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All material for 'The Leicestershire Historian' should be sent to the Editors, Mrs V Henstock and Miss A J Wait, c/o County Record Office, 57 New Walk, Leicester. Contributions for consideration for the Autumn 1970 issue must be in the Editors' hands by 31st July, 1970.
HISTORY OF KEGWORTH III

This is a shortened version of a chapter from the Kegworth Local History Group's history of their village, the third and last chapter to be published in The Leicestershire Historian.

KEGWORTH IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Kegworth today is larger but less compact, more sprawling than the nineteenth century village. If we go back even to 1918, we should have to remove from our picture most of the houses in Mill Lane; almost every house on Broadhill and the Whatton Road; every Council House and the long row of semi-detached houses along the Station Road. If we went back again to 1870, we should miss some of the substantial red-brick Victorian and Edwardian villas and terraced houses. Some of these, as along the Ashby and Derby Road and Nottingham Road and Sideley, were built on land not previously built upon. This piecemeal development of the village shows that it was an 'open' village, with the land owned in small plots. The neighbouring village of Kingston (Notts.) provides a contrast with its set of estate cottages.

The mid-nineteenth century village was clustered around the ancient centre of Kegworth, High Street, Market Place and Church, with densely packed cottages in Dragwell and Borrowell and on the south side of the Churchyard; and in the alleys off the High Street. London Road to the South provided a tail of better-class housing; Packington Hill a group of poorer cottages; the Brickyard (off London Road) the Bridge and the Station were almost isolated outposts.
The better-class housing of the period has mostly survived. But inevitably there are few examples to remind us of the meaner cottages, low and narrow, badly lit, fronting on the street or around common yards and often built in odd shapes to squeeze into odd pieces of land. They were cheaply built and badly maintained. They gave the village of the mid-nineteenth century a mean and squalid appearance. Modern sprawling Kegworth is much to be preferred.

The village economy

In the mid-nineteenth century village, more men worked in farming, than in any other occupation. Farming thus provided the base of the village economy. It was an adequate but not expansive base, upset by occasional bad harvests, but not, in this part of Leicestershire, subject to the full force of the depression of the last decades of the century.

Men were not the only breadwinners; women and children worked when they could. If both men and women are counted, the two trades of hosiery and lace together rank as by far the most important economic activity of the village in 1841 and 1851. These were trades liable to fluctuation. The census returns show startling differences in the numbers employed in the lace-trade: 40 in 1841, 340 ten years later. Almost all of these were women and young girls, some of them infants. This boom in the lace-trade in 1851 was probably not sustained for long. Thus the textile trades were sometimes, but never consistently, the largest in the village. They were always important, however, for their effect on the prosperity of the village.
When the hosiery and lace trades prospered, Kegworth itself prospered.

Domestic service was also important in the village economy. In 1851, 121 people altogether were described as servants, farm-servants, housekeepers or charwomen. Many of the 86 servants and farm-servants, included in this total lived in the attics of the bigger houses of High Street and London Road. Some of them were hired still at the 'Statute' Fair at Castle Donington. By modern standards their work would be regarded as arduous, their hours long, and their restriction of personal freedom quite outrageous. By the standards of the time, however, they counted themselves lucky to be housed, fed and paid.

These three occupations, domestic service, the hosiery and lace trades, and agriculture, accounted for almost three quarters of Kegworth's working population in 1851. The remainder was made up mainly of craftsmen or shopkeepers in the numerous trades which made the village almost self-sufficient for its ordinary needs, and able to provide some of the services of a market town. Besides millers, bakers, grocers, and publicans, there were blacksmiths and joiners, painter and plumbers, a veterinary surgeon and several harness-makers and saddlers. There were also several of those individual craftsmen in business on their own account, who have so largely disappeared from the countryside today: a wheelwright a rope-maker and a clock-maker for example.

There were a few other trades which employed more than a handful of people. Nearly 50 women described themselves as dress-maker, seamstress or needlewoman. There were eleven basket-makers. This industry, like farming, provided occasional work at harvest-time;
children stayed away from school to go rod-peeling. There were ten shoemakers or cordwainers, nine tailors, eight butchers, eight gardeners and eight grooms. Twenty-two people were described as paupers; these were old folk, beyond the salvation of the lace-trade boom.

Social Structure

The nineteenth century village was very different socially from the modern village. It is difficult to make exact comparisons but a rough picture can be drawn and some contrasts with the present day pointed.

As many as three out of five occupied people in the nineteenth century village did unskilled or semi-skilled work. These were separated socially from the skilled craftsmen, who, especially if they were their own masters, could be regarded as akin to the shop-keepers. There were very few black-coated workers or professional workers; but at the top of the scale in 1851 was a small class of landowners and 'annuitants', that is, people who were living on 'unearned' income.

The general tendency was for the lowest classes to be most numerous in 1851, where the intermediate classes are largest today. This is illustrated in the following table, which compares occupied people in Kegworth in 1851 with the same in the whole country in 1951. (The figures are approximate)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Kegworth 1851</th>
<th>England 1951</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landowners annuitants</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

177
Intermediate (including shopkeepers and small masters) 11% 25% 15% 67%
Skilled 14% 52%
Partly skilled 45% 70% 19% 31%
Unskilled 25% 12%

This is not precisely a picture of Disraeli's 'Two Nations' the rich and the poor; nor will the common terms 'middle class' and 'Working class' be adequate to describe the social structure. But there was a gulf between the well-to-do and influential gentry - landowners, farmers, doctors and attorney; - and the labourers, framework-knitters and the like, poor, depressed and downtrodden. There were a little over fifty at the top and nearly eight hundred at the bottom. The two intermediate classes, some 260 occupied people, helped to span the gulf: at least the shopkeepers and the skilled craftsmen provided leadership for the lower classes when it was called for, mainly, no doubt, in the affairs of the chapels and friendly societies.

Social welfare

Those of the humbler folk who fell upon bad times were not left helpless. There was a Union workhouse at Shardlow, Derbyshire, built after the Poor Law Act of 1834, and intended, while housing the poorest to discourage them from wanting to return. Unemployment and poverty were regarded still as a man's own fault; age and sickness, more sensibly were not. Arrangements for the care of the aged and chronically sick were in consequence, more humane. Out relief was allowed to them: the 22 paupers of 1851 were mostly old people sustained in this way.

This state welfare scheme, however, accounted for only
the worst cases of poverty and distress. Kegworth people did a good deal to help themselves. Benefit and thrift societies were established to encourage savings in good times against the bad. The Oddfellows did similar work. There were allotments - the Rector let part of his glebe. Private charity also helped; it may indeed have been the salvation of the mid-nineteenth century village in times of distress. Occasional newspaper references give some indication of the nature of the extent of this charity. In mid-winter 1840, Miss Wilson distributed shoes, stockings and clothes to the poor in Kegworth. In 1848 the resignation of the curate was lamented, for he and his lady 'gave liberally of money, medicine, food and raiment'. The public charities, Oldershaw's and Bulstrodes, were small but regular, and not insignificant in the patchwork of welfare in nineteenth century Kegworth.

Religion

The Victorian Age was more religious than succeeding times. Something like one fifth of the population (occasionally or regularly) go to Church or Chapel on Sundays now; in 1851, when a Census of religious attendance was made, the figure seems to have been about two fifths for the whole country, and an almost similar proportion in the Shardlow area in which Kegworth was included. This was not merely outward show; religion dominated Victorian thinking and religious allegiance dominated Victorian social life. Evidence of this can be discerned in the history of nineteenth-century Kegworth.

Buildings themselves attest to a readiness to establish and sustain a variety of non-conformist faiths. Here people met and talked, concerted
their self-help, or arranged their charity, organised the regular or special occasions of the Church or Chapel year, a lecture, a tea-party, or an anniversary service.

The religious life of the village did not always run smoothly. The dissensions that split the Methodists in the middle of the century were echoed in Kegworth. In January 1851 Mr. Edward Pepper underwent a kind of formal trial in the Methodist Chapel, charged with having attended a meeting of the Reforming Methodists in Nottingham. A few years later the Baptists fell into disunity after the resignation of their Minister, Mr. Taylor, in January 1859. But they later recovered from this unhappy time and busied themselves with arrangements for buildings and services, advertisements, cottage meetings, a tract society, and a public tea-meeting (to cost 9d a person, 'trays to be begged'). Their inquiries about a 'union with other bodies of Christians in the village in relation to some out-of-door services this summer' were unavailing, but they resolved to hold open-air meetings among themselves.

Housing and Health

At the beginning of March 1848, a house in Kegworth occupied by the Aldridge family, blew down in a gale. The family, fortunately, were unhurt, but the furniture, including the lace-frame and piece, was ruined. In the last decades of the century, better houses than this were being put up, and the houses in Nottingham Road are of this period.

By the 1880s or 1890s Kegworth people could expect their new houses to be structurally safe, dry and
with the comfort of gas lighting. A piped water supply and sewage system existed, but most houses were still without water closets, and few had piped water and sinks indoors. The lower parts of the village were decidedly unhealthy and 'fever' (possibly typhoid) was common. The newspaper mentions the death in March 1851 of a 21-year-old woman from 'a fever so prevalent in the lower parts of the town'. In the Autumn of 1875 floods caused another outbreak.

Epidemics of measles, diphtheria, scarletina and typhoid swept through the School, sometimes causing it to be shut down. In November and December 1886 there were 200 cases of illness and 10 deaths in a week. The School was closed for five weeks. The severity of these epidemics was due most likely to unsanitary living conditions, low standards of diet and the lack of the medical preventive measures of vaccination and inoculation.

There had, however, been two doctors in the village since the 1840s, and two chemist's shops. The chemist's patent medicine or old wives' remedies served the ordinary medical needs of the people, who would call in a doctor only in a serious emergency. In such an emergency in January 1849, a woman who had attempted suicide 'in consequence of religious scruples' was saved partly by prompt surgical aid. A hundred years earlier, there is little doubt, she would have died (but a hundred years earlier religious scruples were less common!)

Travel

Kegworth in the nineteenth century saw not only improvements in basic standards, but also an opening out of life, a widening of horizons.
This was literally true of the rapidly improving facilities for travel.

The main road had been improved by turnpiking in the eighteenth century. Side-roads remained muddy, pot-holed lanes until the present century. Even in the centre of the village, in Dragwell, the schoolmaster in the 1860s complained of the mud. Still it was possible and not uncommon for ordinary folk to walk to the towns for work, or out of curiosity, or for the public entertainments of the time. Gentle-folk, on horse-back or in carriages, could reach Nottingham in an hour or so.

The River Soar had been made navigable from the Trent through Kegworth to Loughborough by 1778. This enabled heavy goods, particularly coal from Derbyshire, to reach Loughborough and later Leicester. It was cheaper at this time to send some goods even from London to Leicester by way of the Humber, the Trent and the Soar. Kegworth was not an important inland port like Shardlow, but the Navigation made its mark on the village. Above all it brought cheap Derbyshire coal. There is still a wharf by the Bridge, and in 1851 the licensee of the Anchor Inn also dealt in coal. At that time too a handful of Kegworth people found employment as boatmen or boatwrights.

The Midland Railway, which linked Kegworth to the nearby towns and to London, was opened in 1840, and provided a blessing the modern village takes for granted, cheap and convenient travel. In the 1830s, the last days of the stage coach, a journey from London meant a long gruelling day, with twelve hours or more on the road, and frequent stops for refreshment and change of horses. In
1849 you could travel from London to Kegworth in the space of a long morning; and Derby and Nottingham were only 35 minutes away. There were nine trains a day. Fares in 1840 were 6s First Class from Leicester to Nottingham and 4s 6d in the much less comfortable Second Class. Ordinary people in Kegworth could then leave home more easily to seek work in the towns and later some of them afforded a day-trip for pleasure into town or countryside.

This widening of the village horizons was of the highest importance; it changed life for everyone. For a few villagers the developments in travel and transport brought change in another way, new kinds of employment. The Navigation still employed in 1851 two labourers from the village; and there were then four boatmen and one boatwright. There was a Navigation Inn along the Loughborough Road (now the 'White House'). The care and maintenance of horses involved a score of people as sadlers, grooms and ostlers. Some of these were employed in private houses, tending hunting as well as carriage horses. The old-time coaching inn, the 'Flying Horse', was in 1851 employing an ostler and an under-ostler; but fifty years earlier it must have had a far larger staff to see the coaches in and out. But the railways as they drove the coaches and horses off the road, also provided employment, both on the station, and at the new Railway Inn, and in running the station omnibus. The new 'white-collar' job of Railway clerk was particularly attractive to the brighter lads at school, and the Headmaster thought it worth recording, when one of his pupils gained an appointment.
Travel was not without its hazards. Just before Christmas 1848, two trains collided at Kegworth Station. A goods train should have shunted on to the up-line at Loughborough to let the Mail through. But the Mail was not in sight, so the driver of the goods train decided to go as far as Kegworth and shunt off the line there. He asked a porter at Loughborough to warn the Mail train. In fact, the Mail shot through Loughborough, and crashed into the goods train at Kegworth, at the unlikely speed, so it was reported, of 60 m.p.h., just as it was about to shunt out of the way. The shaken and injured passengers took shelter in the specially opened Railway Inn; but fortunately, no-one was killed. The unlucky porter at Loughborough was taken to prison but later he was released, and instead, the driver of the Mail was dismissed, for failing to observe a signal.

The same day as the railway crash a party of Kegworth gentlemen who had been to see the Commissioner of Inland Revenue in Loughborough were involved in an accident on Hathern Hill. A horse got out of control and their carriage overturned. Mr Cripwell, who kept a grocer's shop in High Street, was seriously hurt. The following year, a Kegworth farmer, Mr John Tebbutt, on his way to Nottingham, had his carriage upset by a lady driver, who, according to the report, negligently pulled out to the right, and then drove off without even expressing regret! The roads of the nineteenth century were dangerous, but the motor-cars which appeared in the early 1900s brought new dangers. In 1904 for the first time, a Kegworth child was injured in a motor-car accident.
Crime

The nineteenth century village was not without deliberate violence and crime. The newspapers report cases of robbery and hooliganism. In May 1847 an agricultural labourer, aged over 70, was assaulted, a box in his bedroom forced open and £18 5s 'the fruits of his industry and frugality' were stolen. The thief was apprehended later in Leicester, 'in a fly, quite drunk, with a female on his knee'. Sheep and turkeys were stolen and, once, a fine leg of mutton hanging up at the butcher's door. Two 'smashers' passed a bad shilling buying tea at Barrow's shop in the Market Place; but they were seized later at the 'Horse and Groom', in High Street, where they were preparing to mash their tea.

Leisure and amusements

But life in nineteenth century Kegworth was not made up entirely of incidents of crime and calamity set against a background of economic depression. Improvements in housing, medicine and communication were contributing to the beginnings of a civilised social life; and there was much in addition to relieve the drabness and occasional sadness of life. The church and the chapels provided a social life for their members who met not only for worship or for business, but also for tea-parties and outings. The Kegworth Society of Oddfellows was established in 1829 and was over 120 strong in 1840. A year or so later over a hundred persons attended the Society's tea-party, which was held in the General Baptist Schoolroom, with the Baptist Minister, Mr Taylor, presiding. The meeting opened with singing, probably of hymns;
but such societies usually mingled a good deal of genuine intellectual with religious exercises. In the 1860s adult education was attempted more formally with the opening of a Night-School in the Dragwell Schools, and by 1871 a Mechanics' Institute had been established.

Those who could read - about half the population in the middle of the century - had the newspapers to instruct them and for lighter entertainment, those papers of 'trashy and immoral tone' of which the schoolmaster warned his boys in 1879. Other diversions are illustrated by the explanations given in the School Log-books for absence from school. There were Wakes, Fairs, and Flower Shows, a Choral Festival, Races (horse, dog and trotting), the Hunt and an occasional cricket match. Menageries and wild beast shows sometimes stayed in the village or passed through, causing great excitement. Of all days September 29th 1863 stands out for on that day a balloon passed almost over the village, and the children went out for half an hour from school to watch. To add to the excitement a boy called Henry Hall was pushed into the well!

Envoy

Altogether, the nineteenth century was a period of rapid change for Kegworth. The villagers of 1800, looking forward, could hardly have imagined Kegworth a hundred years later, with its new industries, new houses, new school and railway. In 1900 older people, those who just got into the 1841 census, would perhaps have heard their grandfathers talk of Kegworth at the close of the eighteenth century - smaller, full of hosiery workers, with a new Navigation and some splendid new houses in the High Street. The
villagers of 1900 might perhaps have looked forward to Kegworth in the year 2000 with airport and motorway but no railway but history, unlike time, must have a stop.

LOCAL SOUVENIR CHINA

J D Bennett

As increasing numbers of Victoria's subjects began to travel about Britain on the new railways, there arose a demand for souvenirs of places visited. One result of this was the production from the 1840s onwards of large quantities of souvenir china bearing local views, made not only for watering places, spa towns and cathedral cities, but indeed for most places of any size up and down the country. Most of the earlier pieces were made in Staffordshire, but by the end of the century a good deal was being imported 'in the white' from the Continent, particularly Germany, and the views printed on here. Much of it is hard to date, as it frequently bears no maker's name or place of manufacture, and the same transfers were obviously used over a long period. But there is a marked decline in quality noticeable by the end of the century; the pieces being made around 1900 seem crude compared with those of fifty years earlier.

What sort of souvenir china was on sale to visitors to Victorian Leicestershire? Most of it has long since disappeared or been destroyed, but from the remaining examples in Leicester Museum and private hands, one can attempt some sort of answer.

A relatively early piece is a saucer (the cup has vanished) with a coloured transfer view of Leicester
Market Place. This possibly dated from the 1860s (assuming the manufacturer did not go on using an out-of-date transfer) since it shows the present Corn Exchange with the additions made by Ordish in 1855, but the Duke of Rutland's statue, which was to be placed in front of it in 1872, is still on its original site in Cheapside. Much later (probably c. 1900) are a pair of gilt-edged ribbon plates, with black and white views of the Clock Tower and Town Hall Square; the same view of Town Hall Square appears on a porcelain mug with a heavy blue and gold band round its rim. Another mug has a view of the new Town Hall; the Square has been laid out with its fountain, and the mug is inscribed 'Municipal Buildings, Leicester'. A more utilitarian gift is a shaving mug, bearing the inscription 'A Present from Leicester' in gilt gothic lettering; this was made in Germany, probably in the early years of this century.

Although it does not really come within the category of souvenir china, one might nevertheless mention here the breakfast or tea set in the Newarke Houses Museum showing the now vanished Bow Bridge Works on King Richard's Road. This was specially made for the company, and bears coloured views of the gothic factory, the manager's house in the same style, and the summer house in his garden. The jugs have purple and gold stripes, and the rest of the items green and gold borders. This is a handsome piece of work, as well as a valuable topographical record of these interesting buildings. Ashby-de-la-Zouch's heyday as a spa is recalled by a porcelain mug bearing a black transfer view of Robert Chaplin's Ivanhoe Baths of 1822, destroyed a few years ago. That Loughborough was once a resort for visitors to the Charnwood Forest is illustrated by a porcelain mug with a black and white view of the parish church possibly showing it before its restoration. Later
visitors to the town could buy a green and gold cup and saucer with the words 'A Present from Loughborough', or a mug with floral decoration and the same wording. Familiar landmarks in the county appear from time to time. A coloured view of 'The Ruins, Bradgate Park, Leicester', showing a herd of deer in the foreground can be seen on a cup of about 1870, while a hair tidy has a coloured view of the ill-fated 'Windmill, Woodhouse Eaves'.

Enterprising tradesmen sometimes made use of souvenir china for advertising purposes. A particularly interesting example is a plate sold by John Staynes, the Gallowtree Gate china and glass merchant, for his next door neighbours, Dixon and Bowles, the clothiers and outfitters. The centre of the plate has a black and white view of the firm's main premises at 57 and 59 Old Cross, Belgrave Gate, with a passing horse tram bearing the slogan 'Dixon & Bowles for your clothing'. The border has five horse trams, one for each route, each carrying the same slogan. At the top of the plate is a small vignette of the firm's premises at 45 Gallowtree Gate. This plate possibly dates from about 1880.

About 1885 the firm of W H Goss of Stoke on Trent began to produce pieces of miniature porcelain bearing civic coats of arms. These continued to be made by Goss and his competitors right down to the 1920s, each piece being produced with the coat of arms of a number of towns, to give it as wide a sale as possible. Examples bearing the arms of Leicester are fairly common; pieces were also made with the arms of Loughborough and Melton, and probably for the other Leicestershire market towns as well. They are found in a variety of shapes, those made by Goss usually being models of historical objects. A model of the Abbot's cup from Fountains Abbey has the coat of arms of Leicester, while that of an old kettle in Salisbury Museum, in the St. John collection at
Coventry, has the arms of Leicestershire and Market Harborough. In 1919 when Leicester renewed its charter and became once more a city, the firm of Goss presented the then Town Clerk with a miniature porcelain chalice, bearing the arms of the City of Leicester, a view of Leicester Castle, and the arms of King Harold. This is now in the Newarke Houses Museum.

Souvenir china was made not only to commemorate places but also events. An example is the florid blue and white mug made for the 1897 Jubilee. This bears a portrait of Queen Victoria, with the words 'Leicester Commemoration Diamond Jubilee 1837-1897', flanked by portraits of Mr and Mrs J Herbert Marshall, Mayor and Mayoress of Leicester in that year. The mug is elaborately decorated down to the Borough arms and a spray on the handle. An unusual feature is that it bears the name of its designer, the local artist George Spawton Catlow, at that time drawing master at the Wyggeston Boys' School.

Although the production of souvenir china at a local level is now limited to places on the tourist map, it is pleasant to be able to record a recent exception. Two different plates were produced to commemorate Ashby's first Arts Festival in 1965. One of them, made nearby at Church Gresley, has the words 'First Festival of Arts Ashby de la Zouch 1965' in a shield, surmounted by the crest of the Hastings family, a bull's head, and on either side a picture of Ashby castle and a jousting knight, inside a black, red and yellow border.
Like the majority of schools built around the 1870s, the village school at Seagrave began its life as a Board School, that is, one built and maintained by local rates and administered by a School Board. However, unlike the Board Schools built in industrial areas, squeezed in where the need was greatest between rows of houses and factories, the school at Seagrave was built on a plot of land a quarter of a mile from the village. Only in the last four or so years has a row of bungalows broken this isolation, but even so the lofty red brick school building still forms an outer boundary to this quiet, rural community.

The fact that a Board School was erected indicates that the education provided in the village was not sufficient, according to the Education Act of 1870. Schooling had however, been available to the village children for almost a century prior to this. A plaque in the church informs all that, 'William Richards bequeathed One Hundred Pounds for the maintenance of a schoolmaster in this Parish. Obiit June 9 AD 1799'. This money was invested and the interest helped to provide schooling for the poor children in Seagrave. It is recorded that in 1818 twelve children were attending a day school. This represented only a minority of those eligible by age to receive schooling. Sixty children attended a Sunday School. However, it was stated at the time that 'the poor are anxious to possess the means of having their children instructed during the week, more particularly if accompanied with any article of clothing'. In 1820 a National School, a large brick building, was built opposite the Church 'at the expense of the late rector and aided by a donation from the Leicester National School Society'. William Richards'
bequest paid the salary of the schoolmaster. In 1835 thirty-nine children, mostly boys, attended this school, 'supported partly by £6 6s from charity (William Richards) - for which eight are taught; £5 from Parish fund for benefit of poor. Rest of children paid for'. A Dame School provided education for six girls, all of whom were fee-paying and the Sunday School continued to flourish, with sixty boys and girls attending. It is reasonable to assume that the National School was no longer functioning by 1870 and in 1875 a School Board was set up to organise adequate education for all children of school age in the village. The Church, continuing its long interest in educational matters '... gave the ground for the Seagrave School, the Schoolmaster's house, offices, playgrounds and garden ...' and 'Mrs Dalton, the wife of the Rector gave one hundred pounds towards the building of the house for the schoolmaster'.

The financial affairs of the Seagrave Board were modest when compared with some of the larger Boards. The grant from the Education Department was assessed after the visit of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and the school finances depended on the performance of the children and their average attendance. Another source of income was school fees. There are no records of weekly payments but the fees January/March 1891 amounted to £7 4s 1d with two children receiving free education, their fees being remitted by the Board. It was usual for two or three children to be excused payments out of the roll of approximately sixty-five pupils, and there are also several records of arrears being cancelled. When the question of school fees was being discussed in 1869 W E Forster wrote that, 'If he (the parent) pays towards the schooling of his child, he will be more likely to see that he goes to school....' It was noticeable that the children whose names appeared most
frequently in the Log Book as being persistent absentees did not pay for their education. However, these children were from large families (eighteen children in one family) and if their fees had not been remitted they would still have been absent: Jan 1881, 'Inability to pay fees - the excuse of several absentees'. In 1891 parents were given the right to demand free education for their children, and on September 4 the Board met and 'It was resolved that the children should not pay for anything'. The remaining income was raised by local rates. The Accountants advised the School Board of the amount of money needed and this was levied under the Agricultural Act.

'The opening of this school which took place about five months ago is likely to be of great benefit to the parish. The instruction both religious and secular having hitherto been very inferior. The children are not at present forward nor could have this been expected, but they passed a fair examination in the few subjects they had prepared, answering well in the meaning of the commandments which they have learnt from the Bible version'. So read the report from the Diocesan Inspector, March 1878. A report of one of Her Majesty's Inspectors two months later stated that, 'The premises are good and the order and attainments reflect credit on the exertions of the Teacher the more so as he has had to teach hitherto without assistance. A girl to teach the Infants is much needed'. The 'exertions of the Teacher' were understandable. Though the numbers of children attending school fluctuated, the average attendance in March was 71, with an age range of three to thirteen years. With the appointment in late May, of a pupil teacher, the headmaster devoted most of his time to the older children, Standards I-IV, though he gave special lessons to the Infants when he thought that they, or the pupil teacher, needed them.
As schools became established, many became ambitious, more subjects were included on the curriculum than children in those teaching conditions, could reasonably cope with. Seagrave Board School, according to an H M I report in April 1895, was an offender: 'Too many subjects are attempted'. Teaching aids were few, the children had text books for subjects such as English, History and Geography, but much of the work was oral or from the blackboard including sewing instruction! 'Commenced teaching sewing on B. Board' (July 1879). When the first school mistress took charge of the school in 1889 she petitioned the Board to supply better equipment and within a month of her arrival all the Standards had new books and the Board 'decided that the children should be supplied with pencils'. Teaching apparatus accumulated very slowly, often on the advice of the H M I. The total amount spent by the Board on books and apparatus in 1897 was £5 7s 2d (average number on roll 67). Most of the information about the work done in the School is taken from the Log Book. There is a noticeable variation in the attitude of different teachers to the record of school life, some regarded it as a formality and entries were brief and mostly covered average attendance and Board meetings. During these periods of time the only information about subjects was shown by a mention of change of timetable.

School life revolved around examinations in the early years, which is hardly surprising as the school grant and, in some instances the teacher's career, depended on the children's performance before an H M I. The teacher, with the ever-present fear of failure, impressed this feeling into the children - an ex-pupil still remembers the feeling of awe and fear of such occasions. The pressure on the teacher is
evident from the H M I reports: 1883 'The Master's careful attention will doubtless improve the weak points ...' It is interesting to note the order in which the H M I listed the work of the school: 1885 'The school is maintained on the whole in a creditable condition as regards order discipline and attainments'. Little mention is made of examination days which were usually in March. The following, however, does give an idea of this event. 1901 'Mr S, H M Inspector, arrived at 9.40 this morning and remained until 10 past 12. 6 children were examined for a labour Certificate during the time. There were only 39 children present out of a possible 58. Mr S expressed himself as being very satisfied that the school was conducted on proper lines and the children were making satisfactory progress. Mr H Chairman of the Board was present a great part of the time'. The Labour Certificate probably referred to a standard of Education (Fourth Standard at Seagrave) that entitled a child to leave school after ten years of age and before the normal school leaving age of thirteen. It is interesting that one third of the school was absent during this Examination.

An 1883 Trade Directory states that Seagrave had a 'Good School with accommodation for 100 pupils'. As the area of the large room was 460 square feet and the smaller class room 230 square feet, this would allow approximately 7 square feet per child. It is therefore fortunate that the number of children attending school at any one time never exceeded eighty. However, although sufficient school accommodation was provided according to the standard of the day, the new Board School did not receive the full and instant support of the population. On October 6th 1877 the new headmaster 'Opened School on Tuesday
Morning with 32 children'. Throughout Mr Austin's headship, the problem of attendance was the predominant feature of his Log Book reports. This was hardly surprising as the average attendance figures affected the grant. From the beginning some parents resisted the Board's efforts to compel attendance during peak working periods of the country year. Sometimes the Board tried to disregard these, realising that if the children were released on demand, regular schooling would never be a reality, but in some instances the Board had to comply with custom. The month of May was a very important time of year, financially, for many Seagrave villagers. It was Cowslip time, and for a brief fortnight, when the flowers were ripe, the women and children gathered quantities of them, pulled the petals off and the fruits of their labours, great loads of fragile yellow trumpets, were transported by horse and wagon to a Wine Shop in Loughborough. The money earned from this natural harvest was then distributed to the villagers when the Carrier returned in the evening. It takes no imagination to realise that the picking of these flowers in such gigantic quantities was a slow, back-aching job, but one that even small children could accomplish. Therefore with or without permission, the children had to miss a fortnight's schooling. The Cowslip Holiday did not really survive the First World War and was last mentioned in 1921.

From the first, the Harvest Holiday was acknowledged by the Board to be an essential break in school life. After the corn was gathered the women and children went gleaning in the fields and as they were allowed to keep the grain they had collected it was natural that they turned out in as great a force as possible. Once again it was impossible to extend the holiday
to satisfy everybody's requirements and low attendances were usual prior to and following the Harvest Vacation. The date of the Harvest holiday was determined by the Board who, no doubt, were influenced by the weather conditions and crop readiness. The members of the School Board were all residents of Seagrave, with a preponderance of farmers, and it is to be expected that they had an understanding and sympathy for the community, although they were, by law, concerned with enforcing school attendance. In September 1887 five children 'were absent all week gleaning, said to be with permission from the Board'.

Apart from seasonal work and sickness, the other main reason for absenteeism was the weather. Few mentions of weather conditions were made the first years and it is difficult to know whether the Headmaster regarded this subject as irrelevant or that these winters were milder. As the children commenced schooling at three years of age, however, they must have found the winters particularly difficult. January 1881, 'Severe snow storms during week. Average only 36 in consequence, only one infant present and none in Standard I on two occasions'. The next headmaster was particularly sympathetic to the 'little ones' and during his time at the school it is noted that some of the infants did not attend during the winter months. Conditions inside the classrooms could not have been too good during the colder months. The rooms were heated by coal fires and though the rooms were not large the height of the classrooms would account for much of the warmth. In 1901 the H M I advised that the Board should 'procure a thermometer' and the following year noted, 'The warming of the room needs consideration'.

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Treats for the children were rare and therefore well attended, irrespective of school. A half-day holiday was given so that they could attend the annual treat given by the Rector and the school closed for the Sunday School outings - but not for Chapel events. Nevertheless, 'A number of children were absent this afternoon in consequence of a large number being invited to Tea by Mr S.' Holidays were given to celebrate all great occasions, joyful and sombre, and the most important event in the history of Education was also honoured: August 31st 1891 'Children had a day's holiday to celebrate the Free Education'.

Sickness accounted for a large number of absences, with frequent mass absenteeism; within a fortnight of the school opening half of the children were away with the measles. Because of poverty, overcrowded living conditions and malnutrition, childhood ailments could lead to serious, and sometimes fatal complications, February 1882, 'Still illness in Village - one child died from measles'. April 1882 'Many cases of Scarletina in village ... one death'. It was not uncommon for children, already weakened by one infection, to fall victim to a further disease and in some years the Log Book records almost continuous illness, and there were many instances of the school having to close, sometimes for weeks, as contacts as well as victims were isolated. These were some of the difficulties encountered by teachers before they could begin to educate the children.

Improved living conditions and regular attendance at school, now part of a child's life, happened only slowly, almost imperceptibly but the changes are dramatic.
ASHBY PARVA

N J Goodacre

When my husband and I came to live at the White House after our marriage in 1929 there were no pavements, only a curb here and there and a gravelly path, and the roads were gritty and loose surfaced. There was no mains water or drainage, which were not laid until about 1960, certainly no earlier. Only five houses in the village had bathrooms and flush W.Cs and these houses had their own cesspits and their water had to be hand pumped or electric pumped up into tanks in their roofs. The old hand pump in the scullery at the White House needed 1,200 strokes to fill the roof tank. In 1911 a boy used to be paid sixpence a week to come and pump twice weekly to keep it full.

We moved in in 1929 before the mains electricity was switched on, but after the wiring of the whole village had been completed, at least for as many people as wanted electricity, the late Mr Hugh Goodacre having agreed to pay half the installation costs to any of his tenants who wanted it. Nobody had heard of cooking by electricity, which we installed at once, and then had to cook by oil until the current arrived!

An independent contractor was hired by the Council to empty the cottage closet pails, but it was some years later (about 1936) before we also had a dustbin collection. You either buried your own rubbish down hedge bottoms or you hired a contractor (often the same man with another cart but the same horse that drew the night soil bucket cart) and paid him yourself to collect your
accumulated rubbish. Once we had to have one deep cess pit behind the house completely baled out and cleaned. The chap the contractor sent down with scoop and shovel to finish the job reappeared to shouts of laughter at his fearful state - he was grinning himself at the joke, 'Look at him' the contractor bawled to us and to various bystanders 'he's getting married this afternoon at two o'clock'.

In 1929 ploughing was still done by horse except for some contract work, and only two of the farms owned a tractor. Only three people who lived in the village owned a car. The farmers went about in an old trap or on a bicycle, or in two cases rode a cob they kept for the purpose of getting round their farms quicker than on foot. During the years before the war the car numbers rose to about one dozen (there were then 43 houses). But there were lorries on regular routes; a contract lorry that collected milk churns outside the farm gates, the days of the horse drawn milk float that each farm had to take its milk to the Ullesthorpe railway station were just at an end. There was also a local carrier with a lorry who made thrice weekly trips to Leicester through the village and brought supplies to the shop (the Post Office). He would undertake all sorts of shopping errands and give lifts to relatives and friends, bring coffins from the undertaker to the bereaved and deliver furniture, crates of apples or farm cheeses to their destinations. His Leicester loading point was the Blue Boar Tavern, and one could give that as an address when ordering goods for him to pick up. On the Saturday run his wife always accompanied him or he delayed unduly at his work!
Another roundsman was an old fellow with a horse and cart who sold blocks of salt that were used in the farm dairies, (not salt-lick for the cattle but 14lb four-sided bars of Derbyshire salt, I don't know whether he fetched them all the way from Derbyshire). Another regular was the man who brought the cart horse stallion round at stud. These magnificent creatures were never used for mere work, the most they ever carried was their attendant's raincoat strapped neatly over their necks, while they were led by him as they walked with that peculiar tip-toe gait, and he kept them in show condition with ribbons on mane and tail and polish on hooves.

In the thirties a man with horse and cart began a greengrocery round, and by then there were regular van deliveries of grocery etc. from the Lutterworth shops. But there was no 'bus service at all until the mid-thirties and then only the school 'bus and one shopping 'bus on Wednesdays to Leicester and back. The school 'bus service did not exist in the twenties and as the old Charity School had been closed since 1919 the children had to walk to Bitteswell and back every day, over a mile, with only sandwiches from home for lunch as there was no school meals service until after the war. There were a great many bicycles used by grown-ups, many more than nowadays, all farm workers went to work on them. People who worked outside the village bicycled to catch workers' trains from Ullesthorpe or Leire stations. Since the closure of the Leicester - Rugby local line the Midland Red have put on workers' buses that come through the village.

The population which from 1929 to 1964 was between
Agriculture is no longer the concern of more than eight households, or a dozen including retired farmers and two agricultural labourers. There is no other industry in the parish except the Ashby Garage, which serves a large area and does a certain amount of repairs to agricultural machinery, and one road building contractor. Otherwise all the breadwinners commute daily to Lutterworth, Leicester, Rugby or Coventry. There is no household, except for a few pensioners, without a car. Since 1964 14 bungalows have been built on Lammas Close and 12 houses on Simons Orchard; 11 new houses have been infilled along the street and those, together with the 8 almshouses for widows and the 30 original houses, make a total of 75 inhabited dwellings.

THE ANSTEY PARISH WORKHOUSE

G M Crompton

This article is taken from a thesis on Poor Law Administration in Anstey 1749-1834, which was submitted to the University of London in April 1969. It is largely based on research on the Overseers of the Poor Account Books at the County Record Office.

The relief of the poor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the responsibility of the parish, which appointed officials (the Overseers of the Poor) to collect rates and to pay the necessary amount to the needy in the parish. If a parish could fully employ all its able bodied
poor, then the amount of 'parish charity' needed would be reduced to a minimum. Outdoor relief attempted to find work for the poor in a variety of ways, but by the beginning of the eighteenth century there was also a movement in some parishes towards the development of 'indoor relief' or the employment of the poor in parish-run 'workhouses.' An Act of 1723 sought to make the system of workhouses general throughout the country but this was not very successful, because it was gradually discovered by those parishes who did build a workhouse that 'the economies anticipated by its establishment did not materialise and there was no real compensation for the initial outlay on building and the running charges of removing the poor to it'.

Anstey established a 'workhouse' in February 1769, and seems to have made use of an existing building (although there is unfortunately no record of its location), since there is a bad levy on the building used before it was officially the workhouse; and although there is a bill for cleaning and thatching, there are no other big building bills for this year. However, the place seems to have been used very little at this time because there is no further mention of it until the 1780s. Possibly the whole idea fell into disfavour, or the Anstey framework knitting industry was prosperous enough to reduce the number of unemployed able-bodied paupers.

In 1781, with the agreement of a vestry meeting, a large bill for either building or repair work or thatching was paid on behalf of the workhouse, and by 1784, a 'workhouse master' had been established. Anstey employed an extra salaried overseer between
1784 and 1796, and he seems to have administered the affairs of the workhouse after 1784 in co-operation with the workhouse master (who is occasionally mentioned by name in the accounts). The workhouse master probably supervised the daily routine of the workhouse, and the overseer of the poor, (whether salaried or elected) was the link with the parish and dealt with all financial matters.

The workhouse was really put into operation about 1797. This was the year when there was the first mention of furnishings for the workhouse - a bed and bed linen. Apparently a great deal needed to be done as the cost of ale in October 1800 'settling about the workhouse' was the large sum of 3s. The building and/or general repair work in the winter and spring of 1800-1801, including the carriage of lime from Barrow upon Soar, and bricks and sand, and hay stubble for thatching, cost the parish fund £16 5s 7¾d. Also, according to these accounts, the workhouse was equipped with three beds, cloth for sheets and shirts, including nineteen yards of flaxen cloth, and five yards of wrapping which was used for making working aprons and towels.

Between 1799 and 1822 there was no extra salaried overseer in Anstey, and the salary was given to the elected overseer of the poor. As before, he supervised both the outdoor relief, and the workhouse master (who earned approximately £4 10s per week wage). In the second and third account books the workhouse, although a separate institution, is treated as an integral part of the poor relief administration. Perhaps because of this attitude, there are no separate accounts for the workhouse, which makes a discussion of its financial situation difficult.
However, since there is no record in the poor relief accounts of any large deficit due to the workhouse, it seems that at least it did not run at too much loss. Indeed, by paying ten pounds a year extra after 1824, the workhouse was able to pay off a loan of £150 by 1832. This had been loaned at 5% interest, apparently by a group of the more affluent parishioners.

Other annual payments by the workhouse were the rent on the workhouse well, 5s a year, the land tax at 1s 2d, the tythe at 2½d, the insurance at 12s 9d (after 1828) and the rent of the workhouse houses at £10 per annum. These houses were rented as part of the workhouse after 1816 when the number of poor in Anstey rose considerably owing to the coincidence of the demobilisation of framework knitters after the Napoleonic wars, and the depression of the framework knitting industry due to the changes in fashion.

Before 1816 the workhouse seems to have been used as a poor house for lodging the old, the sick, the women and children. There were more women inhabitants than men, who could be boarded out and found work by the houserow system. When Spencer's widow was ill, she was lodged in the workhouse until she could go into the infirmary, and whilst she was there, her children were boarded out in the workhouse.

When Widow Brown was ill in September 1825 she was brought to the workhouse and in the October died and was buried. However, there were some men at the workhouse before 1816, because there is a nine shilling bill in the accounts for 'shaving the men at the workhouse' for a year, but these
could be the impotent poor such as 'old Glover' who resides there during and after his illness in 1804.

In 1810 there must have been a growing number of able-bodied unemployed inhabitants in Anstey, because in this year there is the first record of framework knitting taking place in the workhouse itself. The overseer paid a Mr T Pickering 14s 1d for frame rent and worsted, and he sold stockings made at the workhouse for £7 19s 6d which suggests quite a large amount of industry there during the year.

1816 was a very bad year for the Anstey paupers, and the total poor relief expenditure rose to over £1,204. Whole families seem to have been forced to live in the workhouse until they could be found other accommodation and work, because between four and six children were taught in the workhouse during the winter of 1816-1817.

The workhouse became better equipped with frames and the stockings sold in 1817 raised over £25. Between 1816 and 1818 one of the paupers, Edward Guildford, acted as a carrier of the stockings between Anstey and Leicester. As was usual in Anstey, the frames were rented either from the more prosperous local framework knitters, or from Leicester men. Thomas Pickering was a local man - 'March 27 1817 - paid Thomas Pickering's frame rent for two frames a rib frame at 10d and the other at 9d per week - 11s 9d'. William Sibson was a Leicester framework knitter - 'October 31 1818 - paid William Sibson Leicester 13 weeks frame rent due April 4 last = 10gns.' By 1832 there were at least five frames being hired for
use in the workhouse, and the stockings were being sold for over £41. However, the money made on stockings fell between 1822 and 1830 and it is possible that during these lean years the workhouse made a deficit. The bills for yarn, needles and repair work were all paid out of parish funds.

Whilst they resided in the workhouse, the paupers had to be fed, and clothed and kept in reasonable health, and the expenditure was again met by the parish. The workhouse owned its own common land in Charnwood Forest, for which it was given £13 3s by the Enclosure Commissioners between 1813 and 1814 as compensation when this area was enclosed in 1812. However, it did have its own garden, which also compensated for the loss of this agricultural land. This garden was dug regularly by various of the village paupers who planted vegetable seeds and plants such as potatoes, leeks, and turnips, kept it clean and lifted the vegetables when they had grown. In 1805 it was hedged, and in 1820 some stone slabs were put down and a gate erected.

Unfortunately for the parish fund the workhouse was not self-supporting, and after 1808 a great deal of money was spent on food for the workhouse, even though, where possible, it was bought in bulk. The biggest bills were those for bread, cheese, meat including bacon, potatoes, butter, milk and ale; but the paupers also ate such things as beans, turnips, leek, cabbage, onions and eggs. Water came from the well in the workhouse yard, for which there was an annual rent to a Mr Bates, and which received a new winding wheel in 1829 and new bucket in 1830. Both coal and bundles of sticks were expensive and coal was used in both
the stove and the fireplace which was installed in 1818. Candles were also bought in bulk, as was the hog's grease which was used in cooking.

There was an enormous outlay on beds, and bed linen especially sheets, and as with outdoor relief, the overseer found it more economical to buy the cloth and employ the paupers to make the various articles of clothing, such as shirts, shifts, aprons and towels. 'March 18, 1804 - bought 11 yds of cloth for the workhouse at 1s 4½d per yard for shirts, and shifts, making and thread 13s 3½d.'

The finished articles that were bought most frequently were shoes, and the cobbler's repair bills were large, due to the wear caused by working the knitting frames. Other articles of clothing were bought occasionally, such as stockings, breeches, jackets, gowns and petticoats.

By 1834 the workhouse had acquired quite a range of equipment and furniture including a cast iron stove for cooking, trenchers, tins and cutlery for eating, a tub and two smoothing irons for the laundry, and several tables, chairs, beds and chamber pots. The fabric of the building was always in need of repairs, whether to the thatched roof or to the windows, or the floor, or the lime washed walls, or the brickwork, and occasionally also small extensions were built as in October 1817, when 6,900 bricks were delivered to the workhouse and the builder's bill came to £9 15s 3d.

Since until about 1810, the establishment seems to have been used as a poor house for lodging amongst others the aged, infirm and the sick. This meant that the village nurse, Kate Copeland,
spent part of her time caring for the inmates, and in the accounts there are references to expenditure made by her on their behalf e.g. 'January 23 1806 - paid to Kate Copeland for John Cox and Pol Clark in the workhouse - £4 10s 9d.

As with outdoor relief, if an inmate of the workhouse was ill, the doctor was called in, and if necessary the pauper was taken to the infirmary. There are no separate doctor's bills for the workhouse.

By 1834 the workhouse was a well established institution in Anstey, although still an integral part of the poor relief and under the overall supervision of the overseer of the poor. However, outdoor relief always remained the most important part of the poor law administration in Anstey, perhaps because it was probably the most economical method of dealing with the problem of the poor.

MISCELLANY

QUERIES

1. A member writes: 'There was a chapel at Walton by Kimcote mentioned in 1204 and last referred to in the 1630s. It is possible that stones from this chapel were used in building a nearby house, now the home of Mr and Mrs Mason. Does any reader know any more about this chapel?'

2. A reader would like information concerning cheese factories in the county before 1920.
3. A Hertfordshire reader is interested in cast-iron grave crosses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; these are to be found in Hertfordshire and Leicestershire and in other parts of the country. Some are marked with the name 'W F Johnson, Leicester' (a local ironmonger). The reader would be grateful for information on the manufacture of these crosses, and for news of any surviving examples.

4. A London reader studying folklore would be grateful for photographs or information on local customs, particularly Bottle Kicking and Hare Pie Scrambling.

MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

The following is a list of local history projects in which members are currently engaged. Anyone interested should contact the member concerned.

Mr A Jones
Dept. of Geography
Southampton University
Demesne farming and the landscape of the medieval South Midlands.

Mr Aggas
5 Springfield Road
Kibworth Beauchamp
A survey of historic field and furlong names in Kibworth and Smeeton Westerby, 13th 20th cents.

Mr P A Stevens
Kettlebyrigge
Hunters' Rise
Kirby Bellars
The Leics. and Northants. Union Canal and the 'old' Grand Union, the Grand Junction and the 'new' Grand Union Canals.
Mr A Strang  
Village history and  
81 Narborough Road domestic architecture.  
Cosby

Mr J E O Wilshere  
Early fire insurance in  
7 Gullet Lane Leics; Leicester public  
Kirby Muxloe houses pre-1850; Fifteenth  
century Leicester;  
Glenfield and Kirby Muxloe inventories; Unlawful  
games in medieval Leicester.

REMINISCENCES - ESSAY COMPETITION

We have had a wonderful response to this competition - over 70 entries. Because there were so many it has not been possible to announce the name of the winner before going to press. We hope to make this announcement by May, and will give further details in the Autumn issue of the 'Leicestershire Historian'. We would like to thank all those who entered or who helped others to enter.

THE LEICESTERSHIRE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY

This society was founded on September 8th 1969, and during the winter it has had a programme of talks, visits and films dealing with industrial archaeology and history. During the summer it hopes to arrange further visits and some fieldwork. Members will be helping the Leicestershire Local History Council's Industrial Archaeology Group in a survey of the Wreake Navigation, as well as recording buildings in Leicester which are threatened with demolition. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the society should contact the Secretary, Mr R N Thomson, Three Gables, Markfield, Leicester.
REVIEWS

G K Long

HISTORY OF LOUGHBOROUGH ENDOWED SCHOOLS

Loughborough Grammar School and Loughborough High School are the result of a long evolution of the use of Loughborough's charities for educational purposes. This book is a most interesting addition to the history of schools and educational development in Leicestershire.


This survey of the East Midlands W E A is written by the former head of the Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester.

GEORGIAN HARBOROUGH
J C Davies. Wellandside (Photographics) Ltd. 1969 37s 6d

This book considers the life of the town, its industries, trade, position as a coaching centre, the church and the free church congregations, its administration and some notable personalities of the period. It is an excellent and very readable account of Georgian Harborough for the general reader.

Pamphlets have appeared on the following subjects: Bygone Sileby, the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, Cricket in Shepshed, Kirby Muxloe Church, buildings under threat of demolition, and a guide to Leicester.
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Printed by Leicestershire County Council

Price - Non-members 2s 6d