THE LEICESTERSHIRE HISTORIAN

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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 opportunities for them to meet from time to time, to act as a coordinating 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 and offering advice. This year an Information Pack has been sent to all groups who are affiliated to the Council.

The former monthly meetings have been discontinued and replaced by two One-day Conferences, held in the Spring and Autumn, to which members (both individuals and groups) are invited to meet and compare notes about their activities. An up-dated list of groups, many of them affiliated as members of the Council, is published in the magazine. There are two summer outings and the A G M is held in May, kindly hosted by one of the affiliated groups.

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 Membership Secretary, who will be pleased to supply further information about membership and future activities.

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Grace Long

Grace Long was still Deputy County Librarian when the Leicestershire Local History Council was formed in 1966. She came to the first Executive Meeting and stayed until the 1988 AGM.

Her wide knowledge of the county and her contacts with the Library and Museum Services were of great value to us and she was unsparing of time and trouble.

We miss her for her interest and help and for her professionalism in all that she undertook, especially for her work in reviewing local history publications for *The Leicestershire Historian*, which she undertook for many years. Here again her wide knowledge was of particular value.

She served as Programme secretary from 1976 to 1982, during which time the Council was holding monthly events, and she organized meetings of wide and varied interest.

E M Dickson
J M Mason

Mrs Long undertook single-handed all the book reviews throughout the first volume of *The Leicestershire Historian*, which started in 1967, and she remained the principal reviewer for its first ten years. The result is that of the 415 publications reviewed in its pages to date nearly one half were dealt with by her.

Her lively appreciation of all kinds of Leicestershire local history writing was based on a wider understanding of history and interests in other regions of Britain, so that her standards were never parochial. She was quick to give credit to the work of amateur historians and her more cutting comments on some amateurish productions were left unwritten.

She took a keen general interest in the publication of our magazine and a particularly valuable contribution was her bibliographical article on Charnwood Forest, which appeared in Vol 2 No 9, 1978/9. It is fitting that the last batch of her reviews included one of the book on Stewart Mason’s contribution to education in Leicestershire, as she was the best person to appreciate this in its wider context. It will be a hard task to maintain the standards of criticism set by Mrs Long without her help, encouragement and advice.

J Goodacre
Letter to the Editor from Mrs Blanche E Harrison:

Thank you very much for the copies of your magazine. I am sorry I wasn’t in when you brought them; I would have liked a chat with you. Never mind; I feel I know you already.

I feel a sad kind of nostalgia today. Those years come back so vividly. There was such a sense of togetherness, which seems to be lacking today, don’t you agree?

Now, to a more cheerful note. I feel like a puffed up pigeon, full of pride at seeing my name in print, and all my own work. A tonic for my ego! I am giving my spare copy of the magazine to my daughter, so she can have a giggle at Mum’s expense. (We are that kind of family; but I love them all very much).

This year is a momentous one for me, as at Xmas, or just a week before, we will be celebrating our Golden Wedding. Wow! And we really feel that we know each other now — too well sometimes.

Thank you again, John. Give an old girl that privilege of using your first or Christian name, please? Yes, I am taking advantage of my age. ’Bye now, and my gratitude is to you, for your kindness.
EDITORIAL

‘You can learn to throw a hand grenade by lobbing half-a-brick. Try it out at different ranges till you can drop one where you want. Then practise on a moving target . . . An old pram drawn by a pal on a bicycle will make an excellent enemy motor-cyclist.’ The fore-shortened scene on our cover and the practical advice in its caption are taken from a special number of Picture Post issued at the beginning of the Second World War. This is mentioned by Janette Shepherd in her entertaining article on the activities of the local precursors of the Home Guard.

For most people of earlier centuries biographical details can only be gleaned indirectly from information in official and other records. Autobiographies or diaries are therefore prized by historians. David Wykes has shewn how illuminating autobiographical details recorded for a particular religious purpose can be by setting the testimony of one Leicester townsman in its eighteenth century Unitarian context.

The different threads of history cross in unaccountable ways. George Thorpe is as old as the century and has recently been writing all sorts of reminiscences. The impressions that he formed of Tilton on the Hill in the early years of the century seem to depict the timeless nineteenth century village. It is strange to think that at the same time the significance of one local by-election to the emergence of a socialist party fit to form a government of this country was spotted by Lenin.
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF A LEICESTER APOTHECARY:
SAMUEL STATHAM, c1673-1732
David L Wykes

The fortunate survival of a small volume of early eighteenth-century spiritual testimonies, made by the Presbyterian members of the Leicester Great Meeting congregation before their admission to the Lord’s Supper, offers a unique insight into the religious beliefs of individual lay men and women and is therefore a source of major historical significance. The volume is also of local interest because of the unusually detailed opening declaration by Samuel Statham referring to his adolescence and early adult life. Since few personal accounts are available for the early modern period the declaration is of particular interest and is therefore being published here in full for the first time. But Statham’s testimony can also be linked with additional evidence from a collection of family deeds and other sources to provide a rare degree of personal and factual detail about one Leicester man at the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹

The volume is part of the records of the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel and contains a total of 162 testimonies made between August 1711 and the end of 1725, with a further entry for April 1726.² The remaining entries in the volume are merely a record of the date of admission of individual communicants and do not include any testimonies. Most public testimonies of individual spiritual experience were intended to provide evidence for the gathered churches that members had undergone religious conversion before they were admitted to the sacraments. The Great Meeting volume is remarkable because the collection was made by the Presbyterian members of the congregation and was intended to offer the individual evidence of personal fitness to receive the Lord’s Supper.³

Samual Statham’s testimony, given when he was 38 years old, is the most detailed in the volume, as befits the opening declaration, but in general the testimonies in the collection contain little reference to temporal matters or external incidents and such details are only included because of their relevance to the overall spiritual account of the individual. The personal details in Statham’s testimony were therefore to illustrate his long pilgrimage and his many lapses from grace.
Statham was the son of a nonconformist minister and was later to become the father of another. He therefore grew up and lived within the social and spiritual world of religious dissent. His father, the Rev Samuel Statham the elder, had been lecturer at St Giles Cripplegate in London until the Great Ejection of 1662, when all those ministers who refused to conform to the Anglican religious settlement, the Act of Uniformity, were forced to relinquish their livings in the Church. The Stathams were a wealthy Loughborough family, with property in the town which they had purchased from the Earl of Huntingdon in the decade before the Civil War. After 1662 the elder Statham returned to his native town and in 1672 he obtained a licence under the liberty granted by Charles II’s Declaration of Indulgence to preach at his mother’s house in Loughborough. One consequence of Statham’s return to Loughborough was the birth of his son, Samuel junior, in about 1673. After the withdrawal of the Indulgence eleven months later Statham suffered a period of severe persecution and he was imprisoned for nearly three years in Leicestershire Gaol because of his nonconformity. Following his release he settled at Banbury in Oxfordshire, where he preached privately. His first wife having died, in 1681 Statham married Mary Sutton, the sister of another nonconformist minister in Banbury, who brought with her a substantial marriage portion of £120. His son, Samuel junior, remained in Loughborough and it was while making a visit to Leicestershire that Statham fell ill and died in Northamptonshire at Great Preston in 1685. His will reveals his friendship with two Leicester dissenters, William Hammonts, a weaver, and Matthew Simons, the leading patron of dissent in the town in the early eighteenth century.

Samual junior was only twelve when his father died; he was therefore brought up in Loughborough by his grandmother. In December 1689, at the age of sixteen, he was apprenticed for seven years to Josiah Coleman of Leicester. During the second half of the seventeenth century the Coleman family were the leading apothecaries in the town. They were also the principal supporters of the local Baptist meeting. It is clear, however, that links existed between the different nonconformist congregations. The first two witnesses of Josiah Coleman’s will, William Sheares and Samuel Marshall, were both leading members of the Great Meeting, the joint Presbyterian and Independent congregation. In view of his father’s nonconformist friends in the town, it is perhaps not surprising that Statham was apprenticed to a Leicester master. Nonetheless this event took place only seven months after the passing of the Toleration Act which had first legalized nonconformist worship. Since Statham, at the age of sixteen, was also somewhat older than most lads on first entering their period of instruction, his apprenticeship may have been one practical result of the greater freedom.
The choice of a master was governed by a number of factors. The principal consideration of parents or guardians was financial, whether they could afford the premiums demanded and, more importantly, whether subsequently their sons would have the capital they needed to set up in business. Since the amount of capital available influenced the choice of career, only sons of wealthy families could expect to be apprenticed to a leading master. In addition religious dissenters, because of their particular anxiety about the susceptibility of the young to sin and the dangers of bad company, took great trouble to place their children in a religious household with a good family discipline. As a result they often chose fellow dissenters as masters.

The availability of capital has been seen as the crucial determinant for economic success. Thus sons from wealthy families could expect to set up in business on completing their apprenticeships, since their families already possessed the necessary resources to finance their business. A substantial proportion were condemned to life-long wage-earning status, while others faced lengthy delays before they were able to become economically independent. Statham was therefore fortunate in having a good inheritance. In December 1693, having attained the age of 21, his father’s executor transferred to Statham the property at Loughborough which he held in trust. Statham had also inherited the estate of his uncle, John Statham of Loughborough, who had died in 1674. In August the following year, despite having two years of his apprenticeship indentures still to complete, he entered into a partnership with his master for the remaining period of his term. Statham was to set up shop in Loughborough and in consideration of the partnership he was to give Coleman half the apothecary’s goods and utensils, valued at £100, which he had purchased from Dr Simon Adams of Daventry. The drugs and compositions purchased from Dr Adams represented Statham’s share of the partnership capital and were to be used to stock the Loughborough shop, which Statham was required to fit out at his own expense. Any profits or losses derived from the partnership were to be shared equally. Such arrangements were not uncommon for wealthy apprentices wishing to make a start in their own business. But Statham was doubtless prompted to seek a partnership before completing his term of service by the fact that he had already come of age and received his inheritance. For sons from more modest backgrounds, beginning their apprenticeship at such a late age would have been a considerable handicap and one that many would never have successfully overcome. The example of Statham therefore clearly demonstrates the advantage for the apprentice with capital of his own. He was able to enter a partnership, even before he had completed his period.
of service, because he could buy a share of the business. Under the terms of the agreement Statham was still obliged to serve Coleman in his shop in Leicester, though he was expected to be in Loughborough on market and fair days. It must be doubted that the partnership was successful as Statham records that as soon as he was out of his indentures he ran away to London. But he was still described as of Leicester when he completed the sale of a meadow in Loughborough fields to George Metcalfe for £60 in 1696.\(^8\)

It is hardly surprising that Statham, as the son of a nonconformist minister, recorded in his testimony that he ‘had the advantage of Godly Parents, and a Religious Education’. In fact the volume of testimonies as a whole reveals that communicants were without exception from religious backgrounds. Whilst a number admitted they had lived in irreligious households or had fallen in with unsuitable company, it is evident that they already possessed an understanding of sin and came from religious, if not always dissenting, backgrounds. Nonetheless Statham, like many adolescents, rebelled against his upbringing. He admitted that ‘his childhood and youth were mostly Vanity’ and whilst an apprentice ‘the Blackest Scene of his whole Life was Trans-acted’ and ‘no Sooner out of his Time’ than he ran away ‘and got first to London then to Sea where he stayed with Great Uneasiness 30 Months’. His period at sea, presumably as a ship’s apothecary, saw the beginning of his religious awakening, with a ‘Conviction of his sin and folly’.

Soon after his return to Loughborough, in about 1699, Statham’s spiritual pilgrimage began in earnest when he went to hear a lecture at a neighbouring meeting-house by Mr Ryther, the minister of the Castle Gate Congregational Church in Nottingham, who preached:—

at such a rate as he seldom heard . . . God then set in with the word, and Convinced him of his undone State and Condition . . . he now began . . . to see himself Lost and undone . . . (and was) driven in Good Earnest go Good . . . he then Declares that he was made Sick of Sin and sensible of his need of the Lord Jesus Christ the Great Physitian of Souls

He was directed to God by these words of Christ, ‘Come unto me etc’, delivered in a sermon by Ryther. Some time afterwards Michael Matthews, the minister of the Presbyterian congregation at Mountsorrel, preached at Loughborough:—

of the Duty and Benefit of Prayer, from these words, ‘and Jacob wrestled with God and Prevailed’. It was a Seasonable word for the Devil had frequently Tempted him to desist from that Duty

He found the writings of ‘holy Mr Dod’, the celebrated seventeenth-century puritan minister, ‘of great Use’. But while still living in Loughborough he was:—
much ensnared by bad Company, which tended mightily to chill his
Affection to God and Religion, but when by the Providence of God he
was brought (to Leicester) he was in some good Measure freed from these
Temptations
and he sat for some years 'with great Satisfaction and Profit under Mr
Spencer's Ministry'. This period of satisfaction was disrupted. The nature
of the disagreement in which Statham was involved is unclear but in view
of the divisions that later occurred within the congregation between the
Presbyterian and the Congregationalist membership, it was probably some
sort of dispute with the minister, Edmund Spencer, and other members of
the congregation, over issues of doctrine or religious practice. But by the
time he made his declaration a few years later, while under Gee's ministry,
Statham expressed his gratitude that 'Reverence has obtained more in his
family of late than it had done before'.

Although the vividness of Statham's account and the amount of personal
detail he included are untypical, he followed a conventional religious
pattern; for he shared with the other communicants making testimonies a
common experience of spiritual awakening together with an understanding
of the means of obtaining grace: the heightened sense of youthful sin, which
many felt retrospectively; the beginnings of conviction with his awareness
of personal sin, subsequently reinforced by Ryther's preaching; his fear of
God's wrath because of those sins, his despair of being 'lost and undone',
which led to humiliation and dependence upon God, and finally to vocation,
with the identification and acceptance of God's call as provided by Scripture.
If the conclusion of Statham's account gives an impression of assurance,
this may be misleading. In many cases the spiritul pilgrimage and battle for
conviction clearly did not end in this world and individuals had to endure
a life-long struggle to maintain a life of devotion and spiritual progress, which
would only end in death and union with Christ. While all the testimonies
recorded in the Great Meeting volume described at least part of this process,
since they are personal accounts there are understandable differences in
detail and emphasis between them. Some gave more attention to the events
leading to conversion, others to those that followed. Many narratives had
rather more to say than Statham about uniting with Christ, in listing the
'signs' of Grace, their delight in religious observances and the company of
the 'saints', or in describing the internal 'evidences' for the transformation
of their attitudes and emotions.

Samuel Statham made his testimony in 1711 when he was about 38 years
old. It remains the main source of personal detail concerning his life. But
Statham was to live for another twenty years, dying in March 1731/2, when
about sixty years old. In the absence of any comparable source there is far
less personal detail available for the later period of his life; even the details relating to his family are incomplete. The date of his marriage is unknown and only some of the information on the births and deaths of his children is available. Such information is always hard to find for dissenters due to the vagaries of nonconfirmist record-keeping and the subsequent loss of many of those records which were kept. No records survive for the ministry of Gee’s predecessor and Gee only began his register of baptisms for the Great Meeting in 1713. Although he included retrospective entries dating back to June 1711, the register covers the period after Statham’s children were born.\textsuperscript{10} The collection of family deeds together with Statham’s will do, however, provide important additional information, particularly on his finances, because of the details concerning his land sales and his partnership with Coleman.

Statham, it is clear, was one of the leading members of the Great Meeting. As the son of an ejected minister — a much respected tradition within dissent — he was an appropriate person to give the opening testimony. But there is also evidence of his own personal standing within the congregation. He was one of the eight principal members named in the arbitration agreement drawn up in 1716 to resolve the dispute between the Presbyterian and Congregational members of the congregation and their two ministers.\textsuperscript{11} Statham also appears to have served the congregation as treasurer, an important position of trust in what was the leading nonconformist congregation in the town. In 1726 he paid over the monies in his hand to the new collectors, William Bentley (the future banker) and Thomas Chapman.\textsuperscript{12} Apart from this Statham would have gained some of his status as a result of the property he owned in Loughborough and the income he derived from it.

Statham’s testimony records the considerable mobility he experienced during adolescence: born in Loughborough, apprenticed in Leicester, he ran away to London and then to sea. Recent research suggests, however, that, allowing for important regional and social variations, physical mobility was widespread after 1660; indeed common for most English men and women during their adolescence. Most movement appears to have been localised, involving servants, apprentices and marriage partners. Statham was, therefore, typical of many other young men who served an apprenticeship and worked for a master before gaining their economic independence, even if his particular experience of running away to sea is unlikely to have been shared by many. Statham was, however, untypical in certain other respects. Most families appear to have severed their ties with their place of birth. In contrast Statham, though for most of his life he lived and had his business
in Leicester, continued to retain strong links with Loughborough, his native
town. When he made his will in July 1726 he described himself as of St
Martin’s parish, Leicester, but he left to his wife’s discretion ‘the manner
of my Interment, either att Leicester near Cosen Mary Foulds or att
Loughbrow with my dear Children, which to her seems best’. Two of his
children who died in infancy were buried at Loughborough and his surviving
daughter, Mary, who died unmarried in 1745, lived during the latter period
of her life in Loughborough and was buried there; almost certainly because
her brother had become the minister of the Presbyterian meeting in the town.
The maintenance by the Stathams of such strong ties with Loughborough
was undoubtedly a consequence of the family property they continued to
own there.

The date of Statham’s return to Leicester from Loughborough, where he had
gone after his thirty months at sea, is not certain. The evidence from the
surviving deeds that he executed shews that he was still in Loughborough
in 1704, when he was a witness to the will of Elizabeth Bywater, a member
of the Great Meeting. He had certainly returned by 1708, at which date he
executed a lease. A date sometime between 1704 and 1706 appears most
likely for his return, since in his testimony he stated that he had sat for some
years under Spencer’s ministry, and Thomas Gee became assistant minister
in about 1709. Possibly the death of his former master in 1704 provided
the opportunity for Statham to open a shop in Leicester.

Although Statham’s seven year period of apprenticeship would have been
completed by December 1696, he did not become a freeman until 1702.
Such delays were not uncommon but the decision to take out his freedom
had little to do with any economic privileges, since Statham was still living
in Loughborough. Leicester freemen were, however, entitled to vote in
parliamentary elections for the Borough and the General Election of 1702
was the first of a series of hotly disputed contests during Queen Anne’s
reign. As a result 230 freemen were admitted in a short period of four
months, 187 in April alone; more than ten times the normal rate of
enrolment. Statham almost certainly took out his freedom in order to vote
at elections and not in consideration of any trading requirements. The election
of 1702 was of considerable importance for dissenters because of the growing
strength of High Churchmen and their political allies during Queen Anne’s
reign. Statham himself seems to have experienced this hostility. In October
1712, at the height of the High Church reaction, he had obtained a licence
from the ecclesiastical authorities to practise medicine and surgery, despite
already working in the town as an apothecary for a number of years.
Physicians, surgeons and midwives, and also schoolteachers, had by law
to be licensed by their bishop but it is clear that many of them, and not just dissenters, neglected to qualify themselves. Statham’s decision to regularize his position at this particular time was undoubtedly prompted by the realization that as a dissenter he was vulnerable to the threat of prosecution.

Evidence on Statham’s later business activities is limited, though his prominence as a leading member of the Great Meeting is some indication of his success in business. More direct evidence of his importance as a businessman comes from the premiums he obtained with his apprentices. He was paid fifty pounds when he took Richard Cogan as an apprentice in 1720 and the same amount with a second apprentice seven years later. Most apprenticeship premiums charged in this period were modest. In Leicester the premium for a craft remained at between five and ten pounds until at least the mid-eighteenth century. Only masters belonging to the most prestigious trades, notably mercers, ironmongers and hosiers, were charging as much as fifty to hundred pounds by the 1720s and 1730s.16

Evidence relating to Statham’s apprentices also helps illustrate the network of contacts to be found amongst dissenters. Cogan was from Rothwell in Northamptonshire, which had one of the most active Independent Churches during the early eighteenth century, and the Cogan family were to provide a number of prominent dissenters in the next generation. Statham’s second apprentice, bound the year Cogan completed his term of servitude, was from Clay Coton, also in Northamptonshire and not far from Daventry.17 Since Statham purchased his original stock from Dr Adams of Daventry, who was perhaps a dissenter as well, it suggests the existence of a network of contacts originating with his father’s nonconformist preaching in the area during the late 1670s and early 1680s.

Statham was not a typical figure; hence the unusual degree of personal details which survives concerning him. He was clearly one of the wealthier inhabitants of the town, the surviving family deeds attest to the property and wealth he owned and his status as the son of an ejected minister and position as a prominent supporter of Thomas Gee’s ministry explain why he gave the opening declaration, which contains so much personal detail. Nevertheless the evidence can be used to illustrate not only much about Statham’s own life, which is of intrinsic interest in itself, but also a number of more general issues, such as apprenticeship, personal mobility and the structure of religious dissent.
The opening declaration and Samuel Statham's testimony, from the 'Declaration of Communicants', 1711-31, belonging to the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel, Leicester

Leicester

These Following having, we Hope, given Themelves to ye Lord, gave Themselves to us, and Proposed to sit down with us at the Table of the Lord, July 15. 1711 To whom we gave the Right hand of Fellowship,

Josiah Harrison  John Adcock
Robt Grew       John Jones
Simon Retchford Isaac Cook
Jos Vesey       Margaret Parsons
Ann Simpson     Mary Folds
Mary Duckett    Mary Dracot
Ann Huffin      Mary Retchford
Ann Bentley     Susanna Erpe
Leavesly       Jane Marshall
Large          Mary Bentley
Eliz. Hewell
Mary Coates

Preserve 'em by thy Power!

Aug. 22. 1711.

Samuel Statham Declares, That It being usuall in this Church for Persons before their admission to the Sacred & Solemn Ordinance of ye Lords Supper, not only to give Some Account to the Minister of ye work of Grace wrought by God upon their Souls, but also to Members of the Church (by ye Minister) that so they might be more capable of Judging of their meetness for that Ordinance; & he declares, that there being a more than Ordinary Occasion for him that has been a most Scandalous Sinner, to acquaint you with the Methods of Divine Grace & Goodness in Reclaiming him, he first Declares that he had the advantage of Godly Parents, and a Religious Education but Grace be no Inheritance his childhood & youth were mostly Vanity: He was between 16 & 17 set Apprentice to this Town, where the Blackest Scene of his whole Life was Transacted, Scandalously sinning against God, & before the World: He was no Sooner out of his Time but he run yet further from God & Duty, & got first to London then to Sea where he stayd with Great Uneasiness 30 Months, during which Time he had
frequent checks of Conscience, & Conviction of his sin & folly: soon after his Return to Lou’boro’ he went 3 miles to a Lecture where Mr Rider then of Nottingham, now with God Preachd, at such a rate as he seldom heard from these Words of John yᵉ Baptist Oh Generation of Vipers, &c. It was he says an happy opportunity, God then set in with yᵉ word, & Convinced him of his undone State & Condition, not only by Word but by Practice he now began he says, to see himself Lost & undone, & exposd to the wrath of the almighty: he was then he hopes driven in Good Earnest to God to beg for Pardon & Deliverance from yᵉ wrath to come: he then Declares that he was made Sick of Sin & sensible of his need of the Lord Jesus Christ yᵉ Great Physitⁿ of Souls, & God by the Person aforsaid directed him to him by these words Come unto me &c. The Urgency of yᵉ Invitation was great encouragment & yᵉ Thouhts of yᵉ Rest Promisd.

Some time after Mr Matthews preachd at Lou’boro’ of yᵉ Duty & Benefit of Prayer, from these words, & Jacob wrestled with God & Prevailed. It was a Seasonable word for yᵉ Devil had frequently Tempted him to desist from that Duty: that of holy Mr Dod was of great Use to prevent yᵉ Success of this Temptation, Prayer will make a man give over Sinning, or Sinner &c. But while he was in that Town much ensnared by bad Company, which tended mightily to chill his Affection to God & Religion, but when by yᵉ Providence of God he was brout hither he was in some good Measure freed from these Temptations, & sat for some Years with great Satisfaction & Profit under Mr Spencers Ministry, but contention & Uneasiness arising he was involvd, & you Must know how: he solemnly declares that he was wrongd in that Matter, but heartily forgives all, & heartily desires yᵉ forgiveness of all that he has offended: he Blesses God, that Reverence has obtained more in his family of Late than it had done before, he desires to Lament that he has livd so Long in the Neglect of so great a Duty, & honourable a Priveledge as this to which he desires to be admitted, if he should be thout worthy, & desires yᵉ Prayrs that he may be Really so.

References:

1. Leicestershire Record Office (LRO) 14 D 56/1-4, 3 D 58/1-14 & 14 D 63/1-74 Statham family deeds and papers, 1633-1809
2. LRO N/U/1 79/50 Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel, Leicester ‘Declaration of Communicants’, 1711-32/3. I wish to acknowledge the permission of the Chairman and Vestry to use and quote from this volume and to publish Statham’s testimony.
3. Questions concerning the purpose of the volume, the reliability of the testimonies as evidence of lay religious beliefs and the degree of editorial distortion are discussed in my forthcoming study, ‘Lay
Religious Beliefs: The Spiritual Testimonies of Presbyterian Communicants in Early Eighteenth-century Leicester.


5. 14 D 63/67 Articles of agreement for a partnership, reciting Shatham’s apprenticeship indenture dated 12 Dec 1689; Will 1704/103 Josiah Coleman, Leicester, apothecary

6. 14 D 63/66 Conveyance to Samuel Statham jun by the executor of his father, Brouncker Watts of Great Bourton, Oxfordshire, yeoman, 20 Dec 1693; Will 1674/46 & 1674 Adm 30 Nuncupative will and administration of John Statham of Loughborough, gent

7. He may have sold some property in Loughborough to finance the purchase, since a deed to perform an indenture of grant and release survives dated 28 March 1694, 3 D 58/6

8. 3 D 58/7 Sale of meadow in the fields of Loughborough, 13 March 1695/6

9. *Cf ‘Declaration of Communicants’,* pp 17 & 28

10. PRO Non-parochial Registers, RG4/2323 The Great Meeting Presbyterian Congregation Register of Baptism, 1711-41

11. LRO N/U/179/51 Great Meeting Chapel ‘Arbitration Agreement’, 27 March 1716

12. ‘Poor’s Book’, now missing

13. LRO 76/29 Mortgage, 25 March 1704; Will 1708/28 Elizabeth Bywater, Leicester, spinster, dated 28 June 1706; 14 D 63/71 Lease for 21 years, 24 March 1708

14. Will 1704/103, PR/1/111/32, Josiah Coleman, Leicester, apothecary

15. *Register of Freemen*, ed H Hortopp, pp 185-91

16. *Ibid, 387 & 407; ibid, 382 et passim.* The personal estate of Cogan’s father when he died in 1713 was valued at £258 5s, shewing that he was a man of substance. See Northamptonshire Record Office, 1713/109A, Thomas Cogan, Rothwell, apothecary. The apprenticeship premium paid by Richard Cogan almost certainly represented the £50 that he was left in the will of his father

TILTON ON THE HILL IN THE EARLY 1900s
George Thorpe

Travelling along the A47 recently recalled memories — when passing the sign ‘TILTON — 4 MILES’ — of happy childhood days spent there on holidays some eighty years ago. In those days our Leicester-dwelling family had a pony and trap and used to drive there for a day out and further to spend many summer holidays in the village, staying at the Rose and Crown Inn and on occasion at the village butcher’s home, then at the other end of the main street.

The old inn still remains, but, alas, there is no longer a butcher’s shop. Then, a John Hall was the licensee and apart from the pub, he ran as a sideline a spot of farming, keeping milking cows, pig-rearing and a few sheep. The yard had much stabling and a large shelter for farm carts and farming machines. There were large cattle pens beyond; for a monthly cattle sale was held and a Leicester auctioneer, Whittle, Attenborough & Co, would officiate. Animals, in the main, arrived on the hoof and the drovers would congregate to take the purchases to their respective homes after the sale. These events brought much trade to the licensed premises.

Further to the yard, there was a long alley skittle range, made by old railway sleepers. Many a pleasant evening was spent playing there by the villagers. Three young, well to do business pals, Jack Mawby, Sam Keites and a
Ferguson, from Leicester, frequently visited the Rose and Crown, and used to delight in joining in the game. They were always welcome by the locals; for they were good sports and generous with providing liquid refreshment.

On one occasion, they brought a younger man with them. He was gloriously clad and filled the then popular role of the ‘Knut’. He strode across, dressed in a brand new pair of flannel slacks, to the alley. ‘How do you play this bally game?’ he enquired. One of the three chums picked up a ball to instruct him how to pitch; the second, after winking at his pals, started to set up the pins; the third nipped into the pub garden and selected an outsize stick of rhubarb. Just as the ‘Knut’ was delivering the ball, the rhubarb was brought smartly across his backside, leaving the inevitable stain on those brand new slacks, completely ruining them. For this was years prior to dry cleaning being thought of. The uproar made by the afflicted brought gales of laughter from the three seniors, who told him to buy another pair. Our ‘Knut’ was disgusted by their lack of sympathy. But, to be fair, years later, when I next saw the victim, he was wearing Khaki and his ‘ribbons’ proved that other things than mere dress had occupied him in the interval.

Reverting to the pub, right opposite the yard gate was a glorious cluster of trees and the blacksmith would leave newly iron-rimmed cart wheels there to cool off. The trees have long since gone. At a comparatively recent lunch in the pub, I surprised the landlord’s wife by asking if the dairy still obtained, explaining that I churned butter therein some seventy odd years ago. The milk would be in large pancheons for the cream to be skimmed off by a hand scoop ready for the churn. It was a tricky job. Anyone who thinks whirling the churn round at great speed is the answer, will soon learn to alter his or her tactics.

The return of the £1 piece and the suggested pocket bag to carry it recalls that the golden sovereigns and halves were kept in similar ones with a tie round their necks. At the cattle sales the coins were counted out in payment — cheques were not much favoured in that area in those early 1900s. One wealthy cattle-dealer, a Mr Hart, could hardly write, but he knew his every beast, where bought, its cost and more to the point, its today value. How the Inland Revenue sorted out the profit and loss transactions is not known. As a value comparison I recall four lambs fetching ten shillings (50p) each at one sale. The auctioneer took sixpence each ex that for his services (circa 1908).

The butcher killed beast in the actual brick-floored shop. The animal was dragged by a rope, noosed round its neck to a block in the floor, where it
was poleaxed prior to having its throat cut. The rope was manned by three to four men and always included Mr Oliver, the keeper of the P.O. and general store next door. After the poleaxing operation, he would be invited into the house parlour by the master butcher, who left his son in charge. Once seated in the snug, the standard question was asked:—

‘What would you like to drink?’ and after a momentary pause came the standard reply:—

‘A drop of Scotch, please’.

The hot water for dilution was ready on the hob. The couple then discussed topics of the day — local and national. Suddenly the Post Office man remembered official business and retired to his shop whilst the butcher returned to the task of dressing the beast. The routine never varied from week to week. Mr Oliver, who was almost as broad as he was tall, was a well educated man and my father, who enjoyed a chat with him, used to quote a favourite saying of the P.O. Keeper. The latter would decry education in any form and conclude his argument with:—

‘If I’d never learnt to write, I’d have never entered so much credit in my ledger — a lot of the ‘Ruddy’ stuff bad debts’.

His gentle, petite wife would always check William for use of the profane, but his ‘Lordship’ responded that he was only talking to Mr Thorpe.

The village policeman was another gem. He’d call in the Rose and Crown at 9.45 pm — closing time 10 pm. He’d stare at the ceiling.

‘Been a nice day, constable.’

‘Yes!, sir, it’ll help the haymakers, nicely.’

‘Would you like a drink?’

‘Thank you, sir.’ And the pint would slide down his throat. More ceiling-watching.

‘Could you manage another, constable?’

‘Thank ‘ee kindly, sir.’ And the second pint would quickly disappear.

Meanwhile Tempus Fugit — it was 10.15. Then the Arm of the Law would straighten up; tighten his belt; turn up his oil lamp carried thereon and amidst the ‘Time, gentlemen, please’, step outside with the local poacher, to start on his beat.

Upon his retiral, his successor shocked the whole community by summoning the poacher for poaching. The wind of change (to quote) had definitely arrived. Public opinion had made illegal shooting of tame pigeons, released from a box, on the grounds of cruelty. The horseless carriage had appeared; some ploughing was done by dragging a manned plough by cable by steam engines stationed either side of the field — indeed things were on the move generally.
One thing peculiar to the Tilton area was after putting the hay into cobs, it was dragged by an enveloping rope attached to a horse to the stack and not loaded onto a cart. The corn crops were cut by the binder and thrashed on its machine — a very dusty (rat-full at times) operation.

Available transport of the period — the former G.N.R. — nearest (2 ½ miles) Lowesby Station; Tilton station — 3 miles distant; the carrier, Jordon, journeyed to Leicester once or twice a week. Today — both rail stations have gone and lines pulled up, dependent on bus or private conveyance.

Those people of yore were hard workers and generally lowly paid, but I pay tribute to their kindness to us as children and those children were not angels, I fear. In passing, when our yeomen are toasted, as they should deservedly be, their women-folk should not be forgotten. For, apart from being wives domestically, they helped the economy by Stilton Cheese making, butter-making, egg-collecting and poultry-management, helping in crop-harvesting, additionally to carrying meals to their men-folk. And all this by candle and lamp power cum open fires. The washing machine, the vacuum and central heating were not even dreams in that period. These ladies were truly great partners.

Such are a few slight sketches of the Tilton of my boyhood in the early 1900s.
LENIN ON THE 1913 LEICESTER ELECTION

The brief campaign leading up to the 1913 by-election for one of the Leicester seats in Parliament caused quite a stir. The Liberal government was losing its hold over the electorate but the Socialist opposition was as yet disunited. In constituencies like Leicester, where there were two seats, there was an unwritten pact between Liberals and Labour to put up only one candidate each, to vote for each other's and so make sure that the Conservative candidate did not win against a divided opposition.

The Labour Member of Parliament was Ramsay MacDonald, the future leader of the Labour Party, who was at the time on the party’s National Executive Committee. Leicester had a strong Liberal tradition, but it was the retirement of the Liberal Member, owing to a divorce case, that necessitated the by-election. This put MacDonald in an embarrassing position as the local Independent Labour Party decided to ignore the pact by putting up a Labour candidate. The party national committees, however, refused to endorse this candidature, whereupon the local branch of the British Socialist Party put up their own candidate instead in defiance of MacDonald.

In the event the Liberal candidate still headed the poll, although the Conservative did well for a Conservative in Leicester, no doubt because of the divided opposition. The Labour candidate might have obtained more votes had not a ‘manifesto’ been publicised, by the Liberals, purporting to have been issued by the Executive Committee of the Labour Party and saying that:

The action of the Leicester Labour Party is regarded as such a grave violation of national party discipline, and such a graceless disregard of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald’s position, as will inevitably lead to a considerable
disruption of the Labour Party forces, and must compel Mr. MacDonald to sever his connection with Leicester.

Already other constituencies are open to him. Therefore, his Parliamentary career is assured.

Nevertheless, every labour voter who is concerned to preserve party discipline and understanding, and who agrees to the desirability of retaining Mr. MacDonald in Leicester, should give no encouragement to the candidature of Mr. Hartley, which is not encouraged by the official Labour party.

This election campaign, with all its twists and turns, has recently been described in detail by John Pasiecznik in his article ‘Liberals, Labour and Leicester — The 1913 By-Election in Local and National Perspective’. It did, however, also achieve some international notoriety, in Germany and Russia, as the following ironical article by Lenin shews. His source was accurate as to the figures of the voting but was mistaken as to which Member had resigned and evidently did not suspect the ‘manifesto’ of being a Liberal fabrication. The irony of the so-called Independent Labour party being dependent on the Liberal government was a commonplace in the contemporary newspapers; the additional jibe that it was also independent of socialism seems to have been a product of Lenin’s own wit.

EXPOSURE OF THE BRITISH OPPORTUNISTS

A Parliamentary by-election recently took place in Leicester, England. This election is of enormous importance in principle, and every socialist interested in the very important question of the attitude of the proletariat towards the liberal bourgeoisie in general, and the British socialist movement in particular, should ponder deeply over the Leicester election.

Leicester is a two-member constituency and each elector has two votes. There are only a few constituencies of this kind in Britain, but they particularly favour a tacit bloc between the Socialists and the Liberals, as is emphasised
by the correspondent in Britain of the *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. It was precisely in such constituencies that the most prominent of the leaders of the so-called Independent (independent of socialism, but dependent on liberalism) Labour Party were elected to Parliament. The I.L.P. leaders, Keir Hardie, Philip Snowden and Ramsay MacDonald, were returned by such constituencies.

And in these constituencies the Liberals, who are in the ascendancy, call on their supporters to cast one vote for the Socialist and one for the Liberal, provided, of course, that the Socialist is a "reasonable", moderate, "independent" one and not an irreconcilable Socialist-Democrat, whom the British Liberals and liquidators, no less than the Russian, know how to curse as an anarcho-syndicalist, etc.!

What actually takes place, therefore, is the formation of a bloc between the Liberals and the moderate, opportunist Socialists. Actually, the British "independents" (for whom our liquidators express such tender feelings) depend on the Liberals. The conduct of the "independents" in the British Parliament constantly confirms this dependence.

It happened that the I.L.P. member for Leicester, none other than the party leader, MacDonald, resigned for personal reasons.

What was to be done?

The Liberals, of course, put forward their candidate.

Leicester is a factory town with a predominantly proletarian population.

The local I.L.P. organisation called a conference which by 67 votes against 8 decided to put forward a candidate. No sooner said than done. Banton, a Town Councillor and prominent member of the I.L.P., was nominated.

Then the Executive Committee of this Party, which assigns the money for the election campaign (and elections in Britain are very costly!), refused to endorse Banton's candidature.

The opportunist Executive Committee opposed the local workers.

The Leicester branch of the other British socialist party, which is not opportunist and is really independent of the Liberals, then sent its representative to the Leicester I.L.P. and invited them to support its candidate, Hartley, a member of the British Socialist Party, a very popular figure in the labour movement, an ex-member of the Independent Labour Party, who left it because of its opportunism.

The members of the Leicester Branch of the I.L.P. were in an awkward position: they were heart and soul in favour of Hartley, but . . . but what of the discipline in their party, the decision of their Executive Committee? The Leicester people found a way out: they closed the meeting, and each in his private capacity declared for Hartley. Next day a huge meeting of workers endorsed Hartley's candidature. Banton himself sent a telegram stating that he would vote for Hartley. The Leicester trade unions declared for Hartley.
The I.L.P. Parliamentary group intervened and published a protest in the Liberal press (which, like our Rech and Sovremenka, helps the opportunists) against Harley’s candidature, against “undermining” MacDonald!

The election, of course, resulted in a victory for the Liberals. They obtained 10,863 votes, the Conservatives 9,279, and Hartley 2,580.

Class-conscious workers in various countries quite often adopt a “tolerant” attitude toward the British I.L.P. This is a great mistake. The betrayal of the workers’ cause in Leicester by the I.L.P. is no accident, but the result of the entire opportunist policy of the Independent Labour Party. The sympathies of all real Social-Democrats should be with those British Social-Democrats who are determinedly combating the Liberal corruption of the workers by the “Independent” Labour Party in Britain.

Sources:


R H Evans, ‘Parliamentary History since 1835’, Victoria History of the County of Leicester, IV The City of Leicester, 1958, pp 235-41

Leicester Journal, June 13, 1913, p 8
This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Local Defence Volunteers. On May 10th, 1940 Germany had invaded Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg. There was a very real fear of an imminent invasion of our shores and on May 14th the Secretary of State for War, Anthony Eden, broadcast a call for men in reserved occupations and those for any other reason not already in the armed forces to come forward and form a locally based volunteer force to defend the towns and villages of Britain.

The Local Defence Volunteer Force under that name was short lived. In another broadcast on July 14th Prime Minster Winston Churchill coined the name ‘Home Guard’ for this force and so the Home Guard it became.

Leicestershire Record Office has recently received a donation of a small collection of records which gives an insight into the workings and organization of the Local Defence Volunteers before they were transformed into the Home Guard. Amongst the items is a copy of a Picture Post Special ‘Arm for Defence’ shewing on the cover a man in battledress with an L.D.V. armband standing ready to challenge all comers with a Canadian Ross rifle. The first article gives a good impression of the feelings aroused at the time. ‘Arm the citizens! Make our island a fortress! It is the cry of our people . . .
Here — for all our soldier citizens — is the first lesson in war'. Subsequent
pages have illustrations of how to build barricades, recognize a German
paratrooper (entitled ‘the man against Britain’), make home-made grenades,
identify types of German aircraft, judge distances and also action drawings
of a throng of excited ‘soldier-citizens’ calling for spades to dig trenches and
learning accuracy in the use of hand-grenades by lobbing half-bricks at an
old perambulator.

The reality for no.6 Platoon, ‘B’ Company, Leicester City Group seems,
initially at least, to have been somewhat different. There was a national
shortage of rifles with which to arm this new citizen army, due, according
to Wing Commander J W Ogilvy Dalgleish, firstly to the destruction by bomb­
ing of one of the largest small arms and munitions factories in the Midlands
and secondly to the sale to China some years previously of the bulk of the
reserve of rifles left over from the First World War.2 This proved particularly
irksome to Captain R Eric Pochin, who was second in command of no.6
Platoon, ‘B’ Company, Leicester City Group L.D.V. at this period, as can
be seen from the following extract from one of his letters in the collection,
dated July 5th, 1940:—

In the first inadequate issue of rifles there was no equipment for clean­
ing, nor were the arms provided with slings . . . Issue has now been made
of more rifles and precisely the same conditions obtain — in fact what
can only be described as a ‘‘slip-shod’’ method of equipping this force
has been aggravated by the provision of bayonets (for the new arms only)
without any means of wearing the same.
This means that the men will have to resort to any temporary expedient
they can manage, such as pieces of rope, string or webbing, and I venture
to suggest that this is an intolerable state of affairs and one which need
never exist had efficient organisation prevailed in the distribution of
equipment. It not only detracts from the efficiency of the Corps but brings
ridicule upon it which is resented by the ex-service members who naturally
expect to be provided with such gear as will enable them to maintain the
dignity and reputation of the British Army.3

The reply from George Russell, Officer Commanding ‘B’ Company, five days
later was fairly curt and can only have added to Captain Pochin’s sense of
frustration:—

With reference to your memo of the 5th inst. frequent representations
are being made to higher authorities for better equipment, and whilst the
position is very unsatisfactory, as far as I can ascertain we are receiving
our fair share of any equipment issued. I have made special applications
re slings for rifles but have no information as to probable issue.4
'Who'll lend spades to dig some trenches?'

*Picture Post Special*
Captain Pochin had been an officer in the 4th Battalion (T.A.) of the Leicestershire Regiment from 1915 during the First World War and was later to become Adjutant of the 3rd Leicestershire (West Leicester) Battalion of the Home Guard based at the Magazine in Leicester. In civilian life he was a director of the Leicester firm of Goodwin, Barsby & Co Ltd, a post he was allowed to retain even whilst a serving officer in the 3rd Leicestershire (West Leicester) Battalion. Two items in the collection suggest that as early as March 1939 he was involved in organizing his workforce in the face of the threat posed by Hitler’s rise to power. A memo in reply to a note of March 11th, 1939 relating to the T.A. and A.R.P. states ‘I honestly think that if some of the higher positioned members of the staff were to join the example would be followed by the lesser important members’, whilst a sheet of the firm’s paper holds a list of names, presumably of employees, with the number of years each had served and rank attained in the armed services and merchant navy. Three Sergeants, a Lewis Gun instructor and a musketry instructor on the list have been underlined.

The L.D.V. when it was set up was to provide a purely local force. Members were required to give only part time service and were not required to live away from home. They were, however, subject to military law and, on signing on, were expected to serve, without pay, for the duration of the war, although they could withdraw from the force by giving fourteen days notice in writing. Their role was firstly to keep watch and to give advance warning of enemy invasion or attack and second to be a first line of defence against any such attack and to harass any advancing enemy forces. Early priority was given to training the men for both these roles although once again ex-First World War officers like Pochin found much to frustrate them in their efforts to transform their recruits into an efficient force. Popular lore was that the letters L.D.V. stood for ‘Look, Duck and Vanish’.

All over the country the threat of invasion was perceived to be a very real one and in inland counties such as Leicestershire it was expected that such an invasion would be airborne. School playing fields and recreation grounds were obstructed to prevent enemy aircraft landing and open stretches of water, including the long straight reach of the Thames where Henley Regatta took place in happier years, had huge piles driven in all down their length to prevent landings by seaplanes. The men of the L.D.V. in Leicester were not unaffected by the general ‘jitteryness’ of the times and we have a stern memo to all Group Commanders from a Lieutenant Colonel (not named) who was Staff Officer of the County of Leicester L.D.V. at the Magazine, dated July 1st, 1940, to the effect that ‘complaints have been received of members of the Local Defence Volunteers, other than those on duty at properly
authorised road blocks, holding up traffic on the roads at night. It must be clearly understood by all that the L.D.V. are neither required nor authorised to hold up traffic whether or not an air raid is in progress.¹⁰

Against this background is set the first (and only) tactical exercise of no.6 Platoon Company L.D.V. on July 18th, 1940. Braunstone Aerodrome, which belonged to the City of Leicester, had in peacetime been the headquarters of Leicester Flying Club and fell within the Platoon’s area of operations; so it was natural that the exercise should be centred on it as a potential landing-place for enemy troop-carrier planes, preceded by paratroopers. As Captain Pochin put it, ‘As raiding becomes more & more common the surprise element of landing by paratroopers will be increased due to the fact that we should not know whether planes are coming over for bombing or for a landing’.¹¹

Preliminary preparations for the defence of the aerodrome had been put in hand. Alderman W E Wilford used his good offices to have the City Surveyor arrange for the construction of sentry boxes for the aerodrome from second-hand timber and was urged to consider the painting of the white plaster walls of the clubhouse with green or buff distemper.¹² The County authorities were also believed to be pressing for the Airman’s Rest public house across the road from the entrance to the aerodrome to be camouflaged.¹³

As far as the exercise itself was concerned there is a number of documents in the collection which give a good impression of the way in which it was organized — letters, timetables, plans, operation orders, an instruction sheet for those acting as enemy paratroopers and a list of ‘Action Stations’.¹⁴ From these it is clear that there was recognition of the fact that a small platoon of men could not possibly hope to combat a large-scale landing by paratroops and two troop-carrying planes. The plan was for a tactical withdrawal in the face of the enemy landings and can best be described by quoting the programme for the exercise verbatim:—

**PROGRAMME**

Zero 0.00 (in fact 8.30 pm)
3 groups of Parachutists land at various points N.W. and within 700 yards of the ‘drome gates. They proceed to move in the direction of the ‘drome.
.05 No.6 Platoon occupy action station No.3 (no.1 on the plan — a point on the road to Kirby Muxloe just N.W. of the Airman's Rest and the 'drome gates). Reports are transmitted, telephone destroyed and H.Q. established at 'drome gates.

.10 Parachutists press up the road from Kirby and across the fields N.W. forcing platoon to withdraw to position at "Airman’s Rest" (no.2 on plan).
2 groups of parachutists land N. of 'drome and occupy Northern Boundary of 'drome.

.15 One group of parachutists lands West of the "Airman’s Rest"' and advances to occupy buildings. No.6 Platoon withdraws and occupies position West of the road on the South end of the Spinney South of the "Airman’s Rest"' and also holds road (no.3 on plan).

.20 Enemy occupies 'drome and advances down western Boundary.

.24 Approx. Military arrive at Braunstone Cross Roads. The enemy position will be roughly indicated by the white flags.

.30 Approx. Two carrier planes land on 'drome. Their personnel coming under fire from the East end of the 'drome they proceed to consolidate on the West end with a view to providing defence for further landings at this end of the 'drome.

1.00 (i.e 9.30 pm)
Exercise complete — Stand fast — Commanders’ Conference.

The enemy were to be represented by men carrying white flags — each flag representing 24 of the enemy — and the troop-carrier planes were represented by two cars, also with white flags. There is no indication in the group of records deposited who the 'military' were who were to arrive at Braunstone cross roads — such information, which might have been of use to the enemy, would not have been committed to paper for general circulation in any case — but they may well have been a detachment of troops from the Leicestershire Regiment’s depot at Glen Parva. Nor is there any record of the outcome of the exercise or the conclusions reached at the commanders’ conference on its completion.
Sketch plan for tactical exercise at Braunstone Aerodrome by No. 6 Platoon 'B' Company, Leicester City Group of the L.D.V., July 18th, 1940.
Programmes such as ‘Dad’s Army’ have accustomed us to regard such activities as those described above as comical, as though the participants were a bunch of overgrown schoolboys playing war games; but to the men of no.6 Platoon fifty years ago this summer the perceived threat was very real. The games were played in deadly earnest, as it was anticipated that at any moment the game might become reality and the men of the L.D.V. would have to face a real paratroop invasion with which, thanks to exercises such as those described, they would be better able to cope.

Acknowledgements:

Mr Michael Armitage, who donated the records to the Leicestershire Record Office
Mr Orry Pochin, for providing additional information on the Pochin family

References:

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3. DE 3620/15
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7. DE 3620/10
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10. DE 3260/24
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12. DE 3620/21 & /22
13. DE 3620/22
14. DE 3620/25-34
15. No.6 Platoon ‘B’ Company L.D.V. Proposed Tactical Exercise; DE 3620/29
EAST MIDLANDS HISTORY FAIR AT EAST CARLTON COUNTRY PARK

The 1989 Fair was held on the 3rd and 4th of June at the East Carlton Country Park near Corby and was opened by Commander Saunders-Watson from nearby Rockingham Castle. Most of the stands were in three large marquees and the whole event was organized by the East Carlton Heritage Centre.

This year the Leicestershire Local History Council stand displayed not only the Leicestershire Historians and group publications but also eye-catching items such as tea towels printed from sketches sent in from our groups, car stickers and balloons bearing the words ‘We support local history’, which proved to be successful sale items.

The Fair is a friendly gathering and many people come to the stand to talk about their various research projects. It is very pleasant to meet up with other stall-holders and compare notes.

M M

‘HISTORY IN PROGRESS, 1989’
FIFTH CONFERENCE ON LOCAL HISTORY IN SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE AND NORTH WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

This annual autumn gathering for those concerned with local history in the area around Market Harborough took place on the 14th of October. It was as usual held in the Council Chamber of Harborough District Council and was organized jointly by the Harborough Museum and the Department of Adult Education of Leicester University. Thirty five people attended.
This year's guest lecturer was Dr David Crouch, Director of the Mediaeval Aristocracy Project at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. He gave a stimulating and clear account of the sources available for researching the communities of mediaeval Leicestershire. Such sources, he felt, were too often ignored by local historians researching their area because of the languages in which they were written (Latin and Norman French) and their scattered distribution throughout British (and some French) repositories. He urged us nevertheless to attempt working with these materials as they provide extensive information about the life and administration of local communities from the twelfth century onwards.

The main part of his talk was a description of the sources for Leicestershire which were created from before the Conquest until the fourteenth century. These he divided up into five groups. He began with charters and then discussed surveys and inquisitions, the Exchequer Pipe Rolls, the Justice Rolls and Fines, and Royal correspondence. In each case he explained the purpose of the records, their history and survival and the type of information which can be gleaned from them. This was a most useful talk which stimulated considerable discussion and questioning afterwards.

The rest of the day was given over to short reports on current historical research and new projects being undertaken in the Harborough area. These began with Rosemary Blake’s account of the new Manor House Museum at Kettering. This has been in progress since 1988 and contains exciting and imaginative displays on the industry, social history and archaeology of the town and its area. Sue Grant and Jenny Fisher from the Harborough Museum then gave a fascinating account of their analysis of the occupation structure of the Harborough area in the nineteenth century. Using trade directories, they outlined the range of trades practised in the fifty or so villages within ten miles of Market Harborough, and suggested how these places formed a network of commercial, marketing and production centres.

Mel Vlaeminke, from the Billesdon Local History Group, discussed the workings of the Poor Law in the area. In particular she looked at life in the Billesdon workhouse, providing the human story behind the administrative records. In contrast, Ann Paul and Stephen Barker described the field-walking carried out by the Market Harborough Fieldwork Group. Two sites had been examined which showed great contrasts. A field on the course of the Market Harborough Bypass had yielded only some mediaeval pottery; but a field close to Lubenham possessed an interesting scatter of prehistoric flints. Finally, Sheila Southwell outlined the problems, pains and pleasures of setting up a village history display at Weston by Welland.
This was a fitting end to the conference, as such village displays are often an important catalyst for local history research. She reminded us of how such displays require the integration of historical information, artefacts and photographs, together with the goodwill and co-operation of many people and institutions. As is the case with Weston by Welland, the result is often not only a splendid display but the formation of a local history group to look deeper into the community’s past.

The next conference will be held on Saturday the 13th of October. Further details are available from the staff of the Harborough Museum.

S M

LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL ONE-DAY CONFERENCE ‘TREASURES UNDER THE BED’

On the 24th of March the Leicestershire Local History Council held a particularly successful one-day conference on the subject of the conservation and storage of archives and museum exhibits. This was mainly directed at local history groups, who were well represented, but was also of great interest to the individuals who attended.

At the start of her talk on ‘Preserving your archival heritage’ Kate Thompson asked the fundamental question ‘Should you be keeping them at all?’ Important unique documents should be deposited at her Record Office, as in most cases it will be adequate to keep a working photocopy. For those determined to retain documents she made a distinction between preservation, which mainly concerns what you do not do to them, and conservation, which needs careful consideration and expert work, as it inevitably alters their nature. The best environment for preservation is a stable one and we were given advice about the kind of materials that are best used for boxes, packaging and encapsulation. She concluded with suggestions for listing, cataloguing and indexing.

Jane Legget’s talk ‘Treasuring your treasures’ dealt with the similar points that arise in dealing with artefacts and photographs. In asking the same opening question she ran through a list of the kind of tasks that will have to be tackled and pointed out that each of these is being dealt with by professionals within the Museums service. The principal area that local groups
can contribute to concerns all kinds of research. Thus even if it is decided not to retain exhibits, there is much that can be done in the way of building up a ‘village heritage inventory’, which could ultimately form a very useful ‘publication’ if duplicated. Deborah Boden dealt more specifically with the actual exhibiting of collections, covering points such as security, mounting and labelling.

We learnt much more about the practical side conservation from Graham Bloodworth, who has worked for years in the County Record Office. He described different processes, including the latest method of restoring defective pages of paper by re-casting them as hand-laid paper. This was a fascinating talk and should at least serve to discourage us from attempting conservation of original documents as amateurs.

As a case study of a local society’s museum and its displays Steph Mastoris and Deborah Boden talked about the activities of the Hallaton Museum Society. The former pointed out that as he is Keeper of the Harborough Museum, Hallaton is ‘in his patch’ but that the two museums are in no way in competition. On the contrary the society uses the Harborough Museum as a secure deposit for more sensitive exhibits and as source of help and materials in mounting their annual exhibitions, which are open at weekends during the summer.

This was a most encouraging meeting. There was a time when professional museum staff were apt to pour scorn on amateur efforts to build up and exhibit collections. It seems now that the attitude is much more open. After all, many of the exhibits may eventually end up in the county museums and there is everything to be gained by offering help and advice in their preservation in the meantime and by prompting people to gather information about their provenance and history, which can often be best undertaken by local enthusiasts.

J G

LEICESTER IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PROJECT

The Centre for Urban History, in conjunction with Leicester City Council, is conducting a project on the twentieth century history of the City of Leicester. The aim of the project is to produce the first wide-ranging community study of the city, drawing on the expertise of university staff,
local historians and other interested townspeople. The project is exploring the lives of ordinary Leicester men and women and their experiences of social welfare, housing, education, the consumer society, the role of ethnic communities, politics and leisure. The project will be producing the first published community history of the contemporary city and this is already well under way. Despite this it still needs volunteers to help with researching and writing in a number of key areas — notably work, leisure and community organizations. The project is also, however, more than just a book. It is a chance to get the whole community involved in preserving and interpreting our recent past through writing, workshops and research. It is also intended that much of the written and photographic material generated by the project can constitute an essential resource for future researchers in all areas of urban and community history. Those who would like to help or would just like to know more about the project are invited to contact David Nash at The Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, Leicester, LE1 7RH, for further details.

**HISTORICAL DATA ARCHIVE PROJECT**

While the computer is rapidly becoming a widely used research tool in history of all kinds, especially local history, it remains true that most researchers work in comparative isolation so that the opportunity never arises of their files of data being used by others.

There already exists an Association for History and Computing, which publishes a journal, *History and Computing*, and may be contacted by writing to the Membership Secretary, Dr Veronica Lawrence, 3 Crown Terrace, Stadhampton, Oxfordshire, OX9 7TY. Now the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure has undertaken the major task of creating a central data archive, with the purpose not only of preserving such files but also of documenting and cataloguing them and making them available for researchers.

If you or your group have made any data files or would be interested in consulting the historical data archive the Project Co-ordinator will send further details and a brief questionnaire. Write to Ms Sheila Anderson, History Archive Project, Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge, CB2 1QA.
LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES
Addition and corrections to list published in Vol 3 No 7

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

bc BARKBY Local History Committee
   Mr K Adams, 29a Brookside, Barkby, Leicester.

abc HUSBANDS BOSWORTH Historical Society
   Mrs Pepperill, Vine House 19 High Street, Husbands Bosworth, Lutterworth.
   Bygone Bosworth.

abc LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND Federation of Women’s Institutes
   135, Loughborough Road, Leicester.
THE DESCENT OF DISSENT: A Guide to the Nonconformist records at the Leicestershire Record Office
edited by Gwenith Jones
Leicestershire Museums,
Arts and Records Service 1989 £3.50

Although the monarch has been the head of the established Church of England since the Reformation of Henry VIII there have also over the centuries been a wide array of dissenting sects and congregations. Most genealogists and local historians will be familiar with the parish registers kept by the parish clergy of the Church of England; to trace families that dissented, however, can be a bewildering task which should be made much easier in this county by the publication of this clearly set out guide. It is not merely a list of all the records, such as registers, accounts and minutes, that have been deposited at the Record Office. Each denomination is also headed by a helpful account of its development nationally and locally.

By using some small typefaces an immense amount of information is contained in the lists of the records. But although this is primarily intended as a guide for people consulting the records, there is plenty of informative text in the introduction and details of the different denominations and there are suggestions for searching more general records and books. It does not, of course, cover any denominations that have no records deposited but it does cover in addition Roman Catholics, Jews, Unitarians and Leicester’s notably Secular Society. There are some selected illustrations and the printing and presentation are up to the usual high standard.

JG
Leicestershire is a county that is relatively unknown because for many people it is an area passed through whilst travelling between the north and south of the country. This guide shews that there is much about Leicestershire and Rutland to entice travellers to stay longer in the county; there is also much for local residents to learn too. Chapters on the countryside, ancient monuments, churches, historic buildings, museums and industrial archaeology cater for those of us with special interests. A detailed chapter on towns and villages describes what is noteworthy in each of the county's key places. Lists of tourist information centres and suggested motoring routes included are also extremely useful.

This is one of the most recent in the Shire County Guide series, which now covers much of the country. It presents in handy format a concise but comprehensive survey of the county. It will prove an invaluable and easy-to-consult source of useful and interesting information for those planning a day out or just reading for pleasure.

TRAVELLER’S GUIDE TO THE BATTLEFIELDS OF THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR
Martyn Bennett

This book is a narrative account of the Civil War and it highlights the places of armed conflict with maps and battlefield diagrams so that the visitor to a site may visualize these events in the context of the whole war. It concludes with a list of relevant museums and a complete index.

For those particularly interested in this county, the Hastings and Grey families feature prominently among others. The significance of the garrisons at places like Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Belvoir Castle in the balance of power across the country is shewn and, in the final stages of the first part of the war that lead up to the battle of Naseby, the importance to the Royalist cause of capture of Leicester.

There is a whole range of coffee-table publications devoted to weapons, warfare and campaigns, which are sometimes treated as elaborate board-
games. The famous eighteenth century engraved view of the two armies drawn up in opposition at Naseby, reproduced here, might itself be taken as an encouragement to the tin soldier enthusiast. This book is indeed handsomely produced and lavishly illustrated, most of the battle diagrams and present-day photographs being in colour. The text, however, has far more to offer than a tourist guide. In his introduction the author makes it clear that these events directly affected only a minority of the population that suffered the war. Martyn Bennett is well known for his research into the local aspects of the war and his article on the battle at Cotes Bridge was published in Vol 3 No 3 of our magazine. Even for the armchair tourist it is a pleasure in reading this book to follow his account of the war across its widest canvas.

J G


Leicester is well endowed with important Victorian buildings that still exert great influence on the appearance of its city centre. Much of the inner suburban housing too strikes the eye as predominantly Victorian. When it comes to identifying what is meant by Victorian architecture, however, it is easy to get lost trying to trace the rise and decline of the various ‘isms’. A helpful way of presenting the range of buildings is to follow the development of one particular architect. We are particularly fortunate in that one of the most important Leicester firms has worked continuously from early in the last century and into this.

The Leicester Clock Tower of 1868 is the best known design by the second Joseph Goddard and probably established his reputation as an architect. Perhaps his finest secular building is the Leicester Bank of 1872-4 at the corner of Bishop Street, now the Midland. He was also responsible for much church restoration work and for the new church at Tur Langton. The firm later also designed the Leicester churches of St John the Baptist, Clarendon Park Road, St James the Greater on London Road and Melbourne Hall. These
shew all sorts of ingenious and original features developing in the Victorian Gothic style, which was eventually abandoned in favour of a new Italianate revival in St James the Greater of 1899-01.

In the field of domestic buildings the transition from Victorian Gothic to the revival styles inspired by Renaissance and Queen Anne buildings shews with the adoption of the prominent half-timbered gables and the towering chimney stacks. This can be seen not only in a great range of town buildings but also in suburban and country houses, some of them quite modest.

All this and more, both in detail and in coverage back in time to the origins of the practice and forward in time to its continuation into London’s Docklands, is beautifully set out in A4 format, allowing room for the uniformly high standard of the illustrations, 150 in black and white and a dozen in colour. Numerous original plans and drawings are included and among the photographs, apart from the familiar local landmarks, it is interesting to see houses from further afield.

The text is the result of a very appropriate partnership between Geoff Brandwood, who is well known for having made a particular study of church architecture in the region, and Martin Cherry, whose interests in history and buildings are wide-ranging. It is divided into two main parts, the first being an account of the development of the family practice, starting with the first Joseph as a craftsman and property speculator at the end of the eighteenth century. The second part is an appreciation of the buildings of the Goddards which is an education in architecture that is easy to follow, both because it is clearly written and because it is so well illustrated with the examples produced by the one firm.

This publication succeeds on other levels too, as a tribute to the work of one family, as a study of a provincial professional practice, as a guide to some of the best architecture in the county and as proof that our county Museum can meet the challenge of producing a publication that does justice to the text and illustrations.

J G
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE ROYAL INFIRMARY AT LEICESTER: The Making of a Teaching Hospital, 1766-1980
E R Frizelle  Leicester Medical Society  1988  £83.00

In 1971 the author, together with Mrs J D Martin, wrote *The Leicester Royal Infirmary, 1771-1971*, for the Hospital’s bicentenary. Much was left unrecorded, however, and, as the author says in the Preface, ‘it seemed opportune to weave a more ambitious fabric from the threads derived, not only from its links with people and events both near and far, but also from the field of local history as they appeared pertinent.’

This publication, therefore, is the full version. Beginning with the efforts of the Rev Dr William Watts to found the Infirmary, Mr Frizelle takes the reader through the life and times of the physicians and surgeons, through the history of the departments, such as anaesthetics, obstetrics (‘no woman big with child shall be admitted as an in-patient’ Dr James Vaughan, 1771), plastic surgery and cardiology. Many of the people detailed are now permanently recorded by Leicester’s buildings being named in their memory — James Vaughan, Astley Clarke and Thomas Paget, to mention only a few. Chapters are devoted to the medical library, the museum, the dispensary, the nursing staff and the matrons and their accommodation.

A review of this nature cannot do justice to such an extensive and detailed work. Despite its daunting size the book is extremely readable and its style is easy yet informative. Surely in time this will rank as one of the best of Leicester’s history books.

H E B

LEICESTER IN PARLIAMENT: A record of the use of private bill legislation to benefit and improve the city
J S Phipps  Leicester City Council  1988  £25.00

This book aims to give information about local enactments that relate or have related to the City of Leicester. It provides a guide to all the enactments, commencing in 1726 with the Act for repairing the road from Market Harborough to Loughborough, which established the Turnpike Trust, and
concluding with the Leicestershire Act of 1985. A description of why each was obtained is followed by a list in chronological order, with information about amendments and repeals. The first part of the book, which forms the historical commentary, is arranged by subjects: boundaries, street lighting, markets, pleasure fairs, buses, trolley vehicles, railways and infectious diseases are some of the thirty eight chapters in this section. The chapter on pleasure fairs, for example, quotes the difficulties experienced by the town council during the last century in connexion with the May and October pleasure fairs held in Humberstone Gate and a strip of waste land close by known as ‘No man’s land’, on which stalls, shooting galleries and other structures were placed.

*Leicester in Parliament* is not, as the title might suggest, an account of Leicester’s involvement in the national political scene. It is rather a narrative, index and commentary on local legislation which has influenced and shaped Leicester as we know it today. It will be of value not only to lawyers but also to local historians whose interests touch on the many aspects of Leicester’s history.

H E B

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**LOUGHBOROUGH AS I REMEMBER IT**
edited by Jean Carswell
Leicestershire Libraries and Information Service 1989 £2.00

**OURS TO DEFEND: Leicestershire people remember World War II**
edited by Jean Carswell, Rachel Johnson and Siobhan Kirrane
Leicester Oral History Archive and Mantle Oral History Project 1989 £1.95

The Loughborough booklet is the sixth in the Leicestershire Libraries series based on local reminiscence competitions. The county’s second town produced sixty entries and judging a winner proved so difficult that five were awarded joint first place, with four runners-up and fifteen consolation prizes. The five are printed in full, with shortened versions of the four and extracts from most of the others arranged under different topics.

Not only do the memories take us back a long way but different contributors cover completely different generations of memories; the oldest was aged 94 and the youngest 57. There is a wealth of information here and so many
vivid pictures here that together build up quite a clear idea of what it was like to live in or near the town. The sections of extracts, which form half of the text, make interesting reading as separate pieces, but are carefully ascribed to the different writers at the end of each section. Shops, markets and fairs all feature; shops like the Penny Bazaar or Clemerson’s or, for the better off, Simpkin & James, the fruit and vegetable stall run by the loud but benevolent Liza Blackwell, helped by one of her large family, and ice cream, especially the creamy kind made by Bartholomuch’s. One paragraph describes an escapade by three practically penniless Leicester lads to Loughborough Races in the 1930s, eventually financed by their winnings of 4/9d. Many record their gratitude for their schooling; but for one her first school was ‘unredeemedly awful. I could not believe that I was to be sent there every day’.

One section is devoted to the First World War and the main event remembered here is the Zeppelin raid in January 1916, which was for the town a shocking first civilian involvement in war. Four people died and the hair of one of the writers turned white.

The Leicester Oral History Archive has been recording, cataloguing and indexing interviews with old people since 1983 and the Mantle Oral History Project, which is based in Coalville and covers north west Leicestershire, since 1986. Together they have built up a considerable resource, which makes it worthwhile producing books based on extracts. Ours to defend deals with the local and human side of the Second World War. On hearing Chamberlain’s announcement of the start of the war some lads ‘thought it was great’; but several remember ‘thinking we were all going to be blown up the next day or something’.

The chapters cover topics such as the blackout, the Home Guard, evacuees, war work and victory celebrations. Particularly interesting are the passages on coping in the home and how people got round the restrictions of rationing, both for everyday life and for special occasions. It was possible to get hold of spare coupons, if only because some people could not afford to buy their full rations. Black market arrangements were generally tolerated for personal purposes; ‘There was nothing on a large scale, not that we knew of’.

Both these collections are illustrated with contemporary photographs and Ours to defend is printed in large type suitable for aged eyes to read.

J G
THE OAKHAM SURVEY OF 1305: A Translation with Commentaries
The Oakham Survey Research Group
Rutland Record Society 1988 £4.50

This is a model publication of an early document. Not only is a complete translation from the Latin original parchment roll set out line by line but there are several sections which examine different aspects of its origin, contents and interpretation. Careful analysis of internal evidence has enabled it to be dated precisely, with the probability that it was prepared in connexion with raising tallage from the estates of the Countess of Cornwall to help pay for one of Edward I’s Scottish campaigns.

The area covered is not only the town of Oakham but also includes neighbouring villages, its ‘outliers’. There are sections dealing with place names and personal names, both exhaustively indexed, and with the various trades in the town as evidenced by personal names.

Apart from the fact that it sets out fascinating detail about ordinary fourteenth century householders, in the long run the value of this publication to future researchers interpreting the source will be that the editorial policy is clearly declared, making it certain what has been done to transcribe the names and information on the original roll. The book has been produced in A4 format, similar to the Society’s Rutland Record.

It is remarkable that such an excellently produced publication should be the outcome of a group project, originating in a WEA course in mediaeval Latin. It must be a source of satisfaction to the ten members of the research group and to the Society, which undertook the task of publishing.

J G

COUNTRY HOUSES AROUND ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH: A Selection of Prints and Paintings, 1730-1989
Hampsons Gallery, Ashby-de-la-Zouch 1989 £60.00

In his introduction Kenneth Hillier describes the significance of the country house; ‘Anyone who had made money, and was ambitious for himself and family, invested in a country estate. The house that he built (or rebuilt) on
that estate was his headquarters, the visible evidence, of his wealth and power’. Thus, as in other parts of the country, the country house here was the obvious indicator of the family’s fortunes, fates, tastes, whims and image. Remodelling, rebuilding and, unfortunately in many cases, destruction and demolition, all formed integral parts of their life cycles. Despite these common factors of change and the architectural influences, national economic and social events and changes in legislation, each country house around Ashby has had a unique and special history. Following Mr Hillier’s clear and comprehensive introduction to the book, each country house is then described, giving a brief history, significant architectural details and other key facts. Alongside each description a print or painting of the building is reproduced. An attractive map marks the location of all thirty one houses, from Bosworth Hall to Donington and Lockington Halls, and a list of sources at the end is also helpful. It would have been useful, however, to have included a list of all the prints and their sources. Which house is featured on the back cover?

This book and its counterpart *The Castle of Ashby-de-la-Zouch: a selection of prints and watercolours, 1730-1988* (1988, £40.00) together provide a permanent record of local views which is invaluable to the local historian.

**H E B**

**VICTORIAN WIGSTON**

Bernard Elliott the author,

17 Half Moon Crescent, Oadby 1989 £2.00

This neat illustrated booklet, printed privately in Oadby, lacks a title page, but the ‘Forward’ at the beginning explains that it is based on the census enumerators’ returns of 1881 for Wigston magna.

In the ten years since the previous census the population of the village had grown by 63 per cent, so that its 938 households added up to well over four thousand people, of whom nearly one half were aged under twenty. The number employed in the hosiery industry, 298, was declining; but there were around sixty employed in the footwear industry, some working for manufacturers in the village and some for Leicester firms. The principal changes in Wigston were a result of its development as a railway town, some 260 men being employed on the railways.
The text is divided up into sections to deal with the different groups of occupations. After the introductory section the first one deals with the building trades, which must have been very busy during this period. Details are given of many households, including the names and ages of the families. These are filled out from information taken from trade directories and from the author’s other knowledge of Wigston and coloured in places with some historical imagination.

J G

THE CHANGING FACE OF WHITWICK
Whitwick Historical Group 1990 £2.99

The professionalism of publications by local groups continues to improve. This collection of photographs should sell well on its appearance alone. A closer look, however, shews that it has more to offer than a random sample of views. It represents a limited exercise well executed. Two dozen old photographs of the village have been carefully matched by present day photographs, with the differences pointed out in the captions. At the start there is a plan of the village to shew where the views are located, an essential often omitted from similar productions. There is a Foreword, which ascribes the ‘now’ photographs to Julian Price. The owner of each of the early views is acknowledged, many of them belonging to the Group’s extensive collection. A local historian might have been grateful for more information about the nature of the pictures and about the photographers.

Even for those who do not know this village or assume that it has no attractions, there is plenty of interest to be gained from comparing closely these pairs of views. An unusual additional factor is that in some cases the actual shape of a street has changed over the years, owing to mining subsidence.

The very reasonable price of this smart booklet is no doubt due to the fact that it was published by the group with the help of some ‘in memory’ donations.

J G
The purpose of this booklet is to detail the history of the various pubs which exist or have existed in the village of Great Easton and its neighbours Bringhurst and Drayton. A comprehensive introduction describes the development of the village pub and the part which intoxicating liquors played in the life of the community in the past. Rules and regulations for the running of alehouses in the early seventeenth century include:

That none be suffered to tipple in their houses in any one day above one hour.

That none be suffered to tipple in their houses on the sabbath and festival days at the times of sermons or services nor at any time after nine of the clock at night.

The second half of the book is devoted to the history of each of the thirteen pubs in the area. Aleshouses such as The Bull, The Castle and The Crown in Great Easton, The Red Lion in Bringhurst and The Plough in Drayton are detailed, with information about the origins, where known, the landlords, their families and the structure and architecture of each building.

Despite the very rural nature of the Great Easton area and the low population numbers, the alehouses, pubs and inns have all had busy and interesting histories. There is much to read in this booklet and Mr Heselton makes the bare bones of history into a well-rounded and meaty narrative. The Pubs of Great Easton is warmly recommended to local historians, family historians of the area and, of course, to dipsomaniacs.

H E B

Local History Notes on Thruslington
R E Banks the author, 24 Back Lane, Thruslington
5 vols 1987- £1.00 each

These notes, which were first published in Thruslington Life village magazine from 1984, were the results of a successful local history society in the village which devoted much time to working on local records. The society has unearthed information from records held not only in the County Record Office
but also in private hands. Subjects such as the enclosure of Thrussington (this article includes pull-out plans of pre- and post-enclosure Thrussington), the Wesleyan Methodist Society, the history of a cottage at no.18 Seagave Road, the Welles family estate and the life of John Ferneley, the painter, indicate the diversity of information and interests covered by these local history notes.

Old photographs and copies of plans provide additional, visual information and modern photographs grace the front covers to lend an attractive image to the productions. As the author/editor points out, the advent of the computer has advantages for publications of this nature. The use of a desktop publishing program for the most recent volume shews a marked improvement in presentation of the notes over previous volumes.

The author and local history society have done sterling work in making a wealth of information available through this series and we look forward to seeing further volumes.

H E B
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