The Leicestershire Historian, which is published annually, is the magazine of the Leicestershire Local History Council and is distributed free to members. The Council exists to bring local history to the doorstep of all interested people in Leicester and Leicestershire, to provide for them opportunities of meeting together, to act as a co-ordinating body between the various county history societies, to encourage and support local history exhibitions and generally to promote the advancement of local history studies. In particular the Council aims to provide a service to all the local history societies and groups throughout the county by keeping in touch with them, offering advice and information and circulating an occasional newsletter. One-day meetings are held to encourage members of groups to meet and compare notes about their activities and an up-dated list of groups, many of them affiliated as members of the Council, is published in the magazine.

A series of local history meetings is arranged each year and the programme is varied to include talks, film meetings, outdoor excursions and an annual Members’ Evening held near Christmas.

The different categories of membership and the subscriptions are set out below. If you or your group wish to become a member, please contact the Secretary, who will be pleased to supply further information about membership and the annual programme.

- GROUP, Organization £5.00
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Letter to the Editor:

Dr Jeremy Black of the Department of History at Durham University writes that, as the persecution of old women for supposed witchcraft had largely died out in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, it is particularly interesting to note an episode occurring in Leicestershire as late as 1776. This was reported in one of the leading London newspapers, the London Chronicle, in its issue for 11 July, under the heading ‘Country News, Northampton, July 8’:

A woman in the parish of Earl-Shilton, Leicestershire, has been subject some years to a disorder resembling that which proceeds from the bite of the tarantula and so astonishing is the ignorance of many, that they imagine she has been bewitched by an old woman in the neighbouring village of Aston. On Thursday the 20th June last, the afflicted person, her husband, and son, went to the old woman at Aston, and threatened to destroy her instantly, unless she would submit to have blood drawn from some part of her body, give the woman a blessing, and remove her disorder. The son (who is a soldier) drew his sword, and pointing it at her breast, swore he would plunge it into her heart, if she did not immediately comply: When the old woman had gone through this ceremony, they went off: But on Monday last, the person not being cured, they collected a great number of people, and returned to Aston, pretending to have a warrant to justify their proceedings; then, with uncommon brutality, took the poor creature (who is eighty years of age and a pauper) from her house, stripped her quite naked, and, tying her hands and legs together, threw her into a horse-pond; she was then taken out, and in this shameful condition exhibited for the sport of the inhuman mob. As she did not sink in the water, they concluded she was really a witch; and several returned on the following day, determined to discipline her in this cruel manner till they should put an end to her life: The mob, however, was not deemed sufficiently strong, so that she escaped for that time; and it is hoped that some methods will be pursued to prevent a repetition of this horrid usage.
EDITORIAL

Our cover picture, a splendid postcard view of the Square in Market Harborough, is copied from an original (in the P N Series of Artistic Cards) postmarked in 1922, in the collection of S Barker. At the extreme right, behind the fountain, is the frontage of the cinema, the County Electric Palace, with its elaborate shell motif, which shews better in the advertisement taken from Motor Runs Around Market Harborough, issued c1920 by St Mary’s Motor Co, Market Harborough. Sam Mullins has been Curator of the Harborough Museum since its beginning and recent local history activities in the town and its area owe much to his energies. We are grateful that he was able to complete the research and writing of his entertaining article on the early cinema in the town before leaving the county and hope that it may encourage others to do similar work on other towns.

The unique distinction of the town of Hinckley in seeing the birth of the original Hansom cab is well known. Gregory Drozdz in his article puts the patent and its inventor in context and, incidentally, again raises the question of the future of the example of a cab that was presented to the town in the 1930s.

In his detailed and wide ranging research into Leicestershire churches and their rebuilding Geoffrey Brandwood has had the opportunity of noting the work of architects and church decorators both famous and less well known. By giving an account of the career of a single local church decorator, who was based on another of our market towns, he is able to shew some of the wider contacts and influences that affected local work.
One of the most enduring images of the Victorian and Edwardian periods is undoubtedly the sight of the Hansom Cab, the cab that was pulled by a single horse with long reins played over the roof to the driver positioned high at the rear of the body of the cab. The first designs for the cab were patented in 1834 by the architect Joseph Hansom whilst he was resident in Hinckley. Shrewd Leicestershire historians will quickly point out that Hansom was also responsible for other Leicestershire landmarks, like the Nonconformist Proprietary School (now the Museum on New Walk), the so-called ‘pork pie’ Baptist Chapel (now the Adult Education Institute on Bishop Street) and the recently re-furbished Lutterworth Town Hall. Hansom’s connexions with the Cab and these buildings is well known and well documented. What is not so clear is why Hansom lived in Hinckley and why he patented his designs at that time.

In 1984 I began to research into the history of the Hansom Cab with a view to providing present day Hinckleyans with the facts as to the inventing of
the vehicle and the town’s place in its history. The story that emerged was not only an intriguing piece of social history but a story of enduring and little known Hansom connexions with Leicestershire and the opportunity for the town to do something practical today to celebrate its part in the story of the cab.

Joseph Hansom came from a staunchly Roman Catholic family in York. On his grandmother’s side he was descended from prominent recusants in the time of Elizabeth I and James I. At the age of thirteen he was apprenticed to his father, who was a joiner, but his articles were allowed to lapse as he had shewn considerable talents in the architectural field. By the age of twenty five he had progressed sufficiently to enter a partnership, with one Edward Welch, as an architect. Together they designed and built churches in the North-West before astonishing the trade and public alike by winning the commission to design and build the new Town Hall for Birmingham. There were, however, conditions in the commission. Expenditure on the project was limited to £17,000. Hansom’s tender, for £16,648, left little leeway and, moreover, he had to agree to stand surety for any over-expenditure. With the optimism of youth, for Hansom was still only twenty-eight at the time, the building commenced. The project soon ran into difficulties. It became impossible to obtain stone from Anglesey before the winter in 1831 and work on the site had to come to a standstill. Hansom overspent and, although five hundred pounds would have appeased his creditors, he could not raise the money. He was declared a bankrupt.

Help was at hand in the form of a friendship that Hansom had begun with one Dempster Heming, a wealthy barrister from Lindley Hall, just along the Watling Street from Hinckley. Among many other business interests Heming had associations with the hosiery industry in Hinckley. Keen to develop these interests, Heming persuaded Hansom to manage his affairs and to live in Hinckley, in premises that Heming wished to convert into a bank. Thus the Hansom family settled in a house in the Borough that stood on the site of the present National Westminster Bank until 1898, when it made way for the present building.

Heming’s interest in Hansom’s fortunes was instrumental in persuading the younger man to patent his ideas for a safety cab. They had discussed the idea many times. The need for such a vehicle was a pressing one. Hired transport in London had been provided since 1623 by the four-wheeled Hackney carriages, drawn by two horses. By the beginning of the nineteenth century they had a poor reputation for comfort and, moreover, they were dreadfully slow. Yet they were protected by a monopoly.
When the monopoly expired in 1823, two-wheeled cabriolets or ‘cabs’ were introduced as a speedier form of transport. However, their very speed was the cause of frequent accidents and fatalities. A safety cab was needed and Hansom turned his mind, as a sideline from his profession, to its design.

Hansom’s original design bears little resemblance to the image of the Hansom Cab that we have today. The body of the first cab was almost square and stood only ten inches from the ground, making an upset impossible. It had two interior seats side by side and two doors at the front. The driver’s seat was high up at the front of the cab and there was no axle, the wheels being connected high on the body of the cab by a pair of spindles. This allowed for a wheel diameter of no less than seven feet, six inches. Hansom utilized three local craftsmen, the coachbuilder John Fulleylove, Snape the blacksmith and a joiner called Harrold. When the prototype first emerged from the workshop on Regent Street it was met with ridicule, being described as a ‘slice of a coach’ because it appeared to be no more than a huge packing case suspended between outsize wheels. Undaunted, Hansom drove it out to the Watling Street for initial road trials and thence on to London for the glare of wider publicity.

With his business associates Heming had formed a company to promote the cab. Following an enthusiastic reception in London, the company decided to put a number of vehicles on the streets of the capital. Hansom is supposed to have sold his rights to the company for ten thousand pounds but never to have received a penny of this sum. The company’s chief engineer, one John Chapman, made some changes to the design, moving the driver to the rear of the cab, decreasing the diameter of the wheels, streamlining the body and introducing a sliding window to the roof of the cab so that the driver could speak to the passengers. Still bearing all Hansom’s safety principles the cab came to resemble the vehicle that we think of today. While the design changes were being made the company faltered and Hansom, who had meanwhile gone back to his architectural practice, returned to see the company through its crisis. He remained until 1839, when he finally left the project alone, exhausted by the task of defending the cab from its rivals and imitators.

Shortly after the cab was first launched in 1835 Hansom returned to his home in Hinckley to look after his young family and to take up several commissions in the town. Given his family ties with post-reformation Roman Catholicism it is not surprising that he worshipped in the chapel of St Peter’s in the town. This was the first Dominican house in England after the Reformation and proved a source of work for Hansom. A fellow parishioner was
THE FIRST HANSOM.

An impression of Hansom's original cab, from Omnibuses and Cabs: their origin and history by Henry Charles Moore, 1902.
Benjamin Law, master of the workhouse and later Poor Law Union Clerk. Through this acquaintance Hansom secured the commission to design the new workhouse for the town, which was finally built in 1838. It was a rare example of Hansom working in the Elizabethan style and its mullioned and turreted facade is remembered with mixed emotions by local people. It was demolished in 1947. When the Dominicans of Hinckley decided to established a mission in neighbouring Nuneaton, the church was erected to Hansom's design. He also built a priory at Atherstone for nuns of the Dominican order. For the Franciscan nuns of Princethorpe Priory in Warwickshire he designed a mortuary chapel executed in the Norman style.

It is thought that Hansom's father came from York to live with his son in Hinckley and certainly his younger brother, Charles Francis, came to Hinckley and received tuition from his brother. In 1841, although Joseph had left the town, Charles married a Hinckley girl, Elizabeth Muston, in the chapel of St Peter's. The church and its growing community must have secured a lasting place in the hearts of the family; for when Joseph tragically lost two of his daughters in 1844 and 1845 from illness, the bodies were returned to St Peter’s chapel to be buried in the churchyard. When the chapel was demolished in 1976 the site was levelled and grassed over. Thus the remains of the Hansom sisters lie today in the town in unmarked graves. Just before Hansom left Hinckley for good in 1837 his son Alfred was baptized in the chapel.

Hansom left Hinckley to live at Mill Farm, Caldecote, a few miles away. Eventually he went to live in London, where he not only pursued his career as an architect but also founded The Builder, a journal for the trade that exists today as Building. Hansom will be remembered principally as a church architect, although he undertook secular designs as well. It was common for him to move and live in close proximity to where his designs were being built. Thus in 1844 and 1845, while the Baptist Chapel was being built in Leicester, he came to live in the city, somewhere in the vicinity of the Newarke. Most famous of his church designs was the one for St Walburge in Preston. It was an aisle-less church with a hammerbeam-supported roof, an unusual combination.

Hansom died in June 1882 after a working life spanning some sixty years. His obituary in The Builder lists his works, including an inn in Leicester, work for the Turville family, a prominent Leicestershire Roman Catholic family, and work for a Mr Harris of Hinckley.
The story of Hansom’s varied links with the county might end there but for events in Hinckley in 1935 when, as part of the County Show held there, a Hansom Cab was given to the town. Horse-drawn cabs had been superseded at the beginning of the twentieth century by motorized ones; but one or two had continued to ply their trade until the 1930s. One such was seen in Edinburgh by a Hinckley man, Clarence Goode. When he heard it was for sale he purchased it and had it shipped south, to be presented to the town. It was gratefully accepted but frankly it was a bit of an embarrassment; for the town did not have a museum in which to place it. It was kept for many years in the Council’s transport depot but, despite an occasional appearance, there was little chance of displaying it permanently. Accordingly an arrangement was entered into with the Leicestershire Museums Service in 1972, whereby the cab was given to the Museums on ‘permanent loan’. The vehicle eventually found its way to the rear of a storage shed at the Technology Museum and could well have stayed there had not the present Council been lobbied to bring the cab home with a view to displaying it. Such are the unwieldly processes of local government that no decision has yet been taken about the future of the vehicle.

Hinckley still has no museum and although several possible sites and structures for housing and displaying the vehicle have been mooted the cab remains under wraps. It is a priceless antique and was originally a gift in trust to the town. The cost of restoring it and building a unit to house it could easily run to a prohibitive figure close to a hundred thousand pounds. Despite the burden of having to do something worthwhile with the vehicle, there are many in the town today who feel that it is a challenge that the Borough Council should take up. Hansom is remembered with plaques in both Leicester and Lutterworth but there is nothing as yet in the birthplace of the Hansom Cab. Given his various connexions with the town, this is an imbalance that should be redressed.
CHARLES JAMES LEA, ECCLESIASTICAL DECORATOR
Geoffrey K Brandwood

The Victorians loved colour in their churches. Rich architectural clothing, in itself, was not enough and, ideally, a church should glow with colour as it was presumed to have done in the Middle Ages. The desire to recreate and develop an architectural style that had lain dormant for three hundred years and more produced an extraordinary outpouring of Gothic buildings from the middle of the nineteenth century. Apart from a whole generation of architects working in the ‘new’ style, there were armies of builders and craftsmen who transformed the dreams into reality. There was a vast market for the talents of wood- and stone-carvers, tile-manufacturers, glass-painters, metal-workers and decorators. Often little is known of these people, other than the nationally recognised figures. It is therefore fortunate that it is possible to piece together something of the life and work of a local man who embellished churches and other buildings during the High Victorian years.

‘C.J. Lea, Ecclesiastical Decorator, High Street, Lutterworth’ is how he described himself in a long series of advertisements in the Leicester Journal from August 1860. Charles James Lea was born in 1828 or 1829 and the family name first appears in connexion with decoration in a verse directory of Lutterworth in 1837 — ‘For colours, there’s Cherry and Lea’.¹ This was probably Benjamin, who is likely to have been the father of our subject. He was described in 1849 as ‘painter, paper-hanger and gilder’.² Charles appears on the scene in 1853, but his High Street address is different from that of Benjamin. At the 1861 Census he was living at No 11 High Street with his wife Eliza and their three sons and a daughter, ranging in ages from six down to one.
He came to enjoy something of a reputation as a church decorator. He regularly shewed examples of his work to the meetings of the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton. This was one of the most prestigious of the many regional ecclesiological societies and did much to promote the study and restoration of old churches. Its influence was considerable and it attracted many nationally known architects as speakers, especially George Gilbert Scott. Some of its members, to whom Lea must have been well known, included Lord Alwyne Compton, the Rev Thomas James of Thedingworth and the Rev George Aycliffe Poole of Welford, all of whom contributed to ecclesiology at a minor national level.

As the advertisements shew, Lea was aware of the importance of publicity. In 1861 he entered the Ecclesiological Society’s colour competition at the South Kensington Museum. In a field of twenty-two he came away with the third prize of two pounds, behind the two winners from London. His achievement was reported in the local press. The entrants had submitted coloured casts and all twenty-two were to be exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1862. The Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton reported on two examples of Lea’s work at the exhibition. First there was ‘an excellent sample of wall decoration . . . in the form of stencilled diapers, wall decorations, &c.’. Then there was what must have been the prize-winning design: ‘His production in the Medieval Court is of a more ambitious character, being a figure-subject from the legend of S. Alban, for the decoration of the walls of a church in the North, dedicated under the name of this protomartyr of Britain. The figures are enclosed in a compartment, and the broad bands of diapered ornament run above and below. The colouring is remarkably chaste and sober, and far more suited to the decoration of churches than the raw, coarse colouring which has been too commonly adopted in ecclesiastical buildings in deference to the supposed practice of the middle ages.’ This work must have been destined for Rochdale, St Alban, built in 1855-6 by Joseph Clarke of London. There are reports in 1862 of Lea and his assistants working on the decorations of this church. Unfortunately it has now been demolished.

The 1860s were the most active decade for church restoration in Leicestershire and also the time of Lea’s most important local works. Sadly most Victorian church decoration in the county has been destroyed. However, a good example of Lea’s art survives on the nave roof at Husband’s Bosworth and dates from 1867. Here, on a white ground, are the rows of red, stylised stencilled flowers and foliage trails which do so much to enrich the interior of the building. Probably the most attractive local work
of all was the Ten Commandments over the chancel arch at Market Harborough, but these have been covered over and are only known from old pictures.

There seems no link between Lea and any major architects before 1869, though he did some minor stencil decoration at Theddingtonworth in 1858 at the same time as Scott’s restoration. In 1869 he appears to have been responsible for the decoration of the chancel ceiling to the designs of G F Bodley. This was a typical Bodley design of a panelled ceiling, each rectangle of which has an IHC monogram in the centre, surrounded by tendrils with leaves and flowers.

A list of Lea’s work that has been traced so far is given below. It is very far from complete and reflects the discovery of instances during my research on Leicestershire churches. What Lea did, for example, in neighbouring Northamptonshire and Warwickshire remains to be unearthed.

About 1872 he moved to Manchester to go into partnership with one William Best, following the death of Best’s managing partner. Lea’s obituary mentions large works at Eaton Hall, Cheshire, Manchester Town Hall and the Natural History Museum in Kensington. The work at Eaton Hall seems to have been typical of so much Victorian decoration, consisting, in the north corridor for example, of roses, foliage and emblems of the patron, the Duke of Westminster. An important coincidence emerges in that these three commissions were all at major buildings where the architect was the famous Alfred Waterhouse (1830-1905). His apparent patronage of Lea must therefore serve as a tribute to the quality of this work.

Lea died aged 55 at Matlock Bridge, Derbyshire in 1884.
The Ten Commandments at the east end of the nave of Market Harborough church, 1860. They have now been painted over.

From a postcard
List of works:

* indicates outside Leicestershire.
All believed to be churches unless otherwise specified.

1858 Theddingworth. Stencilling on south chapel and tower ceilings. Survives.

1860 Market Harborough. Commandments over the chancel arch and lesser work in the chancel.

1860-61 Owston. Commandments, Creed and Lord's Prayer at east end on zinc tablets. Survive, though badly worn.

1861 Gilmorton. Hangings.

1862 Rochdale.* See text of article.

At the 1861 Lutterworth meeting of the Leicestershire Architectural and Archaeological Society Lea contributed to the museum exhibition in the Town Hall 'a cartoon for fresco to be painted at St. Alban's, Rochdale; ten diaper patterns and other decorations for the same; a sketch for central panel of apsidal roof of St. Stephen's, Congleton; a cornice for nave roof, Middlewich Church, with boss and ribs for ditto' and 'Boss and moulding, forming panelled roof from Astbury (temp. Henry VIII.)'. To the report on the meeting he contributed two plates illustrating the 'Wycliffe Relics'.

In 1862 Lea mentioned in an advertisement that he had worked at North Kilworth, Oakham, Kingsthorpe near Northampton,* Walpole near Wisbech,* Congleton, St Stephen, Cheshire,* Lamport schools, Northamptonshire,* and 'many mansions of the nobility'.

1863 Misterton. Mentioned as a contractor.

1864 Ashby Magna. Chancel wall painting.

1864 Leicester, St Martin. Text over east window; east wall decorated.

1864 Withcote. Some decoration; decalogue on zinc tablets in reredos.

1866 Stamford, St. Michael.*

1867 Carlton. Texts and tablets.

1867 Husband's Bosworth. Nave roof painted.

1868 Lamport. Ceiling decoration. G F Bodley was working at the church at the time.

1869 South Kilworth. Chancel ceiling.

After c1872

Eaton Hall, Manchester Town Hall, Natural History Museum.* see text of article.
A detail from the nave roof at Husband's Bosworth, 1867.
1. Leicestershire Record Office, Misc. 306
2. *Hagar and Co.’s Commercial Directory of the County of Leicestershire*, Nottingham, 1849
3. *Ecclesiologist NS XIX*, 1862, p 59
4. *Leicester Chronicle*, 12 April 1862
5. *Ecclesiologist NS XIX*, 1862, p 362
6. *Leicester Chronicle, loc cit*
7. Northamptonshire Record Office, IL 138, letter 31 August 1869
8. These and subsequent details from *Journal of Decorative Art IV*, 1884, pp 483 (obituary), 498 & 729
9. *Ecclesiologist NS XVI*, 1858, p 405
10. *Leicester Journal*, 3 August 1860
11. Leicestershire Record Office, DE 1266/8
14. *Leicester Journal*, 12 December 1862
15. *Leicester Chronicle*, 26 December 1863
17. *Ibid, p cxxiv*
18. *Ibid, p cxxvii*
19. *Building News* XIII, 1866, p 569
21. *Ibid, 6 December 1867*
22. Northamptonshire Record Office, IL 138

I am most grateful to Dr John Goodacre for providing me with information contained in the contemporary directories and to Mr Michael C Brown, ARPS for preparing the photographs.
Moving pictures were first recorded in Market Harborough in March 1901 when the Market Harborough Advertiser reported the visit of Mr Warren East of Kettering:

On Monday and Tuesday last, Mr W. East brought his Cinematograph to Harborough, and both the performances were patronised very largely. The pictures were excellent, especially those of the funeral of her late Majesty (Queen Victoria) at Osborne, Cowes, Portsmouth, London and Windsor. Those who were not able to witness the pageant were thus given an opportunity of realising to some extent what the spectacle was like. Selections on one of Edison’s most improved phonographs were also given at intervals.1

Warren East’s show was rapidly followed in April 1901 by Mr Arthur Cheetham’s ‘Silvograph’. This was also set up in the New Hall on the Square (on the site of the present Woolworths): ‘Scenes from the Boer and Chinese Wars and the funeral of Queen Victoria are supplemented by several good star turns’.2 The first films were short, lasting as little as four or five minutes and were often included within the variety programme of a music hall or, as in this case, a travelling show. The local paper reported very good houses for Mr Cheetham’s show, noting ‘great public interest . . . a welcome diversion from the ordinary play or bloodthirsty drama’.

The same newspaper also noted that Harborough had already received several visits from ‘Animated Picture Companies’; so although there are no reports before 1901, Warren East’s show was probably preceded by earlier moving picture shows. For many years travelling theatrical troupes had visited the town, putting up their ornate booths on the Square for a few nights. One such show, Mrs Holland’s ‘Palace of Light’, was typical
of its type:
It had an ornate front which included a large organ (of 110 keys by Gavioli et cie, Paris). Seating was for six hundred on wooden benches (the cheaper seats) and upholstered chairs in Italian green figured cloth with backs trimmed with gold tassels, as also were the side door curtains. From the inside top lining, which was of red and gold, were suspended sixteen Japanese lampshades in pink and gold. The lighting system of the interior was identical to that of many travelling cinemas and consisted of four golden flame arc lamps on the central ridge and two at the extreme end of the booth in close proximity to the moving picture medium. Perhaps the crowning glory of the interior was the gorgeously carved and gilded proscenium. And when two or three acts were performed on the stage, the screen was rolled up out of the way. Then to provide all the electricity needed, a steam traction engine stood outside generating, with a belt on its flywheel and driving a dynamo on a platform fixed to the smoke box.³

The late Mr Fred Tuffs, born in Clarence Street in 1895, remembered such a show setting up on the Square in the early years of this century:
The real pioneers of cinematography were the showmen, the road showmen. They used to come round with a big show and a beautiful big spread of organ, wonderful organs; little figures tapping the bells . . . and beating the drums. I used to love to go and listen outside, perhaps never get in, but listen outside to these various overtures: ‘Poet and Peasant’ . . . ‘Light Cavalry’ . . . Perhaps have a couple of little men, dwarves, doing handstands along the railings in front, walking on their hands, anything to attract you to get in . . . Yes, I’ve seen them on the Square.⁴

Similar shows also took place in the New Hall. In late 1902 ‘Silvograph Animated Pictures’ were presented for two nights: ‘Hundreds of Pictures, New Comic Pictures, New Sensational Pictures, New Topical Pictures. Selections on the Giant Concertphone, Mr Will Hunter — Ventriloquist, Madam Rose Garton — Mezzo Soprano Vocalist in her illustrated songs. Admission 2s, 1s.6d, 1s, and 6d.’ In the same year ‘Pooles Royal Myriorama’ proclaimed a varied show including panoramic pictures of Waterloo, the Boer War and Chinese crises, a cine-phono-maroscope of the Coronation procession as well as live entertainment by singers, dancers and circus acts.⁵

For local cinema history, however, the shows put on by Warren East were of particular significance. Working as a professional photographer at
Newland Street, Kettering from about 1898 to 1920, Warren East was not only a pioneer of cinema entertainment in the district; he was also a pioneer film-maker. His second advertised show, in the New Hall in September 1901, offered, in addition to the War, Comic and General Subjects, his own locally-made films. He invited townspeople to 'come and see yourself on the scene'. For three nights the programme included four local films; 'The workpeople leaving Messrs R & W.H. Symington's Factory at Dinner Time on Saturday August 31st, Workpeople leaving the Co-op Clothing Factory, Kettering, the Market Place on Market Day and the Grand Cycle Parade in aid of the General Hospital'. Mr C. Hillyer played the piano (the films were of course silent) and sang songs during the interval, while Mr A. Turner gave selections on Edison's Grand Concert Phonograph. Admission was 1s for the front seats and 6d for the back with a Saturday matinee for children at 2d and 1d.

These films were shot on nitrate film stock that was unstable and liable to catch fire while being shown. Even if they had survived until now, they might have been unviewable or merely a sticky mess in a can. The film shewing workers leaving the corset factory did survive, at least until 1928, when it was incorporated in a film which depicted the various departments of Symington's corset factory, entitled 'A Trip to Libertyland'. The earlier film was simply spliced onto the end of the 1928 film which was at some time copied onto safety stock and eventually donated to the Harborough Museum. This five minute sequence was filmed with a fixed camera facing the factory doors opposite the church as the workers streamed out. It is a remarkable survival, the oldest piece of film taken in the town.

In subsequent years Warren East regularly booked the New Hall in the autumn and on each occasion had new local films to show. In 1902 they included the Church Children's Tea Party procession, barges coming up the canal and the horse show. The programme in 1903 included footage of the Great Walking Race, while that of 1904 featured the Symington workers again, as well as the Congregational Sunday School Procession. This list of local subjects makes tantalising reading. A few still photographs survive to illustrate the events depicted, but moving film of such an early date would be of national significance. It should be remembered that the first successful public screening of moving pictures in this country had taken place only in January 1896, while the first permanent cinema opened in Upper Street, Islington in August 1901. In these pioneering days, however, films were to be found in the music halls and with travelling shows and entertainments such as those provided by Warren East.
We are fortunate to have a first-hand account of Warren East’s shows. Fred Tuffs remembered going to the New Hall: ‘They weren’t in fireproof boxes or anything. He used to just set up’. The Hall itself was behind the street-front buildings on the Square:

You used to go up a yard . . . the first cinemas used to be shown up there, when the ‘flics’ first came to Harborough. Warren East, a man from Kettering, I think he was a bit of a pioneer. He used to set up his stand in the middle of the hall and we used to sit and watch the pictures. They were flickering pictures but it was a start. I remember going once; I think it cost me tuppence to get in, standing up. I was up on a bit of a slope so I could get a good view of it. And I always remember there was a song, ‘You can’t diddle me’. This thing, the phonograph or whatever, was synchronised with the picture you see. It wasn’t like the moving pictures of today but it was a forerunner and this song went:

You can’t diddle me, oh no, you can’t diddle me,
If you take me for a mug, I’ll let ’em see,
When he thought the coast was clear,
He ran off with my old dear,
So I went back and drank his beer,
You can’t diddle me!

That was the first ‘sound’ picture I ever heard and I were only a kid . . . You could hear the tap-dancing, he was tap-dancing as he was singing you see.¹⁰

The New Hall had been built in 1872, providing a reading room, coffee room, lecture hall and offices. A skating rink had been opened in the building in 1876 and in 1906 another of the periodic surges of popularity for roller-skating caused Mr George Eames to buy the Hall for use as a roller-skating rink. The craze flourished and passed, and in 1911 the United County Picture Halls leased the New Hall from Eames for use as a picture house. The County Electric Palace opened, with a gala night on 9th November 1911, as Market Harborough’s first permanent cinema. The manager, Mr A R Guise, proudly announced that ‘in presenting this Exhibition to the public of Market Harborough and district, the management beg to point out that the Electrical Cinematograph Apparatus have been constructed under the supervision of an expert electrician and operator of very wide experience and they have every belief that they will be able to give a higher class exhibition of Cinematography than has ever before been attempted in this district’.¹¹
County Electric Palace
THE SQUARE, MARKET HARBOROUGH

Proprietors ... ... The United County Picture Halls, Ltd.
Manager ... ... Alfred R. Gains

6 Two Performances Nightly 8.15

PROGRAMME:—

BANK HOLIDAY, August 3rd, Tuesday 4th, and Wednesday 5th.

THE RIVER SECRET
(Drama in Two Parts).

JUSTLY PUNISHED (Drama).

THE KITCHEN COUNTESS (Comedy).

REBECCA'S WEDDING DAY (Comic). (Key Comic)

SIMPLE'S BURGLAR SCARE (Comic).

JOHN'S BURGLAR THAD (Comic).

Thursday, August 6th, Friday 7th, and Saturday 8th.

THE DEVIL'S EYE
(Drama in Three Parts)

STORY OF THE WILLOW PATTERN
(Drama).

SULTAN AND ROLLER SKATES (Comedy).

DOUBLY CROSSED (Key, Comic).

THE SERVANT PROBLEM (Comic).

ALL THE LATEST NEWS IN PICTURES.
There will be MATINEES at 2.15 on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

N.B.—This programme is subject to slight alterations at the discretion of the Manager.

Programme of the County Electric Palace from the week the War broke out, August 1914.

Market Harborough Advertiser
Despite these claims, all was not well on the opening night. The New Hall had been redecorated and tip-up seats provided. Mr Jeffrey Clarke JP in front of ‘a large and influential’ invited audience declared the exhibition open and thanked the management for their gift of the proceeds of the evening’s collection to the Cottage Hospital. He was later called upon to explain the ‘various stoppages which were unavoidable but which would soon be remedied’: ‘The performance on Thursday did not go off as smoothly as the promoters wished from the fact that the gas engine was some days late in arriving and it was only by working all night Wednesday that they were able to install it at all. This allowed practically no time for ‘tuning up’ the engine which did not run at all smoothly . . . On Friday and Saturday the engine was running smoothly and the crowded houses expressed themselves delighted with the entertainment which went off without a hitch. The films were of the very best class, instructive, interesting and amusing’.12

The first advertised programme for the County Electric Palace was that for 20th-22nd November:

“Sacrifice to Civilization” — Selig Drama
“Foolshead Somnambulist” — Another Screamer
“Rustic Romance” — Comedy
“Legend of Undies” — Drama
“A Hero Almost” — A Comedy
“Gratis” — A Screaming Comic
Building the SS Olympic
TRIPOLI WAR PICTURES ALL WEEK

Admission was 3d and 6d, Children 2d, 3d and 6d, with a few reserved seats at 1s, cheaper than both the travelling shows and those of Warren East. A similar balance was maintained through the 1910s; the programme changed twice a week with a newsreel accompanying half-a-dozen or so dramas and comedies. These might be serials, with an episode each week.

In March 1912 the Company purchased the New Hall outright, an indication of the immediate popularity and success of their venture. On 10th August the cinema was closed for extensive alterations and reopened again on October 2nd. The building had been refronted with ‘County Electric Palace’ on a signboard across the top of the building and ‘Cinematograph Twice Nightly at 6 and 8.15’ over the entrance. What had been the Coffee House was now a foyer with a central paybox and entrances for stalls or balcony. The left-hand side led down a long passage to the stalls, the right to a flight of stairs, a foyer with a fireplace and the balcony. The projection box was also reached from this upper foyer. Admission prices were stalls 3d, balcony
The County Cinema, The Square.

Seats Booked at Green & Co. (opp. G.P.O.), or by "Phone 122.

6 & 8.20.

The County Electric Palace, about 1920, from Motor Runs Around Market Harborough, St Mary’s Motor Co. Market Harborough.
6d and 9d, and boxes 1s. These were of wooden construction at the back of the hall: ‘You had to book these in advance to get one, and at weekends were mostly used by courting couples. But sometimes young boys would book them and charge the couples extra for them’.13

From time to time the owners of the County Electric Palace showed films of local events. Notable examples are the film recording the civic welcome to the returning troops of Sunday August 17th, 1919 and the moving record of the dedication of the war memorial on Sunday 25th September, 1921, made by Cardeaux’s Ltd, of Kinema House, Coventry. Both films have survived, the earliest known examples of complete motion pictures of Market Harborough, and are preserved in the film archive of the Harborough Museum.

‘Civic Welcome to the Troops’ recorded the finale to a memorable weekend in the town’s history. Following a dinner and entertainment for over a thousand in the Assembly Rooms on the Saturday evening which spilled out onto Abbey Street, a large gathering assembled in bright sunshine on the Square on Sunday afternoon. Preceded by Sunday School children and the Territorial Band, a large number of returned soldiers and sailors marched onto the Square, where speeches of thanks were made and medals and certificates presented. It provides a vivid record of an important event in the town’s history. Long panned shots across the assembled crowd ensured good attendances at the County Electric Palace the following week:

To many who took part in the proceedings on Sunday the 17th inst., the movements of the man with the camera operated by means of a handle were a source of interest as well as curiosity, the latter being excited by reason of the knowledge that if they came within range they would probably have the privilege of seeing themselves ‘on the movies’. This privilege was afforded the public generally on Wednesday evening for the first time (i.e. just three days after the event) and those present on that occasion and since unanimously voted the picture magnificent . . . On Saturday afternoon the film was included in the children’s matinee programme . . . at one time there was quite a babel of voices as each child pointed out to the other individuals in the picture whom they knew; at another such for instance as the presentation of the medals a lusty cheer was raised, while at another as the Rector of Little Bowden was offering a prayer, there was a reverent silence.14

The war memorial film shows the slow march down the High Street of a detachment of the Leicesters, accompanied by a large number of ex-soldiers and sailors carrying wreaths, the town’s fire brigade in their high combed...
helmets and a party of boy scouts. On the Square the Bishop of Peterborough dedicated the memorial and addressed the large crowd from the base of the cross. The final shots show the memorial all but covered in wreaths and floral tributes, a powerful testimony to a grief still keenly felt in 1921.

The County Electric Palace was described as ‘fairly successful for the first seven years of its operation’ when the County Electric Cinema Co was wound up in November 1922. Despite net profits of over a thousand pounds in 1919/20 and 1920/21, there had been a falling off of takings since May 1921, owing to the general trade depression, depreciation of the company’s assets but, most important of all, the opening of another hall in Market Harborough, the Oriental Cinema in St Mary’s Road, on June 6th 1921.  

The hall of the Oriental Cinema was a long narrow building behind a row of shops on the northern side of St Mary’s Road. Access to it was through an ornate stone-fronted foyer and paybox immediately to the right of what is today Goodman’s electrical shop. The Oriental was owned by Showfilms Ltd, the partnership of Mr G Wright and Mr R Justice, the first manager. The grand opening attraction was ‘The Call of the Road — a story of the open road, the card table and the prize ring of a century ago. Featuring also a love story of tender interest’. This was followed in the second half of the week by Charlie Chaplin in ‘Shoulder Arms’. Feature films were accompanied in the early programmes by a comedy or other supporting film and a newsreel, the Pathe Gazette.

The Oriental decoration was an exotic mixture of styles, which included a mosaic floor in the foyer, Egyptian mummies and Chinese dragons, palm trees and pyramids with red and gold shot silk curtains across the screen. The hall itself ran parallel to St Mary’s Road and was approached from the foyer by a long sloping passage. It was equipped with 524 tip-up seats; at 4d, 9d and 1s in the stalls and 1s.3d and 2s in the balcony. It had a small stage on which live acts were occasionally presented and an orchestra pit. The musical accompaniment to the silent films was provided by a pianist on the hall’s Bechstein grand piano, sometimes assisted by a small band composed of drums (Ernest Capell), cello (Bill Allbright) and violin (George Plant). Ernest Capell also provided sound effects, such as the waving of a sheet of tin to suggest a thunderstorm. One of the Oriental’s early pianists was Billy Norton, who had previously played at the County Electric Palace and who was billed as ‘England’s Premier Pianist’.  

25
The proprietors of the Oriental were also quick off the mark in the matter of a local feature. Only three weeks after opening the doors they showed a film of the opening of R & W H Symington’s new recreation ground, situated just behind the cinema in a former brickyard:

The management of the new cinema are to be congratulated on having secured such a fine film of the opening ceremony . . . and furthermore upon the expeditious manner in which they dealt with the matter as the pictures were taken up to seven o’clock on Saturday evening and on Monday the film was fetched from London and exhibited.17

This film has also survived, enabling us to watch the ceremonial unlocking of the recreation ground, the performance of the Works Orchestra and the sporting endeavours and tea drinking of a large number of the corset factory’s employees. We see Harborians’ grandparents in rather crumpled suits, boaters and trilbys, with their wives in all the feathers and finery of the early 1920s, bowling and watching the cricket and tennis. The social and sports clubs of Symington’s, the town’s largest employer until recently, formed an important part of the town’s life. Few still photographs of events on the ‘Rec’ have survived; so this film is an invaluable record.

Showfilms made another local film in 1928, entitled ‘A Trip to Libertyland’. This has also survived and is perhaps the most significant of these early films. It takes us through the various departments of R & W H Symington’s large factory in the centre of the town, then perhaps at its apogee, from endless racks containing bolts of cloth in the Cloth Room to the Design Department, the workrooms crowded with seamstresses and the packing rooms piled high with corsetry and liberty bodices. A most telling shot shews the workforce streaming out of the factory at lunchtime, bearing witness to the large numbers employed by the firm at Market Harborough at that time. It was onto the end of this film that Warren East’s pioneering film of a similar scene in 1901 was spliced, ensuring its survival as the earliest moving picture of Market Harborough. The Symington Collection of foundation wear and corsetry is one of the most significant collections of this material in the world and a small selection is on permanent display in the Harborough Museum. It consists of over fifty thousand items, garments, advertisements, patterns, photographs, packaging, all of which are brought to life by this film.

The ‘talkies’ came to Market Harborough in 1929, when the Oriental’s Kalee 7 projectors were converted to the Gyratone sound system, using a synchronised gramophone record for the soundtrack. The first talking picture to be shown at the Oriental was ‘The Singing Fool’, which starred
Al Jolson, in December 1929. The County Electric Palace had been taken over by the proprietors of the Oriental in the 1920s, but with shows on Saturdays only. In 1931 the Oriental changed to the Western Electric sound apparatus and the Gyratone system was transferred to the County Electric Palace.

A third cinema opened in 1939, the Ritz on Northampton Road, completed by Associated British Cinemas (ABC). With seating for 1,109, Market Harborough belatedly joined a national circuit and the hey-day of the cinema. The opening of the Ritz sounded the death knell of the town’s first picture hall and the County closed in December 1939. After various uses, including a store for Symington’s, a dancing school, a nightclub and Finney’s Antiques, it was demolished in 1968. Woolworth’s store stands on the site today.

Despite the existence of moving pictures since the early days of the century, there has been no systematic attempt to collect and preserve locally-made films in the county. I am sure neglected cans of film, of both commercial and private origin, can be found in cupboards and attics up and down the county. Such an important and vivid source for working and social life in the recent past should not be allowed to rot away. I hope this short sketch of the early days of the movies in one particular community will encourage others to look at their own localities and rescue both the films themselves and the story of the first picture halls.
Programme Twice Nightly 6 and 8.20.
MATINEE SATURDAY 2.30.

Make To-night Your Night for

The House of Rothschild (U) with George Arliss.

SHOWING THIS WEEK-END ONLY.
Matinee: Saturday, 2.30.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, June 24th, 25th and 26th.
Matinee Tuesday at 2.30.

BEBE DANIELS, LYLE TALBOT and JOHN HALLIDAY in

REGISTERED NURSE (A)
Exciting, amusing and highly dramatic story, super-charged with palpitating incident. Adapted from the play by Lily Hayward and Peter Milne.

SEASONED GREETINGS.

SALTWATER DAFFY.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, June 27th, 28th and 29th.
Matinee Saturday at 2.30.

RUTH CHATTERTON, ADOLPH MENJOU and CLAIRE DODD in

JOURNAL of a CRIME (A)

YEAST IS YEAST. BREAK WATER. PETTIN’ IN THE PARK. GAZETTE.

Next Week: SEQUOIA and BROKEN ROSARY.
References:

1. Market Harborough Advertiser (MHA), 12th March 1901. My thanks to Nora Kavanagh of the Harborough Museum for her research and notes from local newspapers, of which I have made extensive use in this article.

2. MHA, 16th April 1901

3. A Say, Bioscope shows and their Engines, Oakwood Press, 1966

4. Harborough Museum Sound Archive, MH.OR27/9, p 7, Mr Fred Tuffs

5. MHA, 25th November 1902, 26th August 1902


7. MHA, 17th September 1901

8. LEIMH68/1984. We are most grateful to Mr Len Robinson, projectionist at the Oriental during the last War and son of Mr Hector Robinson, manager, for his donation of these films.

9. P Robertson, Shell Book of Firsts, p 63

10. Mr Fred Tuffs, MH.OR27/9, pp 7-8

11. MHA, 7th November 1911

12. MHA, 14th November 1911

13. Told to Colin Ball (see note 16) by an elderly resident

14. MHA, 26th August 1919

15. MHA, 19th December 1922


17. Midland Mail, 17th June 1921

18. The Leicestershire Record Office, 57 New Walk, Leicester would be interested to hear of any films made in the county and can offer help and advice with copying and storage of such material.

The author expresses his particular thanks to the late Fred Tuffs, Colin Ball and Len Robinson for their help with the research for this article.
WHO WAS WHO IN VICTORIAN LEICESTERSHIRE

For the past two years a group of adult education students based on Vaughan College has been working on this project, meeting every Tuesday evening in the Leicestershire Studies Library at Bishop Street. There are nine in the group plus the tutor, Ron Greenall of the Adult Education Department at the University of Leicester, whose idea the project originally was. The main line of inquiry is a careful working through the Leicester newspapers year by year from c1840 to c1914, extracting information on people who rated an obituary more detailed than the formal mention in the Deaths column. The aim is to produce a Dictionary of Local Biography which will give the names, dates and a brief biography, plus references of where the information has been obtained, for every person included. So far there are some seven hundred such entries and the project is probably about three quarters complete. The Dictionary will be of use to historians, sociologists, genealogists, literature students, journalists and indeed anyone interested in local people and developments in the nineteenth century.

The range of lives and careers encountered so far include those of artists, auctioneers, businessmen, charity workers, clergy, doctors, emigrants to the USA and Australia, farmers, innkeepers, landowners, politicians, members of Parliament, musicians, poets, painters, office holders in local associations such as temperance and friendly societies, sportsmen, trade unionists, natural historians and women well known locally. Few, if any, places in the county are unrepresented.

All the famous local names (we sincerely hope) appear — the Dukes, Earls and religious notables and the great Leicester worthies, Biggeses, Whetstones, Pagets, Ellises and so on. Of real interest are the long forgotten people who turn up — manufacturers, musicians, temperance advocates, co-operators and Friendly Society stalwarts, well known in their day. Some
odd pieces of information are thrown up in incidental fashion. A favoured place for Leicester emigrants to the USA, for instance, was Germanstown, Philadelphia. Several obituaries of Leicester emigrants reveal this and there was even a cricket match there in the 1890s which featured a ‘Leicester XI’. Another obituary, of a cheese factor, one Thomas Merritt Evans, indicates why there is a Tichborne Street in Highfields, as he was an ardent supporter of the Tichborne Claimant in the 1870s. There is a good deal on music and musicians and the husband of one member of the group, who is studying for a Degree in Music, has chosen a forgotten local composer, Colin McAlpin, as the subject of his dissertation and has even organized a concert of McAlpin’s music.

The project has some way to run yet but it is hoped to have the Dictionary ready for publication early in 1988. Meanwhile any reader who would like to know more or to contribute information might like to contact the writer at the University (telephone Leicester 522456).

R L G

EAST MIDLANDS HISTORY FAIR IN LINCOLN

After the success of the first of these fairs, held last year on the Leicester Museum of Technology site, Lincoln Castle provided a magnificent and contrasting setting for this year’s event, on the week-end of June 20—21. As the central building houses the Magistrates Courts and the Lincolnshire Archives Office, apart from the expected attractions there was also the chance of visiting a special display of archives or the dungeons below.

In the main marquee Leicestershire was well represented by stands mounted by various county organizations. The Leicestershire Local History Council stall was there to sell back numbers of the *Leicestershire Historian* and other publications and hand out our list of groups. We were also shewing off the activities of our member groups that feature in the list, by displaying the journals and newsletters of a few and many of the recent books and other publications produced by a dozen more of them. These were much admired and led to many enquiries, some from family historians from outside the county interested in places where branches of their families had lived. Perhaps more local groups from Leicestershire will be encouraged to join us and take stands of their own next year, when the event will be held in Nottingham.

J G
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES
Additions and corrections to list published in Vol 3 No 4

a. Periodicals
b. Occasional publications
c. Member of Leicestershire Local History Council

c ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH Local History Society
   Mrs Balderstone, 12 Tower Garden, Ashby-de-la-Zouch

ac Herricks and BEAUMANOR Society
   Mr D W Andreas, 8 Hastings Road, Woodhouse Eaves, Loughborough

c BILLESDON Local History Group
   Mrs Vlarminke, Sherwood Rise, Leicester Road, Billesdon

BRAINTON and District Local History Group
   Miss Hall, Main Street, Brantston by Belvoir, (Grantham)

c BIRSTALL and District Local History Society
   Mr R Turnell, 1 Johnson Road, Birstall, Leicester

b DISEWORTH Local History Group
   Mrs Lawson, 40 Hallgate, Diseworth, (Derby)

c EARL SHILTON and District Local History Society
   Mr P Lindley, Hinckley Library, Lancaster Road, Hinckley

c ENDERBY History Group
   Mr J R Crofts, 1 Sheridan Close, Enderby, Leicester

c FLECKNEY, KILBY and SADDINGTON Local History Group
   Mrs Niezawitowsiki, 37 Victoria Street, Fleckney, Leicester

b HATHERN Local History Group
   Mr A M Swift, 18 Shepshed Road, Hathern, Loughborough

IBSTOCK Historical Society
   Mr D Palmer, 2 Jacquemart Close, Ibstock, Coalville
ab RUTLAND Local History Society
  Mr J Crossley, Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, Rutland

abc RUTLAND Record Society
  Mr P N Lane, 3 Chestnut Close, Uppingham, Rutland

Rutland Record

c SOMERBY Local History Group
  Mr B Mellows, The Carriers, Chapel Lane, Somerby, Melton Mowbray

THRUSSINGTON Local History Society
  Mr R E Banks, 12 Back Lane, Thrussington, Leicester

WOLDS Local History Group
  Mrs A Thorpe, Bridge Cottage, Brook Street, Wymeswold, Loughborough

bc WOLVEY History Group
  Mr C S Woodward, Beverley House, Wolvey, Hinckley
Theatre in Leicestershire: A history of entertainment in the county from the 15th century to the 1960s

Helen and Richard Leacroft
Leicestershire Libraries
and Information Service
1986 £6.95

This detailed and comprehensive survey of the theatre includes amateurs as well as professionals, buildings, scenery and the mechanics of theatrical production, circus and music halls as well as straight drama. Quotations in the text and the numerous illustrations are drawn from a variety of contemporary national and local sources.

Leicester shared in the flowering of the drama under the Tudors and Stuarts. Many companies visited the town; but from the banning of public performances of plays under Cromwell in 1642 until 1722 public theatrical entertainment was unacceptable in Puritan Leicester. Thereafter touring companies once more visited Leicester and the market towns, playing in improvised accommodation. Plays had to be licensed by the Justices for a limited period. In 1750 the Assembly Room was built in Leicester, near the present Clock Tower, and offered a space for a variety of entertainments. It was sold in 1799 and the first purpose-built theatre, a modest brick building, was erected next to the present County Rooms. This theatre was host to such notable performers as Mrs Jordan, Grimaldi and William Macready in Hamlet. There are many interesting details of performances in Leicester during this period, including benefit nights, charity performances and mixed bills designed to please everyone. There are details too of the Bath Street theatre in Ashby and Sparrow Hill theatre in Loughborough. Amateur dramatic performances were a favourite recreation in the country houses and details are given of performances at Belvoir Castle and Dalby Hall. Often the gentry took their plays into a local hall, the Town Halls at Loughborough and Lutterworth and the Corn Exchange at Melton Mowbray.

The story of the Theatre Royal, its building, stage equipment, plays and players is given in great detail, from the opening performance of The School for Scandal in 1836 to its sadly abrupt end and demolition in 1957.

Increasing in size, population, prosperity and confidence in the 1860s and 1870s, Leicester demanded a new theatre with facilities for Opera and 'Dramatic and other entertainments of a superior character'. This new and
imposing theatre opened in September 1877 with a concert of vocal and orchestral music. The Opera House was popular and host to distinguished players and distinguished companies within living memory. Noel Coward in Brief Encounter, Tommy Handley of ITMA fame, a much loved series of pantomimes, a last fling of musical comedy; but in 1953 a two month closure heralded the end of a Leicester institution.

The last major theatre to be built was Leicester Palace, Theatre of Varieties, on the site of the Floral Hall, a former music hall in Belgrave Gate, in 1901. It was new, showy, opulent in style, including a marble staircase, and erected on fireproof principles. It was designed to be opened twice nightly and was always a popular theatre. It put on the pantomimes formerly shewn by the Opera House from 1953. Sadly it barely outlasted its neighbours; it closed in 1959 and was immediately demolished. The last remaining theatre building, the Opera House, was opened again for a short spell in 1959-60 but this too was followed by closure, fire and demolition. Leicester was now left with neither a commercial nor a civic theatre.

The variety, depth and interest of this book, both in the text and the illustrations, makes it hard to review briefly or to praise too highly. The best advice to the reader is to buy a copy and sample for himself its many delights. Through it the authors have also brought credit to the Leicestershire Libraries, awarded by the Library Services Trust the 1987 Alan Ball Author Award for the best local history publication produced by a British public library.

G K L

FAMILY FORBEARS: A guide to tracing your family tree in the Leicestershire Record Office
Jerome Farrell Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service 1987 £3.45

Recently an increasing number of people have responded to ‘the pleasure, excitement and satisfaction which the tracing of your own family tree from original sources is likely to provide’, to quote the concluding words of this guide, our county Record Office’s response to the fact that genealogists are the most numerous category of visitors to the office. The author starts from civil registration and census returns and devotes the largest section to parish records, concluding with other possibly useful classes of
documents. In this way, and with other suggestions, he encourages the broadening of the activity into an appreciation of the historical background. A census return, for instance, apart from giving details of the one household being searched for, should help to give an idea of the family's immediate neighbourhood. A minor point, however, is that instead of devoting space to Borough and Poor Law records, the author might have dwelt more on the advantages and hazards of relying on the various printed, typescript and manuscript transcripts and indexes of parish and probate records &c available in the office. He does mention the large indexing projects undertaken by the Leicestershire Family History Society.

This is a clearly and sensibly written guide. Although the text is printed in the usual typescript, it is well illustrated with reproductions of carefully chosen documents and has a stylish 'family album' cover. Another small point is that the chapters or sections are not easy to refer to, as their numbers are missing in the text and their page numbers are missing in the list of contents.

J G

**DOMESDAY BOOK IN RUTLAND: The Dramatis Personae**
Prince Yuri Galitzine Rutland Record Society 1986 £2.55

As a local contribution to last year's Domesday celebrations this account concentrates on the people who became the new landlords rather than the land itself. Once most of the land of Rutland has been the dowry of the queens of England and this gave William I an unopposed opportunity to reallocate and redistribute this estate among his allies. The largest single new tenant was his niece the Countess Judith; but in her own person she allied the old with the new, as her husband Earl Waltheof was one of the old Anglo-Scandinavian owners of large estates. When he was imprisoned and executed for his part in revolt, she nevertheless retained the estate. Other major beneficiaries were Hugh, Earl of Chester and the new bishops of Lincoln and Durham. Many of the new tenants, like their predecessors, had their main demesnes elsewhere. As with the study of land-use in Domesday so this brief survey of land-ownership gives an indication of the complexity of Anglo-Scandinavian society and its Norman-dominated successor.

G K L
Although subtitled *A short history of the Great Central Railway*, the first half of Robert Hartley’s book in fact deals with the predecessors of this railway. Their principal trade was initially located in the rapidly expanding industrial areas of Manchester and Sheffield, later extending across the country to the Lincolnshire coast. After further expansion in the north, eyes were turned towards London. Re-named the Great Central Railway it extended rapidly southwards, being the last main line built to London, where Marylebone Station was its terminus. The management had even greater visions, of a channel tunnel from Dover, where some work was actually started in the 1880s.

This railway, of course, ran partly through Leicestershire, from Loughborough via Leicester to Lutterworth, with several intermediate stations. The profuse illustrations range from reproductions of contemporary engravings and paintings to photographs. Some of the local photographs, mainly from the Newton collection, shew the construction of the line through the city and county and also its operation. Several of these have been published previously, but there is an interesting aerial view of Leicester Central Station and the surrounding housing and industry. Within the limited space given over to text, this book successfully deals with one hundred and fifty years of complex railway history, including plenty to interest the Leicestershire railway or industrial archaeology enthusiast.

The second book devotes four initial pages of typewriter text to the customary history, in summary form, of the Great Central Railway and its extension southwards to London, Marylebone in the 1890s. A contemporary professional Leicester photographer, Mr S W A Newton, recorded with his plate camera the construction and early use of this extension, particularly through Leicestershire. This photographic history, known as...
the Newton Collection, is deposited with Leicestershire Museums and has been used previously in several publications.

In the era of the Beeching railway closures the trunk route finished in 1966 and the local services in 1969. In the 1970s Mr Hartley carried out another photographic survey, this time of the railway in decline. This book is unique in that for some scenes one is able compare two photographs, the first taken during the building of the railway and the second after it ceased operation. Mr Newton's world was one of bricks, manpower, wheelbarrows and the steam shovel: today one would expect to see few workmen, concrete and JCBs. His navvy missions are no more and stations have been demolished or made available for modern needs, such as car-parking. How quickly too a neat track bed is turned into a linear nature reserve. Most of the illustrations are of local interest, commencing at Rugby and proceeding in a northerly order (except that Belgrave and Birstall station is positioned between Rugby and Lutterworth). Ashby Magna, Whetstone, Leicester, Quorn and Woodhouse, Rothley and Loughborough are all included. What a pity that the captions are so short and lacking in information.

The Loughborough to Rothley section of the once main line from Manchester to London is now run in an ambitious manner by Enthusiasts. An extension to Birstall is envisaged for the near future. The commendable guide explains the many things to see at the stations, especially at Loughborough, where the well stocked museum on the platform, the old fashioned signal box and the extensive locomotive shed are all open to visitors. An excellent itinerary of the journey over the line, clearly mapped, covers a most attractive stretch of Leicestershire land- and water-scape. The guide closes with two historical sections, the first dealing with the original Great Central Railway and the second with the present Company and its nostalgic services. An attractively produced booklet with ample photographs, some in full colour, and clear maps; just what the visitor to the railway requires.

J D A
This book forms an introduction, with a map, to a guided tour of twelve lost mansions in the area. Some of these were lived-in social centres at the end of the eighteenth century. Kirkby Mallory Hall, Tooley Park, Normanton Turville and Newhall were all described and illustrated by Leicestershire topographers John Nicols and John Throsby. Some of their illustrations are reproduced in this text and it is a pity that the authorship and date of these has not been added. The accounts of the lesser-known and nineteenth century houses are of greater interest, Lindridge Hall, Chamberlains, Hallfield and Mop Hall. This is a useful introduction for newcomers to the district.

G K L

Apart from Abbey Park, opened in 1882, and Victoria Park there were no open spaces in Leicester in the late Victorian period. In March 1886 Leicester Corporation paid eighteen thousand pounds for a thirty six acre site adjacent to Spinney Hill Farm. A park was laid out with a woodland walk, a bandstand, fenced ‘gymnasia’, a carriage drive and walks. It was opened by Mrs Israel Hart, the mayoress, in August 1886. One hundred years later a high population density makes this park one of the most heavily used in the City.

Jonathan Wilshere’s booklet is a gentle and interesting account. He also lists items of park expenditure over the years and the changing functions of the park in recent years.

H E B
This third booklet in the ‘as I remember it’ series is the first to deal with life in a market town. One section contains the edited scripts of the prize-winning entries and one from the oldest contributor, who was born in 1883. The rest of the book contains extracts from the work of other competitors, arranged by subject and covering childhood, school, work, entertainment, shopping, transport and life during two world wars.

Memories of the 1920s and 1930s are the most vivid. The picture painted is of a very self-contained community, enlivened by the winter hunting season, when high society came to Melton. Many contributors recall schooldays with great affection, particularly pupils of King Edward VII Grammar School. Shops and shopping, the personal service given and home deliveries were much appreciated. The Swan’s Nest Swimming Club, a concreted pool on the river, was popular among the young people. Trips to Belvoir by wagonette and excursions to Leicester on Saturday evenings for 11½d return. Melton was quite a busy railway centre in those days, with two railway stations, two lines to Leicester and links with East Anglia as well as Nottingham and London. Many contributors remember Sir Malcolm Sargent and have vivid recollections of colourful local characters.

The illustrations are very attractive and varied and one’s only criticism of such a well produced booklet is the lack of a sketch map shewing the old streets of the town.

G K L

FROM SHEEPSHEAD TO SHEPSHED: A photographic history of Shepshed from the late nineteenth century to the present day
Shepshed Local History Society the Society 1986 £2.99

A brief introductory text gives a summary of the major changes in the town over the past hundred years, from the official change in the name from Sheepshead to Shepshed in 1888 to the demolition of the former railway station in 1974. The photographs, generally arranged in pairs, speak for themselves and shew changes in dress, shop fronts and modes of transport.
as well as in buildings. The greatest change of all, the development of new housing estates where once were open fields, is not illustrated here. It is surprising how much remains basically unchanged; new fronts and new uses but the buildings themselves are still recognisable today. A well produced and most attractive publication.

G K L

WIGSTON HARCOURT
O D Lucas the author, White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston 1986 £2.00

Wigston Harcourt is a new housing development in the parish of Wigston Magna, between Welford Road and Newton Lane, leading to Newton Harcourt. Old Wigstonians who regretted losing fields to the developers were compensated in a small way by the promise that Wigston names would be recorded for posterity in the new road names. This booklet, filled out with advertisements and ample illustrations, has been written mainly for the interest of new arrivals. One section examines the origins of the name of Wigston, another charts the history of the area and another lists the road names, giving their derivation in detail.

H E B

OLD KIRBY (MUXLOE)
Jonathan Wilshere Leicester Research section of Chamberlain Music and books 1986 £2.95

Kirby Muxloe, five miles west of Leicester, has a full and varied history spanning more than nine hundred years, from a Danish community established by Caeri and called Carbi, in the middle of Hereswode, or Leicester Forest, to a large, almost suburban area of over 8,200 people and 2,790 dwellings. The author covers all aspects of Kirby’s history — the descent of the manor, early place names, the Castle, agriculture, occupations and population throughout the centuries, transport, parish government, social life and religion. There is a very useful section on Kirby Fields, the area which was developed in the 1880s and 1890s as the new Stoneygate for Leicester businessmen, describing each of the main houses
and their occupants. Reminiscences of Kirby Frith Hall, supplied by a groom there from 1910 to 1913, form one of the several interesting appendices to the main history.

Photographs from the author’s own collection and from the work of the late A W Tew form the basis of the book’s illustrations and contribute greatly to the attractive format of the book. I feel that this is Mr Wilshere’s best village history yet and probably one of his best publications.

H E B

THE ODDFELLOWS OF GREAT EASTON
K Yeaman Heselton 1986 £1.50
TWO WHEELWRIGHTS OF GREAT EASTON
K Yeaman Heselton 1983 50p
THE MILLS OF GREAT EASTON
John C Hughes 1986 50p
MISS ANN WALKER’S RECEIPT BOOK: A 19th Century Cookery Book
Joan Heselton ed 1986 50p
GREAT EASTON VILLAGE TRAIL
K Y Heselton 1986 50p

Bringhurst Press, 24 Barnsdale Close, Great Easton

The first is an account of the Great Easton Loyal Constitution Lodge No 2945 of the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity) from its official opening on 21st October 1841 at the King’s Head. The founders’ original objectives were good fellowship and mutual help in times of trouble, unemployment, sickness and death, combined with a touch of mystery in the titles given to officials and insignia and ritual at meetings. Of the original members only one was a labourer; for in the movement membership was usually drawn from artisans, small farmers and shopkeepers. Presumably those who most needed help were unable to afford the weekly contribution. It helped its own members to avoid the threat of the hated post-1834 workhouse and with its payments to doctors encouraged its members to seek medical attention. In 1933 the Lodge acquired its own Hall and next year it admitted females to membership for the first time. In 1956 the Hall was sold to the parish for use as a village hall. Although the improvements in national social provision have removed the need for many of the original payments made by the Lodge, it still exists today and offers a special kind of fellowship to its members. This is a fascinating study, shedding light on social history through the records of one friendly society lodge.
The second, an interesting account of two wheelwrights and their craft, is based on material gathered from parish registers, census returns and their own account books. The first was Edward Brown, who had settled in Great Easton by the time he was twenty one and married there in 1850. His second son Joe carried on the business and his son Harry, despite the loss of a leg in World War I, was still working when the record ends in 1941. The wheelwright was a highly skilled and essential village craftsman in a horse-powered age. His skills were so versatile that he repaired any woodwork in house and garden. Joe was also the village undertaker. These varied skills enabled this firm of village wheelwrights to survive the transition to petrol-driven farm equipment. If the prices for jobs quoted from the account books — seven shillings for making a bandbox with handles for the village brass band and 8s 8d for eight hours work in 1909 — seem very little, they must be seen in the context of low wages generally. The Browns are now gone from Great Easton but many people today would gladly use their traditional skills at such moderate prices.

The author of the third introduces his account with a brief discussion of the basic techniques involved in mills powered by water, horse and wind. There is a seventeenth century reference to a horse mill and a windmill in Great Easton but it gives no clue to their sites. The main part of the account is concerned with the nineteenth century windmills, mostly post mills. Millers are frequently referred to in the parish register. Milling was very much a family occupation, with millers marrying other millers' daughters. When the last miller, John Thomas Brown, died in 1895, the mill seems to have died with him. He was a man of some substance, as he bequeathed to his only daughter various tenanted properties and pieces of land.

The traditional country receipts in the fourth reflect a country plenty, large families and ample time for preparation and cooking. Who today would find it possible to beat a cake for one solid hour? The wine-making receipts are simple and good but perhaps the flavour would not be the same without the traditional wooden barrel.

The fifth, a guided tour round of the county's less well known but most attractive villages, takes the walker at a leisurely pace from the War Memorial, describing many of the interesting houses which date from the era of growing agricultural prosperity in the seventeenth century. Once the village had eight public houses. Now it only has one; and many former shops are now solely dwelling houses. The sketch map pulls out neatly beyond the text.
These five booklets are well written but they all suffer from a smudgy typescript text, duplicated on paper of a quality so low that the ‘print-through’ makes some pages difficult to read. This is particularly disappointing in the case of the Oddfellows book, which is an interesting study running to over eighty pages.

G K L

WOLVEY: A WARWICKSHIRE VILLAGE
(Susan Bassnett ed) (Wolvey History Group) nd £2.25

Wolvey is a village on the Leicester edge of Warwickshire and near the intersection of two important ancient roads, the Watling Street and the Fosse Way. Although in Warwickshire, it has always had contacts with Leicestershire, and work by its five year old history group has been partly based on our county Record Office. The group has produced an eighty page miscellany full of interest and neatly typewritten with two dozen illustrations, mostly photographs. Although the preface warns that it is the work of many different individuals and not a chronological history of the village, many of the expected topics are covered very adequately in various short essays, from the geographical position and the origins of the place name, through enclosure roads of the 1790s, the church and chapel, and analysis of census returns, to the Home Guard in 1944. One section deals with the enmity between a low church vicar and a Catholic squire in the 1890s that led to the temporary closure of the school and another with the improbable and unsupported assertion by Arthur Mee that mediaeval Wolvey had twenty seven windmills. A mediaeval charter is reproduced and translated and there are disjointed extracts from various documents. The treatment is uneven and few sources are given. Perhaps it would have helped if members had signed their contributions and explained their different approaches. To give the whole more overall shape or direction would have required more positive editing. One criticism is that it lacks a list of contents, a title page and all the information that should give us.

J G
Desford has had a long and interesting history and in recent years has suffered much change and expansion. This pictorial account of the village highlights the buildings once in the village and those still there today. The short captions describe the buildings and personalities associated with them. The pages are packed full of photographs and an introductory sketch map of the village is a thoughtful inclusion, pinpointing — for those of us not already familiar with Desford — the location of the buildings mentioned in the text. A modern aerial view of the village puts the back cover to useful purpose. Publisher’s details and page numbers have been omitted, but otherwise this is a charming booklet, offering an attractive front cover and pleasant format.

Further information about Desford’s history can also be gleaned from the excellent series of notes edited and written by Caroline Wessel for the Desford Local History Society.

A Look Back at Hathern describes many facets of the village’s history, such as farming, local industry, the parish church, local chapels and churches, the Hathern Cross and village clubs and societies. The compilers note that Hathern has always been well served by many small businesses and still remains very much a working village. The sections devoted to framework-knitting (about two thirds of the inhabitants were connected with this in the nineteenth century) and other local businesses are of particular interest. A useful plan shews the working farms and some of the shops and businesses of the last hundred years. Although there are only a few illustrations, this does not detract from the quality of the book and the complementary book Old Hathern in Pictures is a collection of photographs of the village and its people covering many topics: buildings, businesses, leisure activities, culture and sport, the school and wartime are only a few. A concise caption dates and describes each photograph. A particularly
commendable feature is the provision of virtually all the names of people in group photographs.

The Hathern Local History Society was formed in 1982 and these two publications are a fine example of how a local group can serve the interests of local history by researching and making available a written record of otherwise unappreciated village history.

H E B

BIRSTALL 1851: A transcription of the 1851 Census with an introduction and indexes
Barry A Thomas ed
Birstall and District
Local History Society 1986 90p

This useful computer print-out of a census return, complete with an added index of names, is an easily read introduction by example to an invaluable source for family and local history. Two things stand out, the predominance of youth in the population and the very local birthplaces of nearly all the inhabitants.

G K L

PECKLETON 1900—1920: the end of the era: thoughts — reminiscences and memories of those times
Alec Bonner (the author) (1986) £2.50

EDWARDIAN CHILDHOOD: A Retrospect
Florence Wragg Oadby Local History Group 1986 £1.50

MANY FINGERS IN THE PIE: A Trilogy — Part 3
Ellen Smith 'Greenfields',
21a East Road, Wymeswold 1985 £2.75

The first of these three books of reminiscences, a vividly written account of a country childhood, succeeds in giving a picture of the author, a glimpse of the village of Peckleton and an account of a very traditional agriculture. Two things stand out in the author’s recollections, the isolation and the quiet. There were no buses until the end of the First World War, few motor cars and everything was very quiet. People walked, cycled or used a horse and cart. He describes the types of horse-drawn vehicles and the appropriate horse for each one. Farming was less scientific — more weeds, more poor drainage and less hygiene on the farm. No milking parlours, when
cows were often milked outside. This is a memory of a very happy childhood, even if it ended with working on a farm at the age of twelve. It was a time when children were welcome in any home and every adult kept a watchful eye on their safety.

Today it is hard to visualize Oadby as a village, and moreover an industrial village with a hosiery factory and home work for the boot and shoe trade. To the author of this second book of recollections this was the setting of her childhood from a three year old in 1907 to a reluctant school leaver of thirteen in 1917, when all hands were needed for the war effort. She describes her home, a four-roomed very typical midlands worker's cottage, her family, friends and the pleasures any child could enjoy when roads were not dangerous and there was nearby countryside to play in. Home-made and local entertainment, the village shops and school from four years old which gave, for all too short a time, basic skills and a love of reading and poetry. Well produced and with some good illustrations, including some entertaining contemporary advertisements, this is a very neat piece of local social history.

This third is the final instalment of the author's account of her life in Wymeswold and the changes she has seen in the village itself and in farming practices since her childhood. This volume deals with the years after the Second World War, when the horse practically disappeared from the scene and larger and larger machines have lightened the heavy work on the land and have reduced the numbers of workers on the land. So far from hens being harmed by being kept in a battery house, she makes a strong case for her birds being warmer, more comfortable and free from the rapacious fox, than wet and cold outside. She swears they are pleased to see her, settle when she sings or when a helper whistles. A light-hearted but nonetheless very witty account of the changing village scene.

G K L

THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL ISSUE IN LEICESTER, 1945—1974, and other essays 1984 £3.25
THE EDUCATION OF MALADJUSTED CHILDREN IN LEICESTER, 1892—1974 1985 £2.50
Gerald T Rimmington Iota Press

The former comprises three essays. In addition to the comprehensive school issue the author also discusses 'Secondary Technical Education in Leicester,
1908—1976’ and ‘The Origins and Development of the City of Leicester School’. All three relate to the existence of the Leicester Local Education Authority, 1902—1974. The comprehensive school issue illustrates the mixed feelings evident within the Labour Party and documents the way in which the tripartite system of secondary education was gradually displaced by the ideal of the common school. The development of secondary technical education in Leicester found its expression in a unique establishment, the Gateway School. The third essay describes the establishment of the City of Leicester School, beginning as a pupil-teacher centre, becoming a mixed secondary school and then a boys’ grammar school and eventually, after 1974, a co-educational comprehensive school.

The content of Dr Rimmington’s more recent book is a sharp contrast. In the early 1890s all backward children were retained in infants’ departments for an extra year or more. The establishment of a class at Milton Street School, Leicester in 1892 for the ‘feeble-minded’ marked the beginnings of a recognition of special educational needs in Leicester. In 1923 a central school for all backward children, at St Mary’s Fields, was founded and followed later by the opening of Manor House School.

Despite a rather dull cover and small typeface the text has a pleasant style and is easy reading. In both books Dr Rimmington’s extensive research and thoroughness are evident and he fills many gaps in our knowledge of education history.

ASHBY CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL, 1836—1986
Kenneth Hillier and Alison Hewes
Ashby-de-la-Zouch Museum 1986 £1.00

Ashby-de-la-Zouch was no different from the majority of other towns and villages in lacking adequate provision for the education of its young in the 1830s. In 1836, therefore, the inception of a National and Infants School for the town provided the first much needed professional system, governed closely by the vicar of St Helen’s parish and the school trustees. The school developed rapidly in an effort to keep pace with the increasing population of the town and new approaches to education. The ‘Ashby Church of England Girls and Infants School’, as it was later known, was congratulated by an Inspector as being ‘quite the best Infant School I have ever inspected’. Despite the filtering off of juniors to another school in 1947, space for the infants came under increasing pressure by the 1970s, mak-
ing the provision of a new school obligatory. It is to mark this final closing of the old school doors, coupled with one hundred and fifty years of the school in Ashby, that this booklet was written. Yet it is in many ways far more than an ordinary school history. Ken Hillier’s detailed knowledge of Ashby and its history is evident and this account tells us not only about the school but much also about the town during these years. Memories of former scholars and comments of current pupils add vitality to the text and make this booklet a most informative and enjoyable publication.

EVINGTON SCHOOL, 1841—1957
Jonathan Wilshere
Leicester Research Department
of Chamberlain Music and Books

The discovery of Evington school records in the belfry of the parish church in 1984 prompted the author, a local historian of note and a resident of the village, to investigate the history of the school. It was founded in 1841 as a National School, under the aegis of the parish clergy. Forster’s Education Act of 1870 made education compulsory for all those aged between five and thirteen years. With this came the need for the keeping of school ‘diaries’ or log books, minutes and Inspectors’ reports. Two of these, the log book of 1874—1902 and the Managers’ minutes of 1903—1957, the author uses as the substance of his booklet. From them he draws information on the school year, attendance, the teachers, discipline, the School Inspectors, Managers and Benefactors. An appendix lists teachers and pupil-teachers.

The publication not only achieves its purpose of relating the history of Evington School but also shews how versatile and useful school records can be in other areas of local history. In terms of appearance the untidy layout of the typescript text is off-putting; but the content is sound and makes enjoyable and instructive reading.

THE HISTORY OF ST. PETER’S CHURCH, OADBY, LEICESTER: From earliest times down to the Restoration of the See of Leicester in 1926
Bernard Elliott
Oadby Local History Group

This history of Oadby church is concerned more with people than with the building and is based on research in ecclesiastical records, wills of Oadby
residents and the laity represented by the church wardens. It starts in the somewhat hazy period of pre-Conquest England when a Christian presence in Oadby is assumed but unrecorded and the mediaeval period when the present church was built and closely associated with Launde Abbey. The Reformation, Civil War, Restoration and Revolution Settlement gave us the basic framework of the church we know today. For much of this period it was often served by absentee or pluralist vicars who left the care of the parish to their curates. The nineteenth century brought new enthusiasm to the church and after 1840 the system of plural livings was largely disallowed. The vicar lived in his vicarage and played a more vigorous part in community affairs. Over the century the church itself was repaired, restored and extended to take its present shape. This is an interesting account of the oldest institution in the village whose very presence has an impact on all its inhabitants.

G K L

HENRY FEARON: A MAKER OF MODERN LOUGHBOROUGH
Wallace Humphrey Department of Economics, Loughborough University 1985 £1.00

Henry Fearon came to Loughborough in 1848 as rector of All Saints parish and from 1863 to 1884 was also Archdeacon of Leicester. His ecclesiastical role was, however, overshadowed in many ways by his interest in sanitary science and his deep concern for the poor. Mid-nineteenth century Loughborough was stricken by a cholera epidemic, a high mortality rate, lack of drainage and fresh water and a negligible education service. By 1885, when Fearon died, a reservoir was built to provide pure water for the townspeople, the Loughborough Endowed Schools were re-established, radical changes were made to other schools and new schools were built. Not neglecting his own parish, Fearon had All Saints restored and his large congregation attended not only services but a wide range of weekday activities.

This study forms part of a series of Economic and Social History publications of Loughborough University’s Department of Economics and is based on a lecture given by the author to All Saints church congregation on the centenary of Fearon’s death. The three dozen pages of typescript text and notes include a portrait of Fearon. Anyone interested in Victorian social problems or Loughborough’s history will appreciate this thorough and expansive account.

H E B
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