title to the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives as it came increasingly to recruit clickers and pressmen. These new recruits, especially important in Leicester and Northampton, were grouped into 'No. 2' branches as machinery began to take over clicking. The lasters and finishers comprised the 'No. 1' branches.[4] Also in 1890 the employers formed a Federation of local associations under the presidency of J. Griffin Ward, the Leicester manufacturer. Two years later the two sides formed a National [Joint] Conference to discuss major issues. Events in Northampton were instrumental in leading up to the formation of this central negotiating body.

As the union was recruiting clickers and pressmen it began to pursue policies in their direct interest and in particular to try and secure a limit upon the number of boys in the clicking and rough stuff departments. The proposal for restriction first came from the Leicester branch but actually became a matter of dispute at Marlow & Sons of Northampton. The Northampton manufacturers thought this too important a question for a local decision and so referred the matter to the employers' Federation. The union promptly increased its demands and William Inskip, the general secretary, sought for the Northampton operatives a uniform meal time, a 54 hour week, an advance in wages for the Northampton clickers and pressmen, and the regulation of the number of boys in the trade. All unsettled disputes, he said, should be arranged by arbitration. Outraged, particularly by the proposed limit on boy labour, the employers' Federation denounced the demands as "an unwise and unjustifiable attempt to interfere with the conduct of the business . . . and if admitted would either drive Boys and Youths at present

[4] A. Fox, *A History of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives*, Oxford, 1958, pp. 1–20.

PLATE 1. SIR THOMAS WRIGHT IN COURT DRESS WEARING HIS CHAIN OF OFFICE AS MAYOR OF LEICESTER.

employed onto the streets or force them unduly into other trades". After strike notices at eight Northampton firms had expired the Federation threatened a general lockout in all centres. Finally Thomas Wright, then mayor of Leicester, intervened as mediator and a National Conference was convened by the two sides and Sir Henry James adopted as national umpire.[5]

The Northampton representatives at the National Conference were Dan Stanton and F. W. Farmer for the union and H. Wooding and A. Church for the employers. During the National Conference it was quickly agreed that there should be a uniform time for the meal hour, a 54 hour week, that the union should expel unofficial strikers, that three months notice should be given for the termination of agreements, and that the unions would give full support in the enforcement of discipline in factories. On specifically Northampton issues the employers now admitted that the wages of Northampton clickers and pressmen were low and on William Inskip's suggestion agreed to pay a minimum weekly wage for clickers of 25/- immediately and 26/- the following March, with 22/- for pressmen. No compromise was possible on the fundamental issue of boy labour and so that question was referred to the arbitration of Sir Henry James, who made an award limiting the number of boys to one for each three men employed.[6]

[5] NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, May 1892; *Proceedings of the National Conference of August 1892*, Leicester 1892. Henry James - b. 1828; 1869, Q.C. and Liberal M.P. for Taunton; 1873 Solicitor-General; 1885, M.P. for Bury, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; d. 1911.

[6] NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Aug. 1892; Federated Associations of Boot & Shoe Manufacturers, *Official Information 1890–1910*, Leicester, 1910, pp. 11–15.

PLATE 2. E L POULTON O.B.E., J.P., GENERAL SECRETARY N.U.B.S.O., 1908–30. A FORMER MAYOR OF NORTHAMPTON, AND SECRETARY OF THE NO. 1 BRANCH OF THE UNION 1891 TO 1908.

There was now a fully developed conciliation and arbitration system. At the first level there were the local boards with their own referees, and at the national level the National Conference under the chairmanship of Thomas Wright, with Sir Henry James as national umpire to consider issues which were of too great an importance for the local boards.

The new system under strain, 1892–95

A second major issue in the early nineties was the introduction of indoor workshops for lasters and finishers instead of the old system of outdoor working, which was being displaced because of the introduction of new machinery. The movement for indoor workshops had begun in 1890 in the London district and the employers there had capitulated in the face of a strike. This pioneering attempt led the union's annual conference in May 1890 to resolve that they should be adopted in every centre and the following year they were secured in Leicester.[7] Soon afterwards the question was raised at Northampton but was very much delayed. The Northampton Board referred the matter to the National Conference, from there it went to Henry James who pushed it back to Northampton as a local matter. Finally, in May 1893, the question was hammered out after 3½ hours' discussion on the Board under the chairmanship of the employers' president William Hickson. The agreement was on lines recommended by the employers' Federation.[8]

[7] NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Jan.–Apr. 1890, Jan.–Mar. 1891.

[8] Minutes, 23 Jan. 1893; NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, May 1893.

The rules for "Indoor Workshops at Northampton", after affirming that "the principle that the decision of the Boards of Conciliation and Arbitration shall be loyally upheld" agreed that workshops should be opened by 1 January 1894 and the union officials pledged that they would help manufacturers to enforce order and regularity in their factories. The agreement was signed by William Hickson and G. Fred Lea as president and secretary of the employers' association and John Tomkins and E. L. Poulton for the union. Two days after the agreement should have been implemented the union informed the Board meeting, at which union president W. B. Hornidge was present, that some 37 association members had not yet introduced the workshop, but only one on army work positively refused and the rest would be ready by the 15th January. Soon after that meeting Board business was suspended by William Hickson because of a strike at Marlow and Sons which was in breach of the Board rules and not until February was the question of their introduction fully settled. There was also difficulty because the replacement of outdoor working by indoor workshops brought with it problems of adjustment similar to those experienced by other trades during the Industrial Revolution and the drawing up of factory rules caused considerable friction. One firm went so far as to lock-in their piece-workers which caused union protests at the Board.[9]

Close upon the indoor workshops question came the battle over the rate of pay to be given for machine finishing work. As lasting and finishing machinery was appearing in the major centres during the early nineties the union fought to have the output paid at the old handwork statement rates which would have given the entire benefits of mechanisation to the employees, and would have effectively discouraged the employers from investing in machinery. In 1892 small manufacturers in Leicester and Birmingham were found to be sending work to be finished by employers who had built a plant of finishing machinery and, as the rates were below the handwork statement, the union contended this was a reduction in wages. The union discovered the Northampton manufacturers were beginning the same practice in 1893 and E. L. Poulton threatened to call out all the men employed in the shops of firms sending work to be machine finished. However, Board rules outlawed such action and William Hickson threatened to terminate the Board meeting unless the union withdrew its own threats. In the end the rules were respected and it was agreed to investigate the 'complaint'. The union side also raised the question of a minimum wage for operatives working with machinery, but that was adjourned to allow each side to gather earnings statistics.[10]

The drawing up of a wages statement for welted work also occupied much of 1893. Negotiations had begun in 1892 but proceeded slowly and a Welted Work Committee was set up as a subsidiary committee of the Board. The men claimed that welted work took the place of handsewn work and required more skill than machine sewing. Hence they claimed a higher rate of pay. The manufacturers, on the other hand, contended that welted work was easier and would give higher earnings and consequently should have a lower rate per piece. Finally the committee reached an agreement at the end of July 1893 and the new statement was to come into operation in August 1893 with individual disputes to be settled by the umpire, F. W. Perkins.

The new welted work statement was a piece-work statement but could be avoided if the manufacturers chose to pay by the day or the week. Consequently, the union demanded that all the manufacturers pay on piece work as the men were particularly worried that if both piece and time workers were employed piece-workers would be laid off first when trade fluctuated or, alternatively, time-workers could be 'speeded up' and subject to increased pressure. The manufacturers were certain they should be able to work any system they pleased and also wanted no interference in the management of their factories which would inhibit the introduction of new machinery. In September 1893 the manufacturers' associations at Northampton, Bristol and Kettering went so far as to give notice that they would feel free "to readjust at . . . discretion any division of labour which may appear desirable . . . in any department of the factory". When the mens' representatives at Northampton could not discover the exact meaning of this the matter was referred to the National Conference along with the question of adherence to the welted work statement.[11]

Aiming to prevent the possible exploitation of operatives working on day work in connexion with finishing or lasting machinery the union in 1893 suggested a minimum wage of 28/- for all those on day work. Initially the Northampton Board Chairman, William Hickson, refused to

[9] Minutes 8 May 1893, 3 Jan., 27 Feb. 1894. E. L. Poulton; b. Northampton, 1865; 1906, Mayor of Northampton; NUBSO. General secretary 1908–30. W. B. Hornidge, general president 1893–99, general secretary 1899–1908.

[10] Minutes, 29 May 1893.

[11] Minutes, 16 Aug.–7 Dec. 1893; Welted Work Minutes, 31 Oct. 1892–14 June 1894, NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Oct. 1893.

discuss the claim on the grounds that it was a national issue. When the Board met three weeks later Hickson made a personal protest against the principle of a minimum wage which he claimed was inimical to the interests of the trade. However, the manufacturers compromised their principles and offered 27/-. When this came to a vote of the Board in December there was a tie and as it was agreed that this was too important a question for the local arbitrators the question was sent to the National Conference. The National Conference considered it a local matter and sent it back. Eventually a 28/- minimum was agreed and it came into operation in July 1894. Actual implementation proved more difficult. Employers could evade the agreement by sending work into the country districts where the Board's decisions were inoperative. Alternatively men who asked for the minimum could be dismissed; one Northampton employer dismissed in a body some 20 men who asked for the minimum wage. Thus all these difficulties were paving the way for the 1895 dispute and helped to cause increasing militancy amongst the operatives, in 1894 the presidents of both Northampton branches resigned as did F. W. Perkins, the only working man umpire in the industry.[12]

The effects of the 1895 dispute: work on the employers' terms

The Northampton Board Minutes are singularly uninformative about the 1895 dispute, they simply record:

> "In March and April 1895 occured the Labour Struggle in the Boot Trade at all the Federated Centres which was settled 19th April 1895 and work resumed shortly afterwards".
> "No Board was held until August everyone being extremely busy making up for lost time and apparently no disputes occuring that required the services of a Board".[13]

The 1895 dispute occured because both sides had reason to be dissatisfied with the working of the conciliation system of local boards and National Conference. The employers' Federation considered it permitted the union to raise questions which had never been anticipated by the employers who also found that arbitration at this time placed an insufficient limit upon the union's bargaining power. This bargaining power had been strengthened by the increased union membership which had itself been encouraged by the gains made at the National Conference. The rank and file members of the union, in contrast, were sensitive to the delays inherent in the Board's procedures, and Northampton in particular suffered from the reference of questions back and forward between the Board and National Conference. Complexity was increased, and tempers shortened, by the increasing introduction of machinery into the trade, for the union resisted the employers' desire to employ men and machines in any way they wanted, in order to cut costs. Whilst the employers feared American competition the union feared unemployment. As the National Union and the Federation took increasingly entrenched attitudes a major conflict was almost inevitable.[14]

After the dispute, which the union lost, the "Terms of Settlement" were drawn up which stressed the desirability of piecework statements in lasting and finishing with machinery, but gave the manufacturers the option of piecework or day work systems whilst limiting one system to each process. The local conciliation boards were reconstructed with more limited functions, and were advised to be more cautious in giving advances. In addition strikes beyond a period of ten days' grace were prohibited and a system of financial guarantees instituted.[15] The Federation President, J. Griffin Ward, described the Terms as "a charter of rights for the manufacturers under which three-fourths of the disputes which affected the industry would be impossible".[16] The Northampton employers had no doubt as to who was victorious and several tried to sieze the opportunity to introduce more stringent works rules into their factories.[17]

The first Northampton Board meeting after the dispute was on 20 August 1895 when the men's side raised the complaint that not all employers were paying the 28/- minimum wage to daily paid lasters and finishers on machinery. William Hickson, taking his guidance from the national decision by Sir Henry James, held that the man or his union must claim

[12] Minutes, 7, 28 Nov., 7 Dec. 1893, 2 July 1894; *Report of the National Conference, June 1894*; Fox, *op. cit.* p. 211.

[13] Minutes, p. 375.

[14] A full account of the dispute is in Fox, *op. cit.*, pp. 217–38. On American competition see, R. A. Church, 'The effect of the American export invasion on the British boot and shoe industry, 1885–1914,' *Journal of Economic History*, 28, 1968, pp. 223–54.

[15] Facsimile of Terms in Fox, *op. cit.*, pp. 662–74.

[16] *The Times*, 25 Apr. 1895; NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Nov. 1895.

[17] NUBSO., Correspondence file B/5; *The Times*, 25–30 Apr. 1895.

the minimum and once it was claimed the employer had the right to discharge the man if he was not worth 28/- per week. In March the following year the question was raised yet again and then the chairman pointed out that the Board had no power over non-unionists. The employers' reluctance to yield any ground they had recently won was also shown when the men's side of the Board suggested there should be a scale of wages for youths aged 18–20 years engaged on lasting and finishing machinery. William Hickson declared this a matter of principle and therefore ruled out of order by the Terms of Settlement.[18]

The men's discontent was intensified when the clickers and pressmen claimed an increase in wages and in 1896 the umpire, E. P. Monckton, refused to grant them any increase. Over the next three years the branch reported a steady fall in membership because of the unpopularity of this award.[19] Lord James' award of boy labour was also due to expire in 1896 and the union gave notice that they wished to increase the restriction from one boy for every three men to one for every five. The employers countered by demanding the abolition of this regulation, and of the minimum wages when they expired. As a result there was a deadlock again.[20]

The minimum wage issue, 1903–10

Apart from minor day to day issues the Board remained mainly inactive. Then, in 1903, the minimum wage question arose again and this was to be the principal issue for the next few years because the breakdown of the old piecework statements had led to a greater concern with the minimum wage, that is, with earnings rather than piecework rates. In 1900 Charles Freak, in his presidential address to the union conference at Leeds, suggested that all centres should aim at a 30/- minimum wage for adult workers and in 1903 the Executive Council instructed all branches to claim this when their current agreements expired.[21] The employers came back with the proposal that "the minimum wage be entirely abolished having been found injurious to the best interests of the trade especially of the workmen employed therein". If it was decided to let the principle of the minimum continue they wanted the amount reduced to 26/-.

After Dan Stanton had complained on behalf of the Northampton men that Northampton was the lowest paying town in the Federation, whilst the cost of living was 10 per cent higher than in other centres, there was deadlock. Consequently it was decided to ask the Board of Trade to name an umpire as the Board rules obliged.[22] The umpire appointed was Sir Kenelm Digby K.C.B. and in March 1904 H. Manfield, G. F. Lea and D. Stanton and T. S. Hornsey presented to him the employers' and the union's cases. During the next month Sir Kenelm toured the factories of C. & E. Lewis, Crockett & Sons and Manfield & Sons so that he might learn something of trade. A final hearing of the case was held in July 1905 and not until November of that year was an award made. To the disgust of the men Sir Kenelm Digby made no change in the minimum wage of 28/-. Not only had it taken two years to reach this decision but Sir Kenelm bound the two sides to this award until January 1907.[23]

While Sir Kenelm Digby's minimum wage award expired the union branch sought again to raise the lasters' and finishers' minimum to 30/-. There was the customary deadlock in the Board's voting and reference was made to an arbitrator to be appointed by the Board of Trade; although E. L. Poulton hoped that this time it would be someone with some knowledge of the trade. Sir Alfred Bateman was appointed and on 11 March 1908 awarded an increase of 1/- to operate from April 1908 to January 1910. Following the award the union made the usual complaints of employers evading the award by dismissing the men.[24] However, whilst union dissatisfaction was understandable there was little they could do.

'Quantities Statements' and other issues 1909–14

Concurrently with its campaign for a higher wage, and a restriction of overtime, the National Union sought to introduce what were termed 'Quantities Statements' in the various boot and shoe manufacturing centres. Quantities statements were almost machine piecework statements; they enabled the determination of the quantity of work which could be demanded for a given day or weekly wage by dividing the weekly wage by the price per pair. Most progress was made in Leicester. However, the

[18] Minutes, 20 Aug. 1895, 2 Mar. 1896; Federation, *Official Information*, pp. 45–6.

[19] NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Jan., Oct. 1896, Apr. 1899. E. P. Monckton, barrister, Recorder of Northamptonshire from 1890 and M.P. for Northampton 1895–1900.

[20] Minutes, 27 Aug. 1896.

[21] *Report of the Leeds Conference*, June 1900, p. 12; NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, April 1903, Charles Freak, General President of NUBSO., 1899–1910.

[22] Minutes, 20 Oct. 1903.

[23] Copy of award in NUBSO. files. Sir Kenelm Digby, former County Court Judge employed by Home Office.

[24] Minutes, 15 Jan., 3 Sept. 1908.

Northampton clickers had originally started negotiations over a quantities statement in 1905 and in 1909 the question was submitted to an arbitration court consisting of Sir Alfred Bateman, Sir Albert Spicer and D. J. Shackleton.[25] In August the Court published a new statement which was received with satisfaction by the clickers' branch which estimated that it would give them a 10 per cent advance in wages.[26]

As the men became more efficient in operating the new machinery the union became more concerned about the possible effects upon the employment of its members. This was illustrated at a dispute at C. & E. Lewis in 1912. The firm claimed the right to pay a bonus to operatives for output additional to the minimum required for the fulfillment of the quantities statement. This was opposed by the clickers' branch and the employers' association accused the union of attempting to restrict output. Thomas Smith, who had been the NUBSO general secretary between 1874–78, was appointed by the Board of Trade to arbitrate on this. He pointed out that no joint agreement existed to prevent the firm from encouraging output in excess of the weekly minimum. The union Executive responded by advising the branch to ensure that no speeding up took place and local officials appear to have taken this as permission to exert unofficial pressure for output restriction. The manufacturers again complained and the union finally agreed that there should be no obstruction.[27]

Returning to the national level once more; the Terms of Settlement had expired and a new set of "Supplemental Terms' was agreed in 1909. The union branches had been considerably dissatisfied with the old Terms imposed after the 1895 dispute and their restrictive nature has been shown in the case of Northampton where the major issues before the Board were considerably reduced after 1895. When the time for revision drew near the branches suggested a barrage of claims: a 48 hour week, quantities statements for all departments, a national minimum wage of 35/-, no overtime, a new boy labour award, exclusion of females from the four major departments, a graduated scale of pay for youths and for females. Some gains were made in the new Terms of 1909, for example a 52½ hour week and a minimum scale for youths aged 18–21 years. The other claims, however, needed to be achieved at the local level.[28]

At Northampton some further progress was made when in 1910 the union claimed a 32/- minimum for lasters and finishers and the manufacturers granted 30/-. Further, negotiations began on a quantities statement for finishing in conjunction with machinery.[29] More spectacular was the achievement of a scale and minimum wage for female workers in the Northampton trade. In his 1904 Presidential address Charles Freak had suggested the union claim a minimum wage of 20/- for adult women workers but progress was to be slow. In January 1912 a minimum scale for the women was submitted to the Northampton manufacturers' association and eventually a minimum scale was worked out which gave girls of 18 years 12/- per week, 14/- at 19 and 16/- at 20 years. In February and August 1913 each level was to be increased by 1/-. This agreement was to remain in operation until August 1915.[30]

The Northampton Conciliation and Arbitration Board exhibits in this survey most of the merits and failings of the boards in the other major production centres. In the years before 1895 it was used by the union as a means by which claims could be militantly advanced. However, after the union's defeat in the 1895 struggle the balance of power was predominantly in favour of the employers until the years just before the war. The settlement of the minor disputes such as the classification of work was a useful service throughout the period. In drawing up of the new agreements the avoidance of the private and social costs of strikes and lockouts is of obvious advantage at the national level: at the local level it was crucial, for continual industrial warfare in Northampton's staple trade would have wrecked the local economy.

[25] Sir Alfred Edmund Bateman; barrister, entered Board of Trade 1865; b. 1844, d. 1929. Sir Albert Spicer, director of Spicers Ltd., Liberal M.P. for Central Hackney 1906–18. David James Shackleton; President Amalgamated Weavers Association 1906–10, Labour M.P. for Clitheroe 1902–10; knighted 1917.

[26] Minutes, 15 Nov. 1905; NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, Feb., July, Aug. 1909; *Northampton Daily Echo*, 17 Aug. 1909, *Northampton Daily Chronicle*, 14 Aug. 1909.

[27] NUBSO., *Monthly Report*, July 1912, Nov. 1913.

[28] Federation, *Official Information*, p. 57.

[29] Minutes, 19, 31 Jan. 1910, 16 Jan. 1911–25 Sept. 1912.

[30] Minutes, 13 Feb.–6 July 1912; Fox *op. cit.* pp. 308–13.

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THE ORIGINS OF ENGINEERING IN PETERBOROUGH: THE QUEEN STREET IRON WORKS

RICHARD HILLIER

At Peterborough in May 1853 a brewery and its adjacent land were offered for sale.[1] The plan appended to the sale catalogue showed the provision of a new road—Queen Street—through the brewery yard to give access to the several newly delineated building plots. In describing the property it was said that,

> "A most extensive Trade has been carried out upon the premises for a great number of years, and an excellent opportunity is offered to any person desirous of entering into the Brewing . . . . Business, or the premises are well adapted for a Foundry of Manufactory of any kind . . . ."[2]

Whether that inspired the future buyer is unknown, but William Prockter Stanley parted with £1800 in order to purchase Lot 2, "All that substantial twenty-quarter Brewery . . . with . . . Stables, Coach house, . . . Mill house, . . . garden and pond . . . ."[3]

W. P. Stanley was born locally into a farming family in 1807. He was first employed by George Vergette at No 6 The Market Place, Peterborough, until he took the vacant premises of Morris and Edward Tongue (at 37 Long Causeway) in 1833. Stanley finally bought the property from Morris Tongue five years later for £1700.[4] Very little is known about Stanley's early days as an ironmonger, but by 1843 he was in a favourable position to invest £1600 in an adjoining public house, The White Hart, 35 Long Causeway. By 1848, if not earlier, the Earl Fitzwilliam had an account with Stanley.[5]

It would seem that Stanley's early success came not from prosaic ironmongery, but from the increased demand from farmers for agricultural equipment, including his own manufactures. Since many early farm machines had various defects, Stanley must have created a reputation for selling well-built and reliable machinery. He would have prospered greatly around the mid 19th century when there was a strong demand for agricultural equipment. This demand, partly created by over-capitalisation by landlords on their tenants' farms, was observed by John Baker,

> "All the improved tools manufactured by Ransom, Howard, . . . are being purchased with avidity . . . I have seen an iron plough of Ransom's obtain a price—after two or three years' service—above that which new ones can be obtained for . . . and the competition for a set of William's patent harrows is perfectly amusing . . ." J. L. Baker, *Farming of Northants*, 1852.

Stanley bought the former Buckle's Brewery in 1853; shortly after he took into partnership John William Bower, and by the last months[6] of that year they were already jointly engaged in ironfounding. By April 1855 the old brewery had been replaced by an 8500 sq.ft. agricultural implement depot, and since the purpose of this depot was to manufacture, repair and display agricultural machinery, we can perhaps surmise that the Long Causeway shop was too small and hindering the capacity for output.[7]

[1] Peterborough Museum Society Library (P.M.S.L.): Particulars and Conditions of Sale of a . . . house and brewery . . . to be sold by auction . . . on 25th May 1853.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Northants Record Office (N.R.O.): Peterborough Manor Court Rolls, 7 March 1838. Peterborough City Council: Paving Commissioners Minute Book, Vol 2; a meeting held on 2 April 1838 records that Stanley was doing alterations to this property.

[5] N.R.O.: Fitzwilliam Misc. Vol 619.

[6] P.M.S.L.: Almanac Directory, 1854 (would have been prepared in Oct/Nov 1853).

[7] Also, by 1850 transport cost should have been reduced with the opening of four railways through Peterborough.

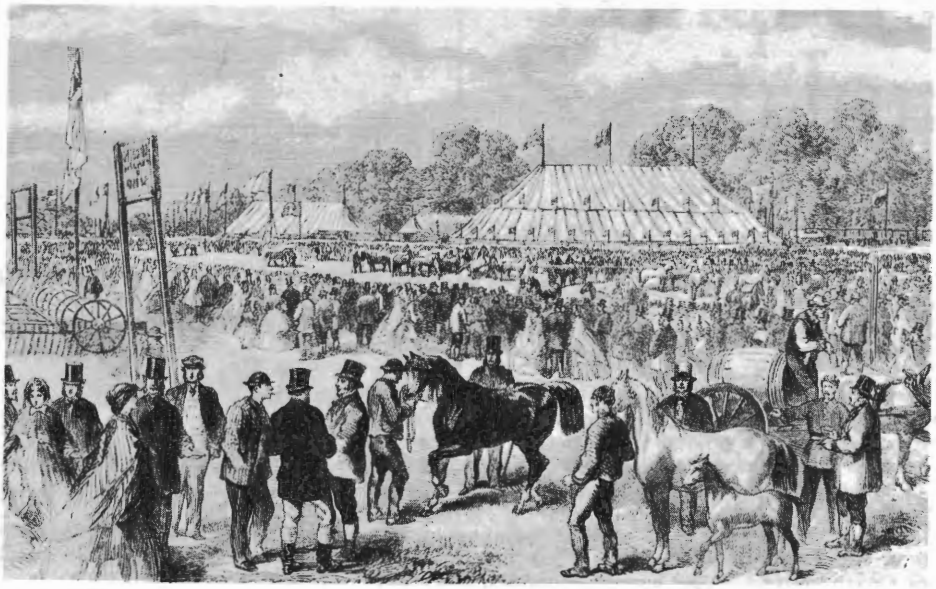


PLATE 1. THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AGRICULTURE SOCIETY'S SHOW IN BURGHLEY PARK, 1862. Amies and Barford had their implements on show there.

The partnership ceased on the death of J. W. Bower in April 1858, whereupon William Barford was appointed as manager; Stanley died on 21st December of the same year. In his Will[8] he directed that his brother-in-law George Maples and John Warren Sharman should act as Trustees, and they leased the ironworks (or implement depot) for a term of fourteen years to Thomas Amies and Wm Barford. Barford was born[9] in 1832 at Gayhurst, Bucks. His father was a wealthy farmer, and young Barford took an early interest in the workings of the farm machinery. He was apprenticed to a firm of agricultural engineers at Banbury, and it was from there that he came to Peterborough. Amies too was born[10] in 1832, the son of Thos Amies II of Ludlow, Shropshire. In 1856 Thos Amies III had taken over an ironmonger's shop in Narrow Bridge St., Peterborough.

The Deed of Co-partnership between Amies and Barford is dated June 1859, and their joint capital for the venture was £6145. Amies became largely responsible for the shop in Long Causeway (which they also leased), while Barford took the management of the ironworks. One of Barford's first moves was to exhibit machinery at the Royal Agricultural Show at Warwick; this formed a precedent and subsequently he was—as his obituary reverently observed—present at every Royal and district show. During 1862 Barford took out a patent[11] for water ballasting in rollers. From then on, horse- and manually-drawn rollers for roads, fields and lawns were to be an unremitting success for the company.

In 1865 the name of the company was altered to Amies, Barford & Co. The addition of the inconspicuous '& Co' represented the arrival of Thomas Perkins of Hitchin. In the new Deed of Co-partnership,[12] dated 21st March 1865, the joint capital of the company is given as £15000. The increase in six years—almost £9000—could be due to one or two forms of investment: 'plough-back' and/or some personal investment by Perkins. Born at Hillmorton near Rugby in 1822,[13] Perkins moved to Hitchin in 1849 where he founded an agricultural engineering business. This

[8] Principal Registry of the Family Division, Somerset House, London.

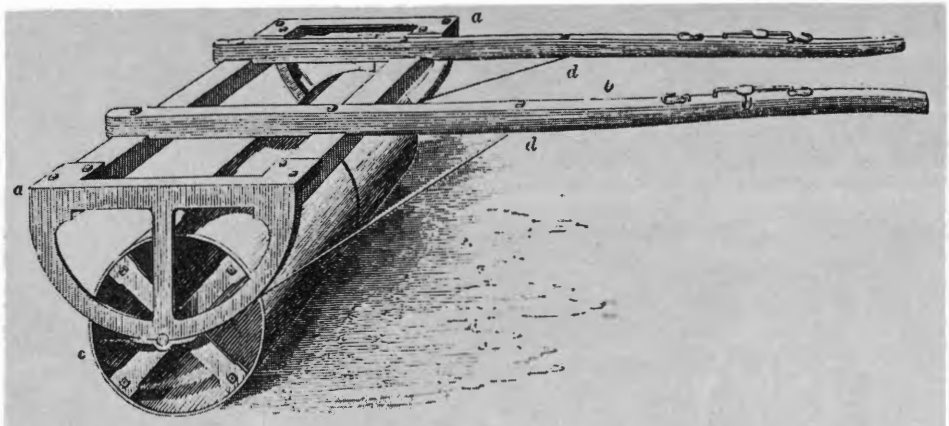
[9] Obituary in *The Implement and Machinery Review*, July 1898, pp. 22975–6. It might also be noted that the Royal Agricultural Hall at Islington, London, has an access road from Liverpool Road called Barford Street.

[10] Information by courtesy of Mrs A. P. Healey of the Salop Record Office.

[11] In the Board Room of Aveling-Barford, Grantham.

[12] P.M.S.L.: Counterpart copies of the Deeds of Co-partnership, 1859, and 1865.

[13] Information from Mr A. M. Foster of Hitchin, who also drew my attention to the fact that Perkins married Frances Sharman of Wellingborough, who was related to J. W. Sharman, ironmonger, of Wellingborough, one of Stanley's trustees.



Cast-iron land-roller.

a Carriage-frame. *b* Horse-shafts. *c* Cylinder. *d d* Iron stays.

PLATE 2. CAST IRON LAND-ROLLER OF THE PERIOD, similar to those produced at Queen Street works.

company prospered, and although Perkins retired from it in 1883, it still survives to-day in the name of Geo. King Ltd of Stevenage.

The earliest known preserved trade catalogue of Amies, Barford & Co., is for 1869,[14] but earlier advertisements for both Stanley and Amies & Barford occur in the *Illustrated Guide to the Gt Northern Railway* for 1857 and 1862 respectively. In the first of these it is shown that Stanley was not relying solely on demand from the home market as he had successfully exhibited machinery at the Paris Exposition in 1855, which no doubt caused him to be "Under the immediate Patronage of . . . the Emperor of the French." The 1862 advertisement illustrates a more diverse range of work than previously offered—

> "Plans and Estimates furnished for fixing every description
> of Agricultural Machinery; heating Churches, Public Buildings
> and Greenhouses by hot water; and Millwrights' and Machinists'
> Work in all its branches.
>
> Plain and Ornamental Castings, Iron Palisades, Tomb Railings,
> and Foundry Work in General."

The 1869 trade catalogue shows that overseas trade had by then increased, the Spanish Government, the Emperors of France and of Russia, and the Pasha of Egypt are all said to have been supplied; but if we judge by the long list of British nobility and institutions supplied, then the home market seems the more dominant. Remarkable ranges in size for single items are offered in the catalogue, for example, one horse-drawn roller (the adjustable water-ballasted unbreakable roller) was offered in nine different sizes decreasing in small increments from $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft long × $6\frac{1}{2}$ ft diam., down to 4 ft long × 3 ft diam. The major diversification since 1862 was into field and road rollers, and by 1869 six different types were being offered with a total of forty sizes. Other machinery offered included nine types of Stanley's patent steaming apparatus, three types of clod crusher, seven variations on a grinding mill,[15] three straw elevators, two water-wheels and iron drainage pipes.

The fourteen year lease of the ironworks and ironmonger's shop expired in 1872, and on the 18th October of that year[16] the ironworks were sold to Wm Barford and Thos Perkins—trading

[14] Public Relations Dept., Aveling-Barford.

[15] Stanley's patent roller mill, awarded a Royal Exhibition Medal in 1851, was made until the 1860's when Amies, Barford & Co adapted and improved on an American version. This apparently gave the company a virtual monopoly on the roller-mill trade until about 1880.

[16] N.R.O.: Peterborough Manor Court Rolls. J. W. Sharman had been replaced as a trustee (? due to death) by Ashley Maples.

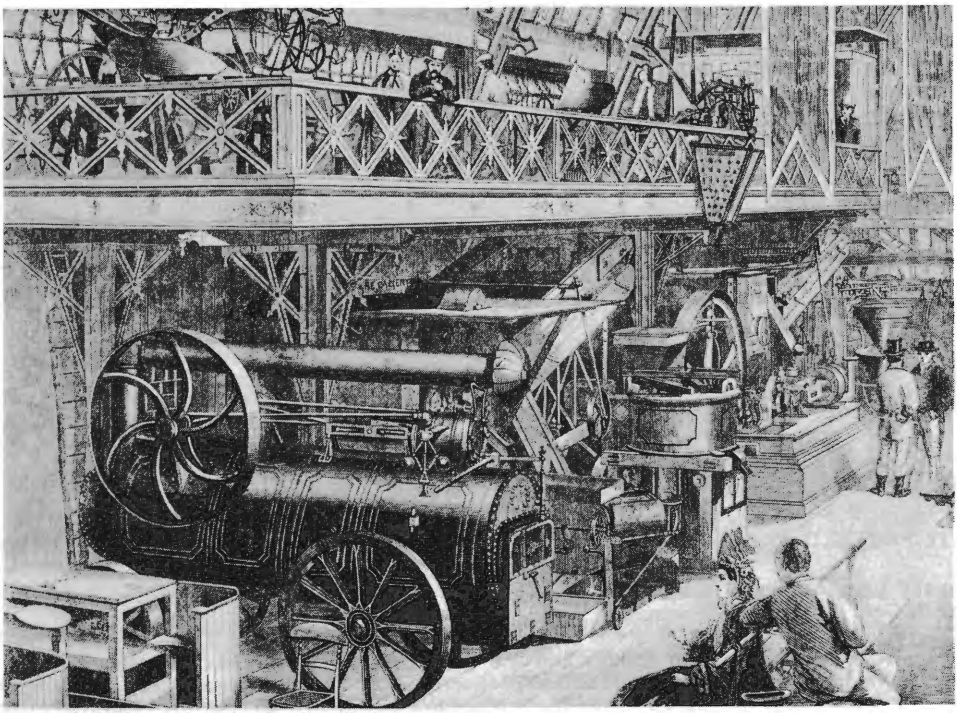


PLATE 3. FARM MACHINERY OF THE PERIOD AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1862

as Barford & Perkins—for £2000; the shop in Long Causeway was sold to Thos Amies. It would seem that the new partnership of Barford & Perkins had now been formed, and whether this wholly excluded Amies is unknown, but he continued to act as an agent for their products. Thomas Amies died on 13th September 1876, and the shop was run by his wife until her death in 1924; it closed in 1960.

In 1868 Samuel Campain agreed[17] to convey to Amies, Barford and Perkins all his interests in his patent improved anchor for steam cultivation, but little seems to have been done with this immediately. When Barford & Perkins' machinery for steam cultivation had been perfected, the intended market seems to have been with the medium sized farmer. It was considered that most medium sized farms had a portable steam engine that could be utilised as the power source. This system was cheaper by £1500 (if the farmer already had a portable) than double-engine tackle. The obvious limitation of using a portable steam engine, and the necessarily lighter tackle that accompanied it, was that it could only be used effectively on lighter soils. Edward Barford has suggested[18] that the demand for this system of steam ploughing began to decline by the mid 1880's; perhaps this was due to the limitations of the lighter machinery, and the effects of earlier over-capitalisation. The trade catalogue for 1900 illustrates more substantial traction- and ploughing engines, although a portable (a Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies) also appears. The mid 1880's also saw the production of Barford & Perkins first portable steam engine, perhaps long over-due as Stanley's roller mills could be belt-driven.

A most peculiar piece of hybrid machinery[19] appeared in 1887 with the 'marriage' of a couple of water ballast rollers to a vertical boiler from a portable steam engine which produced a crude and unwieldy looking steam-roller. Although a few of these were made, they had little chance of competing with Aveling & Porter, and production soon ceased on the pretext that the

[17] A copy is held by the Museum of Rural Life, Reading.

[18] *Mr J. G. Barford, J.P.: A Memoir*; Peterborough, 1924, p. 27.

[19] *A Hundred Years of Road Rollers: A Pictorial Record*; The Oakwood Press, 1965, p. 20.

lifting tackle was inadequate. A more successful venture—though little is known in detail—was the production after 1880 of brick-making machinery for the expanding Fletton brick industry.

A serious fire[20] occurred at the works in March 1894 causing damage estimated at over £3000. The large iron-framed building which was destroyed had been built in 1878, and housed the pattern-makers, the carpenters and painters. Stored in the building at the time of the fire was a straw elevator destined for Spain, the wood-work for a set of steam ploughing tackle for Japan, several roller mills for Turkish markets, and 400 lawn mowers. A less serious fire happened in January 1913 causing £800 worth of damage.

On June 3rd 1898 Wm Barford died, and was succeeded by his only surviving son, James Golby Barford; Thos Perkins, who remained at Hitchin, became the head of the company. Perkins died on September 4th 1908, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John Edward Sharman Perkins; the management was taken jointly by the two respective sons of the founders'—

> "It proved a congenial combination of young family forces, and the more fruitful because of differing predilections. Mr Perkins' qualifications have found their field in the scientific aspects of engineering; Mr James Barford's metier was commercial management . . ."[21]

The last major turning-point in the history of Barford & Perkins came in 1904. In that year they produced their first motor roller,[22] and it was the production of such machines that was to be the mainstay of the company for the following thirty years. This first motor-roller was of three tons, and was powered by a Simms 8 hp single-cylinder engine; of its two rollers, the back one was of standard water-ballasted design. In 1905 it was first publically displayed at the Royal Agricultural Show, and by the following year four sizes of motor-roller were being produced. These were between $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 6 tons in weight, and were mainly used for rolling on race-courses, air-fields and minor roads.

In 1909, only five years after building their first motor-roller, Barford & Perkins were exporting 50% of their output of machines up to 9 tons in weight. By 1910 machines of up to 14 tons were being produced, and the company could begin to compete with Aveling & Porter of Rochester. Two government contracts were received in 1911 and 1912 for a total of twenty-two machines between 12 and 14 tons, and after 1914 the government requisitioned all the output of motor-rollers; particularly requested were the 5 ton machines. An order, received during the hostilities from the Russian Government, for 100 motor-rollers was politely declined.

In 1919 Barford & Perkins became part of the Agricultural & General Engineers Ltd., (known as A.G.E.), a holding company which acquired almost all the share capital of its associate members,[23] and by its existence suggested some form of intended rationalisation between the member companies. Unfortunately, conservatism and reputation were still stronger influences within each company, and even though in Peterborough it was realised that ". . . the allied firms were largely complementary and not competitive",[24] James Barford "knew that notwithstanding their joint membership of A.G.E., he must produce heavy . . . motor-rollers in competition with Rochester's best . . ."![25]

However, on June 29th 1923 James Barford died, and was replaced as Chairman (Barford & Perkins had become a limited company in 1910) by J. E. S. Perkins. The Board then comprised J. E. S. Perkins, F. A. Perkins, E. J. Barford, W. G. Barford, and R. True, the works manager.

The post-war boom was short lived—and men were layed off—but despite the depression Barford & Perkins added over 40000 sq.ft. to the works and so brought it to its fullest extent of $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Orders now came chiefly from previously satisfied customers, but the depression did bring a decline in demand, and of the range of fourteen motor-rollers then offered, work was concentrated on the production of three types. The motor-rollers were by then driven by four-cylinder

[20] *Peterborough Advertiser*, 17th March 1894.

[21] *J. G. Barford J.P.: A Memoir, op. cit.*, p. 14. It is interesting to note, from their Wills, that while Wm Barford earnestly desired that his son should succeed him in the business, Thos Perkins gave his Trustees the option of settling all debts with the company and ending the partnership if they felt it to be expedient. That Perkins provided much of the finance for the business must be undeniable, his estate at death was valued at £87,044 (almost eight times that of Wm Barford's).

[22] *A Hundred Years of Road Rollers, op. cit.*, p. 24.

[23] Edward Barford has put it more bluntly, "Barford & Perkins . . . sold out lock, stock and barrel to A.G.E. in 1919", so much so that, "the Barfords were the only owning family to have no capital or assets outside A.G.E." Quoted from, E. Barford, *Reminiscences of a Lance-Corporal of Industry*, London, 1972.

[24] *J. G. Barford J.P.: A Memoir, op. cit.*, p. 16.

[25] *A Hundred Years of Road Rollers, op. cit.*, p. 42. Presumably these quotes do portray the sentiments then prevalent.

petrol or paraffin engines, but in 1927 high-speed Diesel engines were adopted although they were made by a company outside A.G.E. By 1930 there was a comprehensive range of machines between $2\frac{1}{2}$ and 18 tons, but there were plans for still further additions.

The rationalisation implied by the existence of A.G.E. began at last to take shape.[26] Where this affected Barford & Perkins it included the formation in 1928 of Aveling and Barford & Perkins (Sales) Ltd to handle domestic sales; the joint marketing—with all the member companies—of equipment for the construction industry; and steps towards joint motor-roller production with Aveling & Porter at Rochester. To this end, much of Barford & Perkins plant and stock had been moved to Kent by January 1932.

Many of the other associate companies still continued alone, and the weaker of these were subsidised by excessive 'bites' out of the profits of the more successful companies. The lack of whole-hearted rationalisation between all of the member companies, and the exceptionally unhealthy management[27] of A.G.E. sounded the death knell, and the collapse came in February 1932. An Official Receiver took over the affairs of all the members.

The whole of the ironworks were bought from the Official Receiver in January 1934 by William Brown, estate agent, of Peterborough, who subsequently leased small areas of the works to several companies.[28] Part—occupied by them since 1932—was leased to J.E.S. and F.A. Perkins who continued[29] to build Diesel engines; the Barford initiative was the formation of Aveling-Barford.

Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks are due to, Mr P. I. King, Chief Archivist, Northants Record Office; to Mrs Alison P. Healey, Assistant Archivist, Salop Record Office; to Mr Edward Olive, Public Relations Officer, Aveling-Barford, Grantham; to Mr John Creasey, Museum of English Rural Life, Reading; to the late Mr George Amies, of Inverness, and lastly to Mr A. M. Foster, of Hitchin.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 52. Although optional Aveling or Thackray-Barford scarifiers were offered by both companies from about 1922 (*ibid.* p. 42).

[27] E. Barford, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–22.

[28] *Peterborough Advertiser*, 12th January 1934, and 27th July 1934.

[29] Perkins Engines Group finally vacated the works in 1975; they have been demolished.

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RURAL LIFE AND THE CAMERA IN THE TWENTIES

R. L. GREENALL

Whilst collecting photographs for a book on Northamptonshire in the years 1914 to 1939* the writer was forcibly struck both by the strength of the survival of rural life well into the age of cinema and radio, and the fine quality of the work of contemporary press photographers. The footwear industry, the principal trade of Northamptonshire, after a rapid burst of expansion from 1870, reached (and passed) its peak as an employer of labour in the first decade of this century, and slowly contracted in the Inter-war years. It was not, of course, then in decline; output continued to rise; and it long remained the reliable staple of the county. However, no other considerable industries came along to diversify the economy of the area and as far as economic growth was concerned Northamptonshire, in these years, was marking time. The result was that the county preserved much of its late-nineteenth century character—that of a largely rural area with only one large town and a few pockets of industry in certain other towns and villages—largely unchanged well into the 1930s.

Being a press photographer must be at once interesting and frustrating. Interesting because it is essentially a creative and non-routine occupation, and (on occasions) stories to be covered may well turn out to be the stuff of local, if not national, history: frustrating because only a few of one's photographs will be printed, and those that are will soon be forgotten, newspapers by their

PLATE 1.

* R L Greenall *Northamptonshire Life 1914 to 1939*, Northamptonshire Libraries, forthcoming, 1979.

PLATE 2.

very nature being ephemeral. It is sad to reflect that newspapers are sometimes neglectful of their archives of old photographs, and that those that are not, at some point in time decide to throw out their oldest. For the historian clear-outs of old photographs can be a great loss. The chance survival of the two reproduced here is a case in point. They were taken by Spencer Percival, antique dealer and photographer, who was a well known figure in Kettering, as were his father and sister. Not only are they first class as photographs, but they are of great historical interest because they capture a rural culture on the verge of disappearance. They were, in fact, acquired by a local collector at a grand throw-out by a local newspaper many years ago.

Plate 1 shows the rector and churchwardens distributing charity money in Geddington church on Christmas morning, 1924. Under the will of Sir Robert Dallington of 1636, the interest of £300 was left to provide bread weekly, and money after service on Christmas morning, for twenty four people of Geddington. Although a formal, rather posed picture, the camera has captured the rich ambivalence of the feelings involved in the distribution of the fruits of ancient village charities—a mixture of sympathy, condescension, humiliation and the struggle to preserve dignity, and a feeling that the parish charity money was a right that had been earned.

Plate 2 re-captures a more specifically masculine occasion in old Corby before the great steel works transformed the place—the letting of the 'church and town lands' in 1928. Periodically two lots of grazing land (5 acres in all) were let at a 'pin and candle' auction. In this kind of auction the person who made the last bid before the pin fell out of the tallow candle was the one who got the lands. This goes back (at least) to the seventeenth century: Samuel Pepys mentions a variant of it in his diary when he witnessed the sale of two ships in 1660 'by an inch of candle', 'where I observed how they do invite one another and at last how they all do cry; and we have much to do to tell who did cry last'.[1] In this case the tenancy of the land was for four years and went to the man 'who did cry last' for a bid of £10 a year. The income raised this way was divided between the churchwardens and trustees of the parish poor.

[1] R. C. Latham and W. Matthews (eds.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys, Vol. 1 1660*, 1970, p. 284.

With the publication of a number of books of old photographs and the efforts of Record Offices and County Libraries to collect them, a good deal of interest has been recently aroused in the subject. As a result some newspapers as well as many individuals have deposited their old photographs. It is, however, important for it to be realised that this is an on-going process. Today's photographs of the building of new roads, shopping centres and even beauty queens will be the stuff of local history fifty years hence. One hopes that press photographs in particular will pass into the archives in bulk, and not be dependent for survival on chance and the keen-eyed individual collector.

DRAPED PIANO LEGS

In 1855 Robert Vernon Smith (later the first Lord Lyveden), a Liberal and one of Northampton's two M.Ps., offered to give the town £100 towards the cost of erecting public baths. Some local Conservatives attacked this offer as covert political bribery. Liberals sprang to Vernon Smith's defence. The *Northampton Mercury*, a Liberal newspaper, printed a leading article on the subject (14 July), which included the following paragraph:

> Certain ladies in America dress the legs of their pianofortes in trousers, because, in their lively imaginations, legs are legs, whether of wood or of flesh and blood, and ought in decency to be covered. But as nobody ever gave these ladies credit for greater purity of mind on that account, so nobody will believe a whit the more in the virtue of our Conservative prudes because they affect a sensitiveness [over Vernon Smith's offer of £100] about as real and well-founded as that of their prudish sisters across the Atlantic.

There are many people who believe that excessive modesty was a hallmark of 19th Century England. In proof they sometimes allege that the Victorians refused in public to mention either legs or trousers, and that piano legs were frequently draped to avoid giving offence. This paragraph from the *Mercury* should give these people food for thought. Northampton newspapers and directories often carried advertisements which mentioned trousers (sometimes with illustrations, e.g. Taylor's *General Directory of Northampton*, 1858, advertisement for Dimbleby & Co., 1 Gold Street), and there was never any hesitation in referring to legs when the occasion required.

Admittedly the Victorians did sometimes describe trousers as "inexpressibles" or "unmentionables", but always in a jocular manner of speech. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the former term was in use as early as 1790—well before the Victorian era—and the latter in 1830.

However, it would be interesting to know whether the *Mercury* was correct in asserting that some American pianos did get their legs dressed in trousers. If so, where? New England? New York? Surely not in Chicago or the Southern states? Perhaps one of *N.P. & P's.* transatlantic readers can assist in solving this curious, and by no means unimportant, historical problem.

Victor A. Hatley

OBITUARIES

THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON

The 6th Marquess of Northampton, William Bingham Compton, D.S.O., died on January 30th 1978, aged 92. He had succeeded to the title in 1913, and was a founder member of the Society, and one of its Vice-Presidents. In 1913 he published, in limited edition, *The History of the Comptons of Compton Wynyates*, where the Compton family had resided from very early times, having purchased their home at Castle Ashby in Northamptonshire in 1512. An autographed copy of the book, presented by the author, is in the Society's Library.

His son, now the 7th Marquess, has been a Vice-President since 1968, so that the family's connection with the Record Society is maintained.

Dorothy Sladden

MR C. T. CARPENTER

Mr Christopher T. Carpenter, who died on 10 June 1978, was a long-standing member of the Northamptonshire Record Society. Born in Margaret Street, Northampton in 1886, he was baptised at nearby St Sepulchre's Church. Almost the whole of his working life was spent with the famous Northampton book-binding firm of Birdsall & Son, from which he retired in 1959, shortly before the firm itself passed out of existence.

A skilful bibliographer, Mr Carpenter undertook much work in private libraries, notably those at Althorp, Easton Neston and Elton Hall. His advice on all things to do with the care of books was always sound. Kindly and possessing a gentle good humour, he maintained a lively interest in historical matters, particularly when they related to his native county.

It is a sobering thought that there can now be few people alive who are able to remember clearly the Northampton of c. 1900. Mr Carpenter was a mine of information about this fascinating period; for example, I recall with pleasure his account of the inauguration in 1904 of Northampton's electric tramways, and how he and his friends took full advantage of the opportunity of free rides over the system on the opening day.

Victor A. Hatley

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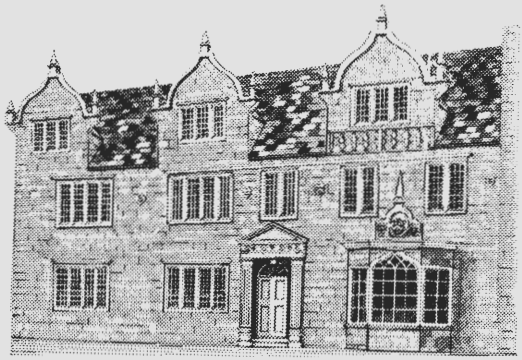

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BOOK REVIEWS

WOLLASTON: PORTRAIT OF A VILLAGE

by DAVID HALL

(*The Wollaston Society*, 1977, £4.95)

This is the latest addition to the growing number of Northamptonshire parish histories, and it is a good one. With enormous industry the author has walked the fields and surveyed the earthworks of the parish, worked his way through the very considerable documentation available locally about it, and unearthed a selection of interesting early photographs to produce a very readable and clear account of Wollaston's existence from the earliest times. He proceeds from a discussion of the archaeological evidence—which he was largely responsible for discovering himself—to a thorough consideration of the social and manorial history of the place in the Middle Ages and subsequently, rooted in a full examination of the documents, which are frequently quoted and fully referenced. Of particular interest in this reviewer's opinion are the vivid details of 17th century daily life yielded by the examination of probate inventories, the extremely valuable account of the working of the open fields of the parish and of the regulations pertaining thereto, and also the description of the actual process of enclosure in the 18th century. The record evidence sometimes enables the personalities of some inhabitants of old Wollaston to be brought into sharp focus, which is not always to their advantage, as in the case of the unpleasant and obstructive Priscilla Aprice, who did her best to gain the utmost and beyond during the negotiations for the sale of the manor to Sir John Egerton in the early 17th century. This is entertaining reading, as are other vignettes of Wollaston life in the not so distant past, for example, the vigorous application of yellow soap in the 19th century workhouse, and the local children getting into the village cinema for nothing behind the screen, but having to read the wording of the silent films backwards.

The author is perhaps not quite so successful when it comes to relating local Wollaston developments to the wider national scene; social historians, for example, might be surprised to learn that the main mass of the Anglo Saxon population consisted of free peasants and that the villeins were a new social class created by the Normans. One or two editorial quibbles might be raised; the referencing of the line drawings is poor, and modern Wollaston could probably have done with a better map than the simplified version in the back end paper. This would have brought out very clearly the odd plan of the place, curiously referred to only very briefly in the author's concluding summary but which has now received fuller comment from Mr C. C. Taylor in the journal *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 21, 1977 (pp. 189–193). Wollaston clearly consists of two distinct *foci* of settlement, later linked by a road along which houses have been set, thereby joining the original settlements together. There were two manors at the time of Domesday and in the Middle Ages; their respective manor houses were sited in the two ancient settlement *foci*, with their enclosed demesnes close by; moreover, the author's own archaeological work has produced Middle Saxon pottery from each of the presumed original nucleations, with a Roman site near one of them. This is food for thought indeed.

A. E. BROWN
Adult Education Department
University of Leicester

THE TOWN OF STAMFORD

ROYAL COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL MONUMENTS (ENGLAND)

(*H.M.S.O.*, 1977, £25)

William Stukely, Vicar of All Saints, Stamford, from 1730 to 1747, described it as "the most elegant town on the western road". Few would disagree who know the place or who have read this admirable book. Stamford as a piece of townscape sets a standard of excellence to which few other places in Britain can pretend. Its compactness, sense of urban enclosure and

twisting streets on the steeply shelving banks of the Welland are human in scale. Drama is provided by the soaring spires of All Saints and St. Marys; dignity by the Metropolitan scale of such buildings as the Stamford hotel; urban amenity by an 18th century theatre and assembly rooms—a notable town hall. But the feature which the latest Royal Commission volume brings out so strikingly is the quality of house design in some four hundred examples precisely described and inventoried. The fact that Stamford was situated on an outcrop of some of the finest stone in England was helpful but not a determinant. It seems that the credit should go to the merchants and professional men, solid, worthy, and with a discerning eye for architectural proportion and balance, who dominated the town in the 18th and early 19th century. They patronised builders who produced a distinctive style peculiar to Stamford at this time, involving pediments, venetian windows, round headed openings, keystones and pronounced architraves. A surprising number of these houses have survived untouched by modern development or urban decay. Stamford is a town of discrete buildings; there are few groups or terraces, unlike Bath. It owes little, architecturally speaking, to the gentry, unlike York; despite the fact that the Earl of Exeter was the greatest landowner, the finest buildings were constructed by lesser men.

The medieval domestic fragments are classified, but the hub of the book is reached in the important analysis of fifteen different house types when the main changes of house plan are detailed from the 16th century onwards. Open hall, cross-wing, lateral placing at the gable ends are all described with multiple examples before the move towards Augustan symmetry, and the development of the double-pile house and the occasional basements on the metropolitan plan, mingling with the more usual placing of the service wing at the rear.

This masterly book will remain a definitive record of the state of Stamford in the early 1970's. Its enormous price (it works out at about 15p. a page) destines it for libraries only. It is the product of a team of architectural historians who have little feel for archaeology despite the lip-service they pay to the important series of excavations undertaken by Christine Mahany over the last ten years. There is no plan, for instance, of the latest buildings found at Stamford Castle, no map of cultivation remains, and yet Stamford's fields were of crucial importance to the medieval townsmen. 6 pages out of 163 seems a cavalier way of treating the important contributions made here to urban medieval archaeology.

The plates (163 of them) comprise half the book. They were doubtless taken on a Sunday during a prolonged petrol tanker drivers' strike for Stamford is apparently car-less. The fact is that Stamford, despite the relief afforded by the A1 by-pass, is still the prey of motorists whose metallic carapaces destroy the scale of the buildings and distract the eye from enjoying them. Even in Stamford the multiples have been butchering buildings. The unfeeling concrete stumps of the Co-op buildings contrast with the elegance of the building above (plate 105). The outsize fascia and huge gap caused by the International threatens to topple the well proportioned design of the parent building.

Of the plates only the air photographs are disappointing; verticals would have shown more of the layout and the siting of the town (plates 1 and 2). The end paper map too is uninformative; it shows only street names and religious buildings. A larger scale map showing every monument would have been more useful. Most of the plans and diagrams are models of clarity but confusion is caused (e.g. Fig. 82) where the section of a building is shown on a larger scale than the plan. The referencing too is at times so laconic as to be meaningless, e.g. on page *lxiv*, it doesn't help much to be told that the authority for a particular statement is "a court roll". Again there are difficulties where the conventions indicating the upper and lower parts of a building change (Figs. 131, 132). The north point is directed differently in two plans of unnecessarily unequal scale of the same building (p. 129). These are trifling editorial points however.

A final point, "The Town of Stamford" is a pleasure to handle. It is smooth-paged, linen backed, grey and gleaming with gold. It reminds the reader of one of the essential visual glories of Stamford. A grey stone town, effulgent with gold when the westering sun shines on its spires, towers and gables.

JOHN STEANE
Oxfordshire County Museum

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS: A HISTORY OF NORTHAMPTON HIGH SCHOOL

by P. D. NICHOL

(*Northampton High School*, 1978, £3.50, and £2.50 (paperback)

This highly readable account of a single-sex independent school is written with commendable detachment by a current senior mistress. At the start she supplies useful perspective

by describing, with some literary references, the generally lamentable state of female education in Victorian England. By the mid-nineteenth century Frances Buss and Dorothea Beale had achieved fame as heads of girls' schools and as the nation prospered, more opportunities came to be provided for girls. Thus in March 1878 a new Northampton school, under the auspices of the established church, opened its doors to the daughters of the middle class in the Clevedon Buildings, Abington Street. Because the earliest records have not survived, researcher M C Harrison has relied at this stage on newspaper advertisements, form magazines and the reminiscences of old scholars (how fortunate is the elementary school historian to have Log Books!). For decades inadequate finance threatened the enterprise and operations were conducted in a succession of premises.

The author throughout rightly sets local events in the national context so that, for instance, the pupil–teacher system, the work of School Boards and County Councils, and the effects of Acts of Parliament are touched on. There is, too, in the modern style, a wealth of information on town life and local customs. A recurring theme is the curious British penchant for denominational schooling and the inevitable intrusion of religious instruction in the classroom: Joyce Liddington, Head Girl in 1928, was, for instance, rebuffed for writing an essay on the folly of attempting to convert the African to Christianity. As one might expect, class distinctions thread the narrative though surely we can all agree on the desirability of teaching children discipline, good manners, and to read, write and speak well.

A procession of characters like recitateur Charles Brookes, the unconventional Mrs. Dawson Jackson, left-winger Janet Margesson and impetuous Effie Sinton flit across the pages and tributes are extended to three dedicated and determined Headmistresses, Alice Straker, Elizabeth Wallace and Ruth Marsden. In every school there is a 'Mr. Chips' figure and tribute is paid to assistant Eunice Gibbins who served forty-six years and helped found the Old Girls' Association. Changes of staff, sites and buildings are well documented. To counterbalance, one would have welcomed more details of syllabuses and lessons, but the number of subjects mentioned does reflect a breadth of curriculum down the years.

This volume, with illustrations by Christopher Fiddes, will appeal to past and present pupils, the historian of education, and anyone interested in the status of women. It was saddening to learn that one Speech Day guest, Mr. J. P. Roxburgh, Headmaster of Stowe, should betray his male chauvinist prejudices. That was some time ago, yet even today girls are denied entry to certain careers. They sit fewer GCE 'O' level examinations than boys and the disparity widens at 'A' level. Minor criticisms of the book include the omission of footnotes and an index which is comprised mainly of persons.

D. K. SHEARING
Nene College

PORTRAIT OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

by PETER GORHAM WEBB

(*Robert Hale*, 1977, £4.50)

In his most recent 'portrait of the county', Mr. Webb, a Northamptonshire man returned after some years away, divides it up into eight sections, and in as many chapters takes us on a brisk gallop around the sites. Despite a number of well-told anecdotes and a good range of photographs it is more of a Cook's tour than a personal interpretation. Mr. Webb clearly does not think much of modern developments, populating his Northamptonshire with ghosts of the past rather than people and places of the present; which is a pity—there is room for a book which provokes us to look at the county as it is and at the forces that have made it what it is.

It may surprise some who do not know the way of publishers that the book comes from the publisher of Mr. Ireson's portrait of the county, still in print and selling, for the two books are very similar in approach. The first reservation about it therefore is not that Mr. Webb has not done his homework—he clearly has—but that much is familiar. Moreover, his viewpoint is very conventional: he is too prone to go on about 'unspoilt' villages and too easily shocked by such places as poor old Desborough, over which he shudders, and Long Buckby, which is totally ignored, or modern Northampton. Yet one wonders if he has really looked with an unprejudiced eye at, say, Northampton's Eastern District before condemning the recent housing estates for their monotonous sameness.

Another criticism is that although Mr. Webb is sound within the confines of his approach, his work seems to have been somewhat rushed: a careful revision might have removed a number of blemishes. For one thing he is altogether too careless in his use of language. The very first sentence

jars; we are told that the Nene 'undulates across the fields in the direction of Wellingborough'. Does it really move with a wave-like motion through the landscape? The Wellingborough Road is said to be 'switchback' (*p. 36*), whereas in fact it rides up and down little hills and dales (and might even be said to *undulate*). The author is also not above using slang—Miss Breitmeyer's father 'made his pile in diamonds' before buying Rushton Hall; Pitsford is a rather 'posh' residential village; Boughton has 'swish modern houses'.

And, despite having researched his history reasonably thoroughly, there are a number of factual errors. It is now thought certain that Inigo Jones was not the architect responsible for the loggia facade at Kirby (*p. 103*), as the late Sir Gyles Isham pointed out in 1974 in Vol. V., No. 2 of this journal. Dr. Doddridge did not lecture at the Dissenting Academy at Daventry in the 1740s (*p. 171*): it moved there from Northampton after his death in 1751. The 'Midland Railway' was not routed through Woodford Halse 'in 1827' (*p. 188*). Mr. Webb is also careless in the citing of authorities such as Pevsner, John Cornforth and Mary Finch. Nowhere is the reader given the titles of their books and articles. In a volume without footnotes, references or reading list, these should have been worked into the text. Otherwise how is the average reader to know what Pevsner, John Cornforth or Mary Finch wrote, or even who they are? In citing these instances it is not the intention of this reviewer to be carping. But in a book which relies so heavily on local history to evoke Northamptonshire these things should have been got right.

R. L. GREENALL

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An account of Henry VIII's creation of the See of Peterborough (co-extensive with Northamptonshire) out of part of the ancient See of Lincoln, and the conversion of the Abbey Church into the new Cathedral, together with all the relevant documents and several photographs of the surviving Conventual buildings in the Precincts.

VOL. XVIII. **Elizabethan Peterborough,** THE DEAN AND CHAPTER AS LORDS OF THE CITY. Edited with an Introduction by the late W. T. Mellows and Daphne H. Gifford. (1956). (This is an Anthony Mellows Memorial Volume). Price to members, £3.00; to non-members, £6.00, plus postage and packing.

The extraordinary diversity of town government in England is displayed in this volume which tells the story of the transfer by Henry VIII of the manorial dominion over Peterborough from the Abbots to the Dean and Chapter of the newly created Cathedral after the dissolution of the monastery. The manorial court rolls and other documents printed cover the first century of government by the new lords of the city.

VOL. XXII. **Luffield Priory Charters, Part I.** Edited with an Introduction by G. R. Elvey (1968). Price to members, £3.00; to non-members, £6.00, plus postage and packing.

This is the first of two volumes dealing with the affairs of the Benedictine Priory of Luffield on the Buckinghamshire-Northamptonshire border. Each charter is reproduced in the original Latin with a summary of contents in English at the head.

"The Papal Bulls, the episcopal charters, the royal documents, at the beginning of the book, are all interesting in themselves, over and above what they teach about the material situation.

–*Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique (Louvain).* (1969).

VOL. XXVI. **Luffield Priory Charters Part II.** Edited with an Introduction by G. R. Elvey (1975). Price to members £4.00; to non-members £6.00, plus postage and packing.

This second volume completes the edition. It contains a wide range of charters and leases, including interesting material from Northampton and Buckingham, and some court rolls and surveys. The edition provides an unusually complete series of records for a small monastic house.

VOL. XXIII. **The Royal Forests of Northamptonshire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.** By P. A. J. Pettit (1968). Price to members, £3.00; to non-members, £6.00, plus postage and packing.

Like Vol. XIX, this is an extended commentary upon an important series of texts. It examines the development and exploitation of the forest lands under the Tudors and Stuarts, and the impact of the Crown's vigorous and subtle policy upon the life of the country.

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Some other Publications of the Northamptonshire Record Society (contd.)

VOL. XXIV. **The Letters of Daniel Eaton to the Third Earl of Cardigan, 1725–1732.** Edited with an Introduction by the late Joan Wake and a Note on the Language by Deborah Champion Webster (1971). Price to members £3.00; to non-members, £6.00, plus postage and packing.

This volume contains 166 letters from the Steward to the owner of one of the most important estates in the County. It has a full introduction, glossary and indexes, and is illustrated by six plates and three maps. The letters give a vivid picture of Northamptonshire society in the early eighteenth century, with particular emphasis on the running of a landed estate, the recreations of the landed gentry, and their relationship with their tenants.

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VOL. XXV. **Northamptonshire Militia Lists 1777.** Edited with an Introduction by V. A. Hatley (1973). Price to members £3.00; to non-members £6.00, plus postage and packing.

This volume contains transcriptions of the lists compiled by the Parish Constable in each town or village, divided into hundreds. There is an analysis of crafts and trades for each hundred, a glossary, and index of surnames. The book provides important material for social and economic historians, and for genealogists.

". . . Of obvious interest to the social historian, these rolls are also of great interest as raw material to anyone who makes the British Army his study, as is shown in the able introduction by the editor. . .". –S. G. P. Ward, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* No. 209, Spring 1974.

VOL. XXVII. **Northamptonshire Lieutenancy Papers and Other Documents 1580–1614.** Edited by J. J. Goring and the late Joan Wake. (1975). Price to members £3.00; to non-members £6.00, plus postage and packing.

The greater part of the edition concerns the workings of the Northamptonshire militia during the Armada period. It prints papers that passed between Sir Christopher Hatton, the Lord Lieutenant from 1586 to 1591, and his deputies. They show the working of the Lieutenancy at the local level during a formative period.

Northamptonshire and Rutland Clergy, A.D. 1500–1900

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by supplying

ROTARY PRINTING MACHINES

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OVER SIXTY COUNTRIES

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OVER EIGHTY YEARS

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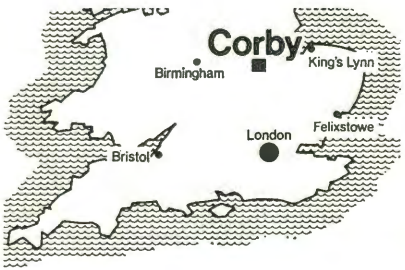
Come to Corby where the growing's good.

If you're looking for a place to re-locate or expand your business, the New Town of Corby has got so much going for you.

It's ideally placed in the industrial centre of Britain. Within easy reach of the East Coast ports, London and Birmingham. And neatly situated on the major road and rail networks.



What's more, Corby is young enough to be vigorous and exciting – with modern factories ready for you to occupy at highly competitive rents. (Or our "design and build" service will help you plan your own specification.) But Corby is mature enough, too, to offer well-established housing, schools, shops, public services, leisure activities. And skilled and unskilled labour is readily available.

Many companies have already put down roots in Corby – with success. Why not join them? Our experienced help and advice is at your service.

For a fully detailed brochure on Corby, contact K. R. C. Jenkin, B.A., F.R.I.C.S., Chief Estates Officer, Corby Development Corporation, 9 Queen's Square, Corby, Northants NN17 1PA. Telephone (053 66) 3535.