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East Midlands History and Heritage

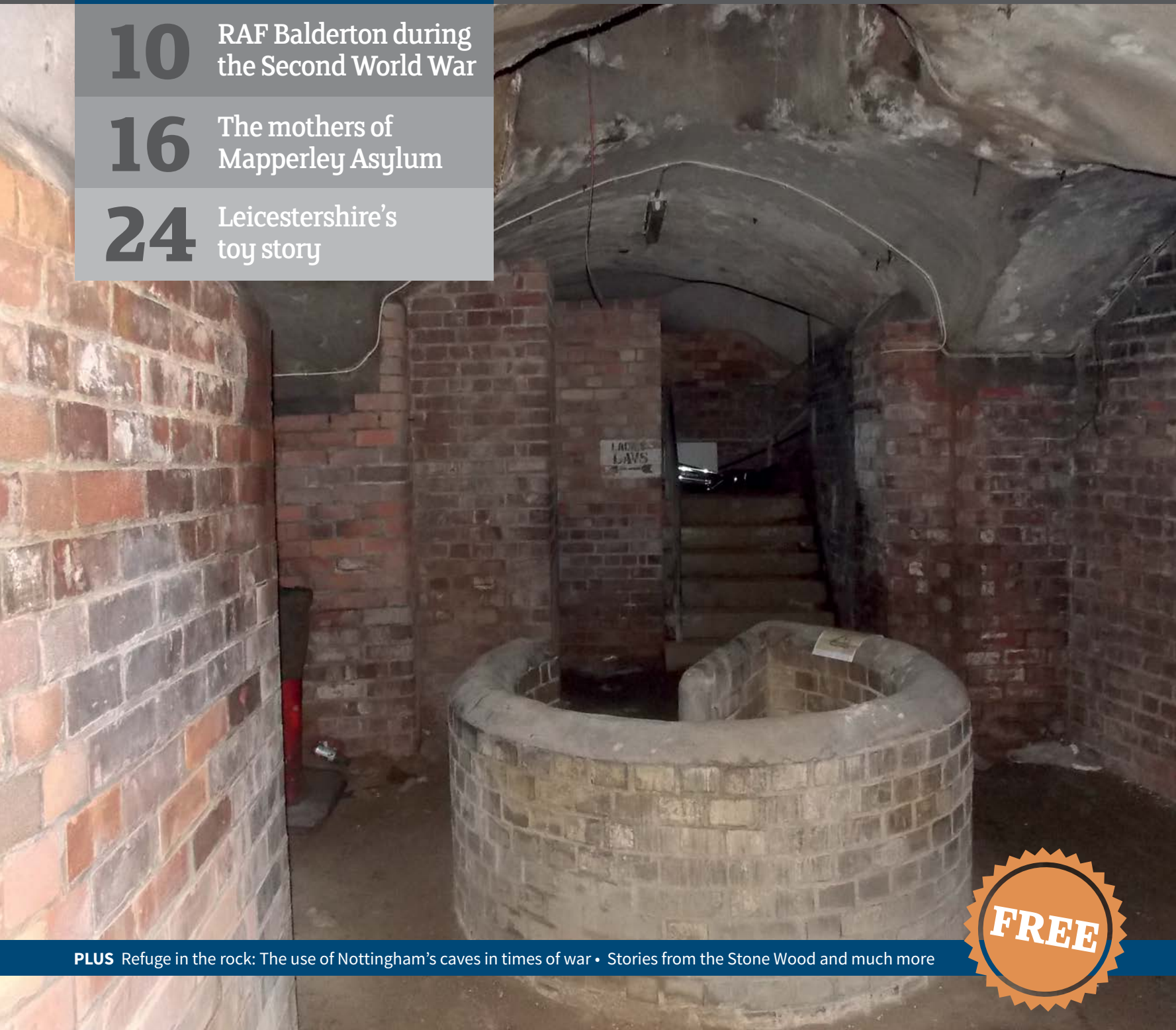
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE • NOTTINGHAMSHIRE • RUTLAND

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PLUS Refuge in the rock: The use of Nottingham's caves in times of war • Stories from the Stone Wood and much more

FREE

Welcome

Welcome back to East Midlands History and Heritage. The month of November 1918 is embedded with great local and national meaning. We'd like to help mark the end of the Great War by co-ordinating and publishing a series of stories from across the region looking at the consequences, during and after, that the War had on local communities.

The stories, based on your research, will be published in our January 2019 edition. I've sketched out some of my own ideas, grounded in my knowledge of Nottingham and the impact that the War had on the City (page four). Some of these relate to my own family, most of them don't. I enjoy writing about hospitals, for example. You could well have different interests, and indeed better ideas, of your own. We very much look forward to hearing from you. If we can help in any way contact us on emhist@virginmedia.com

And, finally, we'd like to thank the Marc Fitch Fund for its financial support towards the publication of this issue.



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PRIVATE GWGC COLLINS COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

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So write for us

Let us have details of your news and events.

We'll take your stories about your community's history to a larger regional audience. We'd also welcome articles about our region's broader past. Articles are normally between 1500-2000 words long. Keep a look out, too, for matching images that will help illustrate your work (the higher the number of pixels, the larger we can make the image).

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The consequences of the Great War: Observations from Nottingham

BY DR NICK HAVES

We are about the mark the centenary of the end of the First World War, and the January 2019 bumper issue of East Midlands History and Heritage will be dedicated to this. We are particularly interested in the subsequent consequences it had on local life in the villages, towns and cities across our region, rather than stories about the war itself. And we'd like your help in making this issue a particular success by sending your stories and pictures to us. You might like to think about particular themes or ideas. Did the war raise expectations about a better tomorrow – of a “*Land Fit For Heroes*” – and were these promises kept? What was the social and political impact of the war? Did it have positive as well as negative effects? How and what did people remember and commemorate? How did they cope with loss or with disability? We can't promise to publish everything, but we'd like to get as broad a range of articles as possible.

As a nation, we remember the war now primarily in terms of death: some 723,000 British servicemen lost their lives. Most were in their late teens or early to mid-twenties. The impact of a “*lost generation*” was profound; it was to haunt the inter-war years. In fact, we have very particular memories of the Great War, fed by poets, grainy, flickering black and white film, satirical comedies like *Black Adder*, and, perhaps most poignantly, by images of row after row of white headstones. More positively, the war, we are told, brought social and political change: perhaps we needed to be told that something good came from so much death? Change is most noticeably associated with a greater equality for women, marked by the expansion generally of the franchise through the Representation of the People Act, 1918 (where most women over 30 and men over 21 now got the vote). The war had also provided greater employment opportunities for women, but was this purely temporary? We remember, too, slogans like “*Homes for Heroes*”, as the state accepted new social responsibilities to address a national housing crisis that had already existed before the war, and which had got worse during it. The big question always is what actually happened subsequently? Did people want major change or did they want to return, more or less, to how things were before?

Jay Winter argues that the types of memorialisation selected by local communities reflected their search for a visual language that best reflected the values for which the soldiers had laid down their lives. Certain forms became ubiquitous. Celtic crosses and obelisks, some bespoke, many purchased according to standard patterns, marked the universality of loss. Yet not all memorials were like this. In my own village of Bramcote, it was decided instead to build a community hall which is still used today. The politics of remembrance and selection could also be highly contentious. Plans by Nottingham Corporation to erect a £20,000 memorial in the city centre were abandoned amid acrimonious claim and counter claim between local civic leaders and those speaking directly for ex-servicemen. Veteran's organisations called for the money to be used to build houses or endow hospitals for ex-servicemen and their dependents, arguing that it was “*only just that any memorial should also be for the permanent benefit of the community.*” “*In nine cases out of ten the monuments in this city are a disgrace*”, remarked another. Civic leaders,

“Nothing appealed more to the hearts of the people who had lost their boys than a memorial”

however, took a very different view. “*Nothing appealed more to the hearts of the people who had lost their boys than a memorial*”, proclaimed Nottingham's Mayor, Sir Albert Ball (whose fighter ace son had been killed in 1917). He described any objections as “*absurd*”, bemoaning how little had been planned to be spent compared to other cities. Another declaimed against the “*irreverent practice that was cropping up*” of giving prominence to “*the views of those who were wrapped in the sleep death in France.*” Face was saved when Sir Jesse Boot gifted land to the Corporation adjacent to the Victoria Embankment as an open space and memorial site. The memorial and gardens were unveiled in 1927. It cost £35,000.



NURSES' MEMORIAL HOME (OPPOSITE THE CASTLE)

Yet pragmatism also found its place. A public meeting called by Ball and the Duke of Portland in 1919 decided to launch a war memorial fund to extend and reconstruct the General Hospital. It raised £92,000. John and William Player each gave £10,000. But the appeal noted: “*Small donations are required as well as large. It is most desirable that this memorial should be a memorial of all classes.*” The first necessity was a new 130 bed nurses home, opened in 1923, as a “*dignified and worthy memorial to the Heroic Dead, and a distinct ornament to the City.*” In Nottingham, Derby, Leicester and countless other cities and towns across the country, families endowed hospital beds in memory of relatives killed. Readers might remember that the Duke of Portland gifted Ellerslie House as a home for severely disabled ex-servicemen, an endeavour supported by other prominent business leaders but also by community groups and ex-servicemen's organisations such as the Mansfield Patriotic Fair Committee and the Nottinghamshire Territorial Association (EMHH Issue 2). Yet money was always in short supply, and without significant state support from the Ministry of Pensions, the venture would have collapsed.

Indeed, the War and its aftermath marked an extensive outpouring of philanthropic activity. Soldiers' pay was significantly below that of pre-war earnings, even after the separation allowance paid to wives was increased. A National Relief Fund, set-up in 1914, had by 1916 raised some £6m. Across the war the Red Cross raised three and a half times that amount: money that was later to filter down to appeals like the already mentioned Nurses Home (£15,000) and Ellerslie House (£2,000). The British Legion, an amalgamation of existing war-time charities, was founded in 1922. It was particularly pre-occupied with unemployment amongst ex-servicemen, especially the disabled. Around 1.2m ex-servicemen were entitled to a disability pension (around 25% of those who had served). Entitlement was based on the degree of disability. The loss of two or more limbs, for example, entitled a man to a 100% pension, whereas amputation of a leg below the knee was assessed at 50%. Sixty-five thousand men drew a pension for neurasthenia and shell-shock. Pensions were also awarded to some 240,000 war widows.

Initially funds were distributed through local War Pension Committees, comprising representatives from interest groups (war widows, employers, trade unionists, the Charity Organisation Society, local councillors). In 1917, for example, Nottingham's Committee dealt with some 5,000 cases, and awarded over 17,000 pensions and grants and arranged for medical treatment, training and employment. Later, it operated as a local complaints bureau for those in receipt of pensions. By the end of 1924, the Committee had interviewed over 16,600 men and 2,800 women, dispensing payments of £66,700. Complaints and negative press reports continued to appear,

It's frequently claimed that the war heralded the demise of the Liberal Party, and the rise of Labour and class-based politics.

however, about the speed of processing and the levels of awards. It was also “*impossible to provide artificial eyes in Nottingham owing to the shortness of supplies.*”

It's frequently claimed that the war heralded the demise of the Liberal Party, and the rise of Labour and class-based politics. Various factors might explain this. During the war, government became much more interventionist: that is,



VICTORIA EMBANKMENT WAR MEMORIAL

in a way ‘Socialist’. The nation also had many conversations about post-war reconstruction and better tomorrows. And, as noted already, the franchise was significantly expanded in 1918, again arguably as a reward for wartime service. Whether or not the pre-war franchise did discriminate heavily against working people – and thus likely Labour supporters – remains contentious. But in areas such as housing and social welfare, the state, locally and nationally, did now seem more prepared to intercede. How did this impact locally, politically and socially? In Nottingham in 1913, the Conservatives held thirty-seven council seats, the Liberals twenty-three, and the Labour Party two seats. In the 1919 municipal elections the two main parties continued to dominate. The Conservatives held thirty-three seats, the Liberals took twenty-one and Labour ten. This, however, understates Labour gains. Of those seats directly elected, rather than those nominated as aldermen, Labour took ten (whereas in 1913 it had two), to the Conservatives twenty-five and the Liberals thirteen. Labour was successful in seven of the nine seats it contested, taking 55% of the votes cast. Labour had focused heavily on emotive ‘home front’ issues highlighting shortages and inequalities, particularly in housing. As even the local Liberal press noted, “*Possibly the successful onslaught which Labour has made on the old regime may be the best thing that could have happened... It was high time somebody imparted more vigour and life into the criticism of Corporation affairs. The attitude of the City Council towards housing has been a disgrace.*” In response to Labour's success, the Conservative and Liberal Parties “*banded together to fight a common danger in the Socialists and their revolutionary doctrine.*” Only rarely now did the two parties compete electorally, preferring instead to stand on an anti-Labour ticket where one or the other by agreement contested the seat. The long-term impact of this for the Liberals was atrophic. By 1929 they had only eleven seats, compared to Labour's twenty-six and the Conservatives twenty-seven.

Nottingham certainly had a housing crisis. “*The influx of munitions and other workers*” during the war meant that “*by the end of 1918 all ... houses in a reasonably habitable condition had been let.*” Indeed, so acute was the crisis that by 1921 houses previously condemned as uninhabitable were being reopened. Initially, as part of a broader national and local reconstruction programme, the City Council had planned to build some 3,700 houses in suburban estates, generously subsidised by central government and at ▶



IMAGE LEFT: SOLDIER GENERAL HOSPITAL 1917, COURTESY NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
IMAGE RIGHT: PRINCE OF WALES' VISITS ELLERSLIE HOUSE 1923, COURTESY NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

because this was not the time that the Council could provide the sums required." The Housing Committee was criticised for its "passion for grant and subsidy", and its inappropriate focus on "garden city provision." Advocates retorted that the construction of tenements was the "most retrograde proposal that had ever been submitted to the Council... denying brave heroes the houses they needed."

At this stage the Minister for Reconstruction, Dr Christopher Addison intervened. He rejected the idea of tenements, and, instead, insisted the Council proceed as originally planned. As a result, 1,500 houses were completed before central cuts in 1921 slashed housing programmes across the country. These houses were let almost exclusively

to returning ex-servicemen. My grandparents were two of these tenants. And this was only the beginning. Despite its hesitant start, during the inter-war years the Corporation invested heavily in council housing. This was particularly unusual because it remained Conservative controlled. By 1939, under the chairmanship of William Crane, the Housing Committee had constructed 17,095 houses. As one senior Tory confided: "there was a time when I regarded Alderman Crane as a

fanatic and visionary," but now he thought "the committee were doing sound, valuable and useful service."

Decline was noticeable in other areas too. In the years before the First World War, Nottingham truly was the "City of Lace", famous nationally and internationally, employing some 26,500 men and women in the city and its surrounding area (or about sixty per cent of lace makers in Britain). At its peak, there were roughly 220 firms operating some 2,500 Leavers machines across the county. Yet few industries suffered so sharp a decline, as export markets during and after the war were lost, manufacture elsewhere expanded (frequently using machines built in Nottingham) and fashions changed. One local industrialist reminisced of Nottingham's Lace Market district that before the war "at the mid-day break the warehouses were discharging their crowds of employees in their solid thousands" compared to the "semi-deserted appearance which prevails today." Employment fell to less than half its pre-1914 level and the decline proved to be permanent. Coal, machine manufacture, hosiery, textiles and related industries generally also suffered. The numbers of women employed overall in Nottingham post-war temporarily fell by a little under ten percent from pre-war levels. The fall was particularly noticeable in domestic service. The great houses in which some of these had previously been employed also suffered. Many estates faced major financial problems because of the steep rise in death duty rates in 1919 (for example, from 9% to 40% on estates over £200,000), a blow made heavier because of the loss of heirs during the war.

I hope this brief survey of one particular place offers some ideas as to possible areas of research. It's by no means exhaustive, and every town, village or city will have its own story to tell. We'd really like to hear from you, and to encourage you to research and write about the impact that the Great War had on your area. We'd be happy to help in any way we can. 📧

Dr Nick Hayes (Editor East Midlands History and Heritage)
Nottingham Trent University

“Possibly the successful onslaught which Labour has made on the old regime may be the best thing that could have happened... It was high time somebody imparted more vigour and life into the criticism of Corporation affairs. The attitude of the City Council towards housing has been a disgrace.”



MY GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE IN SHERWOOD

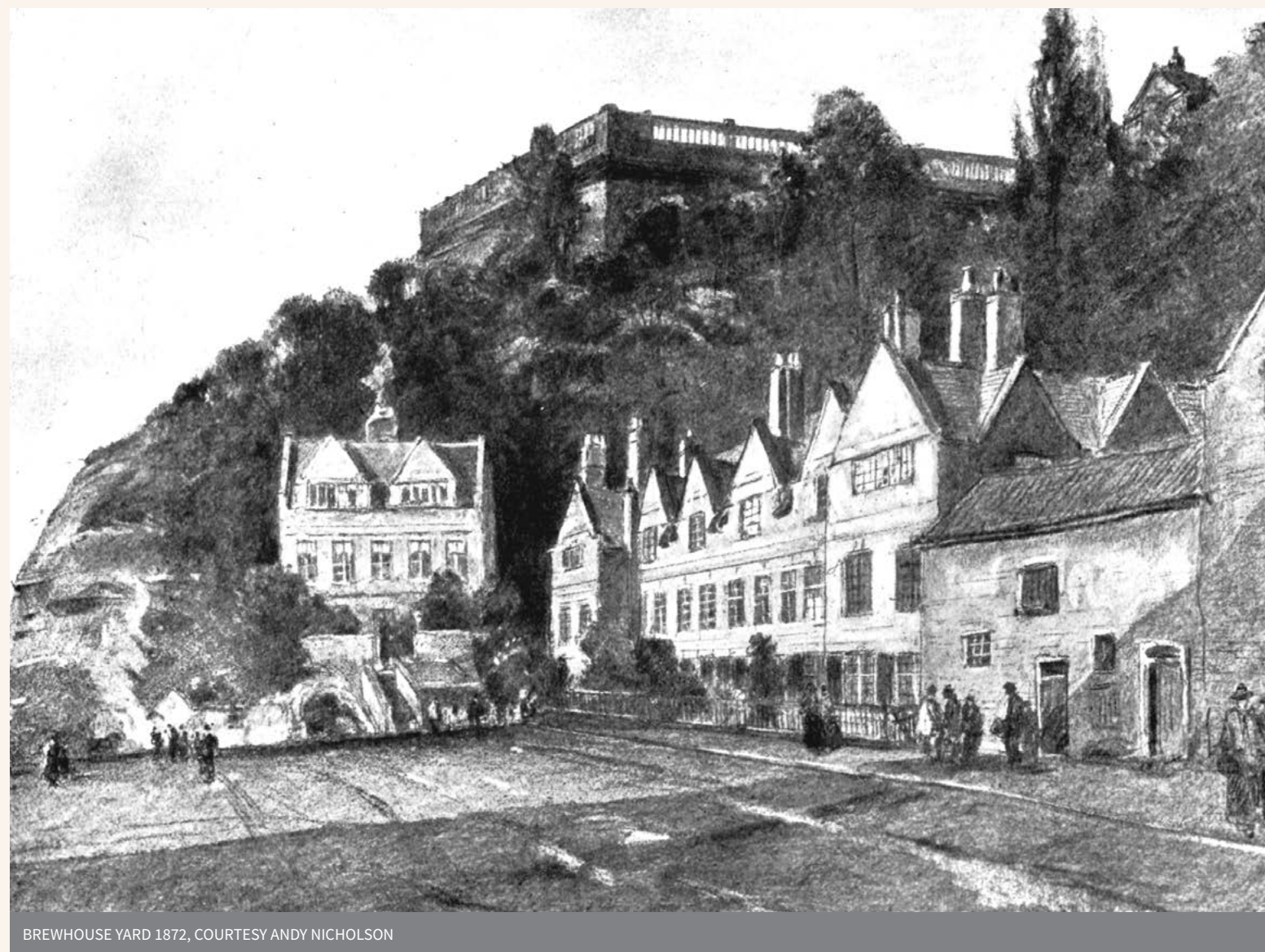
limited cost to the Corporation. These were intended partly to cover shortages but also because a wartime survey had found that some 7,000 houses in the city were deemed seriously deficient and/or insanitary. Committing to this was a bold step. Nottingham, like other major provincial cities, had little by way of a track record in providing subsidised housing. In fact, for many members of the Council it was too revolutionary. At the last minute, after a five-and-a-half-hour debate, the Council voted by 30 votes to 19 to abolish this proposal and substitute instead 500 to 600 tenement dwellings. "The [original] schemes were objectionable", it was argued, "because of their enormous cost and

'Wealthy women, bankers and cloth-workers':

The lives of the nonconformist families of Brewhouse Yard, Nottingham, 1650-1750.

BY BETHANY MARSH

During the medieval period Brewhouse Yard, or "rock-yard" as it was often called, formed part of the Nottingham Castle estate. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the castle had fallen into disrepair, having ceased to be a royal residence during the reign of Henry VIII. For this reason, James I sold it, and the majority of its estate, to the Earl of Rutland. Brewhouse Yard, however, was separated from the castle by a royal grant issued in 1621. The grant made Brewhouse an extra-parochial site; that is, a defined area considered to be outside any ecclesiastical or civil parish. ▶



BREWHOUSE YARD 1872, COURTESY ANDY NICHOLSON

Such spaces were anomalies as they had no church or clergymen and were, therefore, exempt from paying poor rates or tithes.

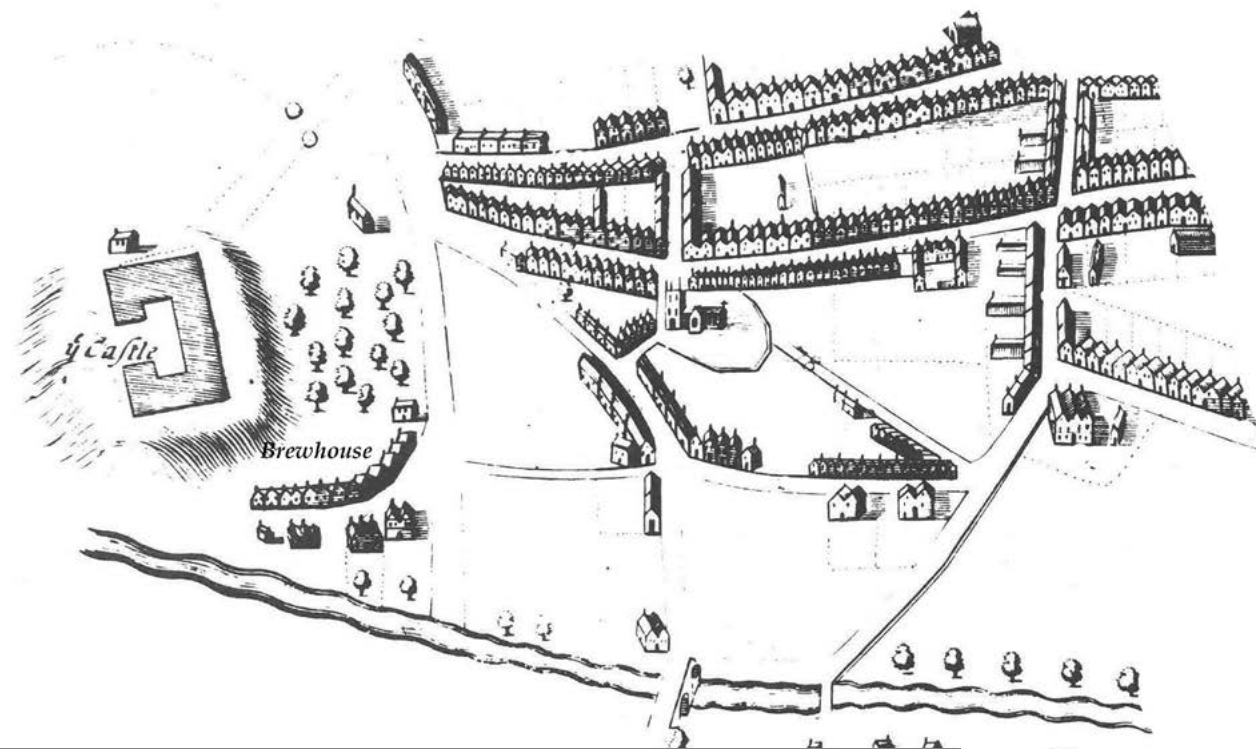
In the case of Brewhouse, in 1621 only the families of John Mitton and William Jackson lived on the site. Yet by the 1670s many more people had moved to Brewhouse, as evidenced by the building of a long row of twelve or thirteen houses and five detached buildings, visible on the 1677 map of Nottingham. This growth was largely the result of the site's extra-parochial status which protected Protestant Nonconformists, those who rejected the practices and teachings of the established Church of England, from legal and social persecution.

Brewhouse thus became a haven for Nonconformists. As Robert Thoroton, a Nottinghamshire magistrate and historian, noted in 1677, Brewhouse was "a great receptacle for fanatics, and other like people, who would not live conformable to the laws."

The disruption caused by the British and Irish Civil Wars (1641-1653) precipitated the general breakdown of control over the National Church in England. As a result, numerous new radical religious groups began to emerge, including the Ranters, Particular Baptists, Seekers and Quakers. After the execution of King Charles I in 1649, MPs in parliament, though mindful of religious reform, were anxious to restrict religious liberty. The majority favoured the retention of the National Church, although it had been greatly weakened in 1646 by the abolition of episcopacy (government of the church by a hierarchy of bishops). As a result, dissenting congregations enjoyed a degree of tolerance. Compulsory church attendance, for instance, had been repealed by the passing of a Toleration Act in September 1650, but complete toleration of all dissenting groups had yet to be achieved. At the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Charles II had promised in the Declaration of Breda "liberty to tender consciences": that is religious toleration to everyone provided they "do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." This promise, however, was never fulfilled as conservative MPs pressurized the king to restrict the activities of dissenters. Between 1661 and 1665 a series of laws – labelled the 'Clarendon Code' – were passed, which, for example,

made the use of the *Book of Common Prayer* compulsory in church services. Ministers who did not conform were ejected from their churches and anyone caught practising alternative forms of worship was liable to arrest, imprisonment, and severe fines. Thereafter, Protestant 'dissenters' became more commonly known as 'Nonconformists'. It was not until the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89 that freedom of worship for all Protestant groups was sanctioned. A further Act of Toleration received royal assent on 24 May 1689, giving Nonconformists the right to worship freely and have their own meeting houses.

It was within this context of political uncertainty, social upheaval and religious change that the Nonconformist families of Brewhouse Yard lived. Amongst the residents of the site were many wealthy and prominent individuals, a number of whom would go on to impact the wider religious, economic and political landscape of the city of Nottingham. The rest of this article will consider the



BREWHOUSE YARD THOROTON'S MAP OF NOTTINGHAM, 1677, COURTESY NOTTINGHAM LOCAL STUDIES LIBRARY

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lives of a number of these individuals and families, including the wealthy widow Fortune Burrowes, the banker Thomas Smith and the dyer Tobias Wildbore.

By the 1670s the two most substantial landowners of Brewhouse were the widows Fortune Burrowes and Anne Mitton. Both women had inherited the land at Brewhouse from their husbands and subsequently prospered in their widowhood. Anne extended her fortunes through the building of new tenements, so by 1675 she possessed two shops and seven houses on the site. She also improved her family's social standing by securing the marriage of her daughter Mary to Thomas Collin, the son of Lawrence Collin, a gentleman of Nottingham. The marriage combined propertied wealth with trade, laying the foundation for the couple to elevate the reputation of their family further through political position. In 1688 Thomas became an alderman in the Nottingham Corporation and by 1699 was Mayor of Nottingham. Entering into municipal government was a common practice amongst wealthy families who wanted to extend their local influence. Fortune, conversely, had no children, but by the time of her death in

1684 had amassed sizeable wealth similar to Anne. Besides owning two houses at Brewhouse, in her will she disposed of £546 8s 0d in single monetary portions (when average family income was about £40 p.a.).

In regards to the women's religious leanings, there is no evidence for Anne's personal beliefs. Fortune, on the other hand, was probably a Quaker, for she was associated with various Quaker leaders through her social network. Quakerism developed from the ministry of George Fox during the mid-1640s. The central teaching was that Christ was fully and immediately present in all believers, and that the 'Inner Light' was a surer spiritual guide than priests or scripture. In 1658 she was witness to the will of Elizabeth Ooddingsell, alongside John Reckless. The latter was one of the first converts to Quakerism, having met Fox in Nottingham in 1649. Reckless became a local Quaker leader and began to preach Fox's message in the market square. Another local Quaker leader connected to Fortune was John Theaker. During the 1660s Theaker resided in North Collingham, but was continually harassed for his beliefs, receiving multiple fines amounting to £38 (or roughly £3,000 today) for attending illegal Quaker meetings. This harassment likely inspired his move to Brewhouse Yard, where he could be protected from legal and social persecution, and Fortune and Theaker thus became neighbours. Theaker was also intimately connected with the Reckless family through the marriage of his daughter to John Reckless' son Jonathan. It is possible then that Fortune, Theaker and Reckless attended the same Quaker meetings at Reckless' house on Spaniel Row, a short walk from Brewhouse.

Fortune's life had crucial links to another resident of Brewhouse named Thomas Smith, who is a key figure in the history of banking. Thomas was born in 1632 to John Smith of Cropwell Butler and Elizabeth Garton. Elizabeth died in 1633 and John died in 1641, leaving Thomas an orphan. It has been speculated that Fortune and Robert Burrowes became Thomas's guardians at this time. Thomas certainly lived at Brewhouse at some point during the 1640s as Fortune described him as a previous tenant and "kinsman" in her will. This does not mean they were necessarily blood-related but indicates a close bond between the two, which would make sense if Fortune became his 'adopted' mother. In 1653 Thomas turned twenty-one and likely moved off the site as he was now able to inherit £200 left to him by his father. This money was used to establish Thomas's business as a mercer, buying and selling luxury cloth. The business was a success and in 1658 Thomas was able to purchase a property in Market Square, now NatWest bank, and set up the Smith Family Bank, the first provincial bank outside of London. When Thomas died in 1699 his son, Thomas junior, took over the running of the bank, expanding its

influence across the Midlands. Ultimately, Thomas's life and business prospered after leaving Brewhouse, but the short time he lived there seemed to have a definite impact on his life. It was at Brewhouse that Thomas was exposed to Nonconformist teachings which would later influence his religious behaviour. In 1685 and 1686 Thomas was taken to the Deanery Court for failing to receive Holy Communion at Easter and attend Sunday church services, blatant acts of religious subversion.

In addition to Quakers, a number of Independents/Congregationalists also lived at Brewhouse Yard during the seventeenth century.

During the 1660s Theaker resided in North Collingham, but was continually harassed for his beliefs, receiving multiple fines amounting to £38 (or roughly £3,000 today) for attending illegal Quaker meetings.

The Wildbore family, for instance, were crucial members of this group and helped to build the first meeting house of Castlegate Congregational Church, now the St. Andrews with Castlegate United Reformed Church. The Wildbores were a respectable family of reasonable wealth and status. Samuel Wildbore, head of the family, was a fuller and worked out of a shop rented from Anne Mitton. His firstborn son, Tobias, also entered the cloth industry but was able to advance beyond his father's position. By the 1680s Tobias had reached the level of cloth-dresser and by the time of his death in 1724 was a dyer. This elevation was aided by Samuel's investment in his son's education. Alongside cloth-working Tobias was a surveyor: a skilled profession which required extensive knowledge of geometry, trigonometry, physics, engineering and metrology. Knowledge in these subjects required a grammar school education, which only families with some wealth could afford.

Tobias also became involved in the building of the first meeting house for the Castlegate Congregational Church. Castlegate Congregational was founded in the 1650s by a small group of followers who met secretly in various people's houses. After the Act of Toleration was passed in 1689, subscriptions were taken for the building of a new meeting house. Tobias donated £2 for its construction, his brother John donated £1 10s and Samuel £3. In total the building cost £322 10s 10d and was completed on 8 October 1689. The work was overseen by Thomas Wright, the son of Captain Wright who was an elder in the church and had been arrested and imprisoned for unlicensed preaching. After the building was registered in 1689 Tobias was appointed as one of six trustees: responsible for managing church finances and looking after the church property. Tobias's position as trustee enhanced the family's respectability and allowed him to make connections with notable Nottinghamshire gentlemen, such as

Thomas Wright. The Wrights and the Wildbores went on to become close friends, resulting in Tobias's niece Elizabeth marrying Thomas's son Ichabod in 1722. Elizabeth and Ichabod's grandson wrote of them in his diary: "Theirs was one of the few Matches made in infancy by Friends which succeeded to the wishes of all Parties...they conceived an early attachment for each other which grew up with them". It was connections such as this which helped elevate the Wildbore family further, their descendants becoming politicians, bankers and scholars.

Brewhouse Yard was a safe haven, during the seventeenth century, for many families and

individuals whose religious devotion ran contrary to the established beliefs and practices of the time. Despite their differences, Quakers and Independents, amongst other Nonconformists, were able to live, work and worship side-by-side in this small extra-parochial parish. But Brewhouse was not simply a place of protection, it was also a place where families were able to establish themselves economically and make connections to prominent members of Nottinghamshire society. As a result, the descendants of many Brewhouse residents themselves became prominent members of Nottingham's social and political elite. Thomas Smith and his descendants left a lasting impact on Nottingham through the continuation of the Smith Bank and the building of numerous grand houses, including Broxtowe Hall and Bramcote Hall. Anne Mitton's descendants continued to be positioned in municipal government, with her great-grandson Langford Collin eventually being appointed as Justice of the Peace for Nottingham. Finally, the descendants of Elizabeth and Ichabod Wright went on to establish the Wright Bank and reached perhaps the highest echelons of society with the marriage of their great-grandson Samuel to the daughter of the Earl of Coventry. In the turbulence of the seventeenth century such economic, social and political achievements would have been inconceivable to the persecuted inhabitants of the "rock-yard".

Further reading: G. Burgess, and M. Festenstein (eds.), *English Radicalism, 1550-1850* (Cambridge, 2007).

Bethany Marsh
University of Nottingham

RAF Balderton during the Second World War

BY PETE STEVENS



HANDLEY PAGE HAMPDEN, PUBLIC DOMAIN WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Before the war, three farms occupied land two miles south of Newark on Trent, just west of the Great North road and just outside the village of Balderton. By mid-1940 all these farms had gone, the families given just six weeks to sell all their livestock and machinery, and leave. The land they had farmed for many years was about to be turned into an airfield for the RAF. Construction started in late 1940 and was completed by June 1941.

As he lowered his undercarriage the wheels hit the top of the trees, sending the aircraft crashing into three houses on the opposite side of the road.



BALDERTON AIRFIELD LOOKING NORTH, THE CONTROL TOWER AND TECHNICAL SITE ARE ON THE RIGHT, 1947

RAF Balderton formed part of a chain of bases that littered the East of England, facing occupied Europe. In the early years the airfield had only grass runways, with a tarmac perimeter track and grass dispersals. June 1941 saw the arrival of the first RAF personnel and the base became a satellite airfield for 25 Operational Training Unit from RAF Finningley, operating Handley Page Hampdens, the Vickers Wellington, and the Avro Anson. Also using the airfield was 16 OTU from RAF Upper Heyford. Only weeks later the first accident occurred when Hampden P1210 overshot the runway and crashed, killing the pilot and radio operator.

Flying became more frequent over the next couple of months as the RAF stepped up its aircrew training programme. On the night of the 16 August 1941 Hampden X2959 took off for night flying training and, after completing several circuits, the pilot turned the aircraft to land, but he was way off course. On the east side of the Great North Road was a small copse of trees that looked very much like those he had to fly over to land on the airfield, but these trees were taller. As he lowered his undercarriage the wheels hit the top of the trees, sending the aircraft crashing into three houses on the opposite side of the road. It burst into flames, killing not only the pilot and wireless operator, but also six of the children of Mr and Mrs Brumpton, who lived at 84 London Road. The occupants of other two houses were lucky to escape with their lives. This was by far the worst tragedy to affect the village during the operational life of the airfield. Four more crashes during the months of September and October saw the loss of four more aircrew.

December 1941 saw the arrival of the first operational squadron. This was 408 (Goose) Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force, with their Handley Page Hampdens. It flew a total of 88 operational sorties during December, with the loss of 4 aircraft and 15 aircrew. Operations continued into the New Year but, by the middle of January, the airfield had become unusable due to heavy snow and all operational aircraft and crews were sent temporarily to RAF North Luffenham until the weather improved. 408 Squadron remained at RAF Balderton until the 15th September 1942, when it departed for RAF Leeming and conversion to the Hadley Page Halifax. During its time at Balderton it flew 988 operational sorties with the loss of 38 aircraft and 134 aircrew – a graphic reminder of how dangerous bombing operations could be.

This was by far the worst tragedy to affect the village during the operational life of the airfield.

The airfield now closed for operations and major construction work began. This consisted of the laying of three concrete runways and larger dispersals, the construction of five hangers and control tower and other temporary buildings on the technical site. Other outlying buildings were constructed to house the increase in personnel and equipment storage. All of this work was completed within eight months and the airfield was opened again in July 1943. August saw the arrival of 1668 Heavy Conversion Unit to train pilots on the Lancaster and Halifax Bombers. One pilot of note, Leonard Cheshire, arrived to convert from the Halifax to the Lancaster. It took him less than a week. By November 1668 HCU had moved on to RAF Syerston and become No5 Lancaster Finishing School. Its departure saw a lull in activities, but in January 1944 the airfield had become USAAF Station 482, or Balderton Field, with the arrival of 437th Troop Carrier Group and the Douglas 'Dakota' C47's and Waco Gliders, and shortly after the 439th Troop Carrier Group.

More unusual visitors were Frank Whittle and his Jet Trials Unit, with a prototype Gloster Meteor F9/40 and two Vickers Wellingtons both with jet engines in the rear. We have had many reports from local villagers saying that they remember seeing the Wellington flying over the area with the props feathered and sounding very strange, and were amazed that it could still fly. Whittle based himself at The Old Hall on Main Street Balderton and it is thought that engine tests were carried out in the grounds. ▶

With flying operations finished, the airfield was handed over to 254 Maintenance Unit, and until August 1954, it was used for storage of some 40,000lbs of munitions.

The Jet Trials Unit stayed at Balderton until the 28th April. Meanwhile the Americans spent their first couple of months training for the invasion of Europe and by the beginning of May the main force had moved south to Ramsbury to prepare for D Day, leaving behind only ground and maintenance staff. By the beginning of August, it was thought that the airfield would be handed back to the RAF but preparations for Operation Market Garden saw all of the 438th TCG return.

As training for the operation gathered pace, the skies over Balderton were full of C47's, towing Waco

gliders and practising snatching the gliders off the ground. On Sunday the 17th September 1944, 80 C47's left bound for Holland, 30 with paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne and 50 towing gliders. All reached the target area and, after releasing their gliders and dropping the paratroopers, all returned safely. The following day, after being delayed by fog, the 94th Troop carrier squadron finally got airborne at noon, with 80 C47s – all towing gliders – heading for Holland, this time with the 307th Airborne engineer battalion. One, flown by Major Joseph Beck, was hit by anti-aircraft fire and was forced to land just short of the target area.

The co-pilot, Captain Fred Lorimer was killed by small arms fire, and the rest of the crew were taken prisoner. All the other aircraft returned safely.

On the 1st October 1944 the USAAF handed the airfield back to Bomber Command. The first couple of weeks was spent cleaning, tidying and arranging the station in accordance with Bomber Command operational requirements in preparation for the arrival of 227 Squadron. The Watch Office required refitting, and a new operation room and intelligence office building were provided, along with re-organising all the station communications. 227 Squadron arrived on the 22nd of October and operations shortly after, with 18 Lancaster's detailed to attack Bergen, Norway. The Squadron remained until 5th April 1945. Thereafter, the airfield was only available for emergency landings. While stationed at Balderton 227 Squadron flew 720 operational sorties, with the loss of 62 aircrew. Across its operational life, 213 air and ground crew, and 6 civilians, lost their lives.

With flying operations finished, the airfield was handed over to 254 Maintenance Unit, and until August 1954, it was used for storage of some 40,000lbs of munitions. By June 1954 the airfield was marked for closure and all munitions had to be moved by lorry to a railhead some 10 miles from the airfield, and then by rail to Cairn Ryan on the west coast of Scotland, where they were loaded onto ships and dumped in the Irish Sea. The airfield stood empty for 3 years and was sold in 1957.

Now in 2017 there is virtually nothing left of this forgotten airfield. Twenty per cent was returned to farming, the remainder being mined by British Gypsum. By 2020 most of the farm land will have been built on. On the 8th April 2018 RAF Balderton Research Group are holding a reunion at Newark Air Museum for the service personnel and families of those who served at the airfield from 1941 to 1954. 📷

Pete Stevens
RAF Balderton Research Group



WACO GLIDER USAF, PUBLIC DOMAIN WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

BY SCOTT LOMAX

Refuge in the rock:

The use of Nottingham's caves in times of war

By the spring of 1937, the British Government was anticipating war with Germany and encouraged councils across the country to seriously consider the matter of civil defence, and take action. Nottingham was one of the first cities outside of London to do this, and indeed the first in the country to establish a local Air Raid Precautions (ARP) network. In March 1937 the ARP and the Watch Committee were busy identifying sites suitable for use as shelters in the event of air raids. ▶



GUILDHALL CAVES

The German air assaults seen during the Spanish Civil War showed that war with Germany would lead to air raids on a scale unimaginable during the Great War. Planners thought that the Nottingham and Derby regions alone might suffer 15,000 dead after a fortnight's bombing, with a further 35,000 wounded. It was quickly realised in Nottingham, as elsewhere, that as tensions with Germany grew, the city's 250,000 inhabitants needed protecting. What was needed was the creation of hundreds of air raid shelters.

Eventually 745 sites in the city were scheduled for use as public air raid shelters and the ARP staff and volunteers visited each in order to produce a sketch survey on small cards which are now in the collection of Nottingham City Museums and Galleries. The cards provide details of access and emergency exits, along with the depths of the

shelters below ground (if applicable) and, usually, the number of people who could be accommodated. Of these the majority utilised pre-existing spaces beneath the ground. Large basements beneath shops, warehouses, factories and offices were adapted where necessary.

A significant proportion (approximately fifteen percent) of the underground air raid shelters made use of Nottingham's historic manmade caves. We currently know of more than 800 caves hewn into the sandstone bedrock which underlies much of the city. They are particularly concentrated in the city centre and along the major roads leading into the centre, such as Mansfield Road and Derby Road. Many were hewn during the medieval and post-medieval periods, although a significant number are relatively recent excavations. They were used for a variety of purposes including storage cellars, tunnels, production of malt, tanning, catacombs and sand mining.

The use of caves as potential shelters had been suggested during the early months of 1937. One of the key voices calling for their use, some of which extend for up to 200m in length, was George Campion, Director of the Thoroton Society Excavation Section. Campion had become fascinated by archaeology at a young age and had worked on a number of sites from the late 1920s. He took early retirement in order to pursue his interest and in 1936 helped establish the

“the city's 250,000 inhabitants needed protecting”

Excavation Section. His work excavating many caves provided him with the knowledge of their potential suitability in providing protection from bombs. He was particularly keen that a cave hewn in the late 18th and 19th century as a sand mine be used. This cave system, known as the Peel Street caves, or less commonly Rouse's Sand Mine, was large enough for hundreds of people to seek safety (unfortunately the estimated figure was not recorded on the ARP card).

In addition to those publicly sanctioned caves there were others, privately owned, in and beneath houses and businesses. Thus, a number of other caves, such as those at the well-known Trip to Jerusalem, were used with some preferring to see out the raid with ale or spirits rather than seek refuge in the often overcrowded public shelters.

Most caves used for this purpose had to be adapted, with emergency exits and ventilation shafts cut out of the rock, blast walls and steel supports built, and corrugated iron put in place to strengthen the roof. One cave, that beneath the former Guildhall, used reinforced concrete throughout to further strengthen the extensive cave system. That cave, originally hewn in 1860 for storage of barrels of ale from Skinner and Rook Brewery, is on two levels, extending deep into the ground and so was able to provide greater protection.

The caves located behind the cottages at the foot of the Castle Rock at Brewhouse Yard (now the Museum of Nottingham Life) were joined together in order to assist with access and exit. The largest cave at the museum, which had been used by the Boots Company at some time prior to the war, and was used in the 1970s by the University of Nottingham to carry out cosmic ray experiments (giving it the name 'the Cosmic Ray cave'), formed an emergency headquarters for the ARP. Here office space was available, with desks and telephone lines installed. Bunk beds were also provided for the volunteers to get some rest in case of a bombing raid of lengthy duration. In the larger shelters bunkbeds, often three beds in height, were positioned in large numbers to maximise the number of people able to be sheltered.

CASTLE ROAD SHELTER

A significant proportion (approximately fifteen percent) of the underground air raid shelters made use of Nottingham's historic manmade caves.



NOTTINGHAM ARP OFFICE 1940. PUBLIC DOMAIN WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The largest underground shelter in the city was beneath the former John Player Tobacco Factory in Radford. A number of small systems, and a substantial system of interconnecting passages, were hewn soon after November 1885 for use as cellaring for the Forest Brewery. Adaptations to increase ventilation and strengthen the roofs enabled a staggering 8,896 people to be accommodated here during bombing raids.

In addition to adapting historic caves, a small number of new caves were created, including one beneath Nottingham Castle. Caves of likely 18th century date, which formed the cellars of Rock House (which was demolished in 1928), were known to exist approximately half-way up Castle Road. In 1938 a series of linear passages was hewn, extending from the Rock House cellars, using mechanical boring devices. These passages extend beneath the area occupied by the castle's bandstand. Consideration was given to connecting all the caves beneath Nottingham Castle, and further expanding this network, but it was considered to be too expensive. The cost was cited, by a 'city official', as being £10 for each yard in length of tunnel. Other air raid shelter caves were created immediately east of the Victoria Railway Station (now the site of the Victoria Shopping Centre).

George Campion believed the use of pre-existing caves, and the small number of caves hewn in 1938, fell far short of what was required. In May 1938 he urged the authorities to utilise the sandstone bedrock in a highly ambitious scheme of cave creation in order to protect the entire civilian population. He unveiled his vision of creating five cave systems each formed of three extensive tunnels with interconnecting passages. The systems would be located beneath areas of rising topography, which Campion referred to as the "hills" of the city: the area of the Arboretum towards the Forest; Cliff Road to Hockley; Sneinton Hermitage to Sneinton Hollows; the northern side of the Park to Alfreton Road; the Castle Rock to Mount Street. The passages would total approximately 40 miles in length. He believed that enough ventilation could be supplied and that a central well in each of the systems would provide sufficient water. Electric lighting would be installed. Underground casualty wards, bathrooms and "every convenience" would be available. Voluntary labour would, Campion believed, have enabled the scheme to be delivered at a cost of £1,000,000 or £4 per head.

The sale of the sand extracted during the tunnelling would, he argued, help reduce costs.

Campion's vision, of course, never came to fruition and the authorities believed there were sufficient shelters available for the population. Certainly, Nottingham had greater underground provision than most other parts of the country.

As it transpired, there were 11 raids over Nottingham during the Second World War, the worst of which took place during the nights of 8 and 9 May 1941, and which has become known as the 'Nottingham Blitz'. During this 'Blitz' more than 100 planes dropped bombs across large areas in the city centre, resulting in 159 lives being lost and 274

Adaptations to increase ventilation and strengthen the roofs enabled a staggering 8,896 people to be accommodated here during bombing raids.

injuries. It is a sad irony that the Stadium Hotel, the cave of which was used to shelter from zeppelins in 1916, was destroyed during that raid. In total the 11 raids killed 178 people and injured a further 350. Had there not been so many historic caves which could be quickly adapted into shelters, this figure might have been higher. Even so, it was far below the number of likely dead anticipated before war broke out. Here planners worked on some one million killed and wounded in the first two weeks alone. Fortunately, the numbers were far fewer: across the war as a whole some 60,500 were killed (half of which were in London), and a further 86,000 seriously injured.

The story of Nottingham's caves being used for civil defence does not end with the celebration of victory against Germany and Japan in 1945. Following the use of atomic weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, and the onset of the Cold War, fears of the Soviet use of atomic weapons resulted in the issue of protection of civilians being considered once again. It was widely believed by

1950, and reported in the Nottingham press, that if an atomic bomb was dropped on a typical British city approximately 50,000 people would be killed.

In November 1949 the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission was urged to explore all possible avenues for agreement on the international control of atomic energy and to restrict it for peaceful purposes.

That same month, fearing the consequences of a war involving atomic weapons, George Campion renewed his pleas to the city's officials to create a town of tunnels and chambers 40 feet below the surface. This scheme to house the city's increased population of 400,000 would, he believed, have costed £10,000,000 but this sum could be raised if every person in the city paid £25 in instalments. Again, he argued that the sale of sand could offset some of the costs. 'Huge' underground community centres, cafes, bathrooms and lavatories were among his suggestions for facilities to help accommodate people for several weeks. He further suggested that once the tunnels were no longer needed to provide safety they could be used for a tube railway system to reduce traffic congestion.

Again, Campion's scheme was never put into place, but the nuclear threat was one that the authorities took seriously. The reinforced concrete building, forming a War Room, at Chalfont Drive, approximately two miles from the city centre, was built in the early 1950s and substantially enlarged around 1963 to form a Regional Seat of Government. Meanwhile, one of the city centre's most substantial cave systems, beneath the former Guildhall, Central Police Station and Central Fire Station, was modified in order to be used during atomic attack. Extending two levels into the ground, with lighting and emergency telephone lines, this cave system provided working space and accommodation for hundreds of emergency workers and the city's authorities. It was no doubt at this time that reinforced concrete was used in these caves. The caves cut into the Castle Rock were also considered for use as Cold War shelters. 📍

Scott Lomax
Acting City Archaeologist, Nottingham City Council

The mothers of Mapperley Asylum

BY CARLY-EMMA WHITE



Mapperley Asylum (initially known as Nottingham Borough Asylum) was an addition to the county asylum system that grew out of the increasingly philanthropic and institutional processes of the nineteenth century. Designed to take on the overflow from the County Asylum in Sneinton, Mapperley opened its doors on the 3rd August 1880, under the direction of Medical Superintendent Dr Evan Powell, with capacity for 280 patients.

However, the Nottingham borough borders had expanded between the planning of the asylum and its opening, and thus numbers admitted were exceeded within the first year. To meet increasing demand, an extension was built in 1889, which added six additional wards. These were occupied by male patients while the original six wards were given over to the female patients; but again, the asylum was at capacity within a year. Mapperley asylum treated both men and women of all ages for a variety of mental health problems, from mania to dementia.

By the mid-century it was widely believed that insanity in its various forms could be cured if dealt with appropriately, particularly within the sanctuary of an asylum. The Moral Treatment movement, advocating treatment via rest, routine and care, was to the forefront in banishing the outdated and inhumane practices of the privately-run asylums. By the closing years of the century, 98 per cent of county asylum inmates nationally were paupers. Numbers of inmates were increasing significantly, rising by 48,299 between 1844 and 1890. The 1845 Lunatics Asylum Act made it compulsory for every county to build an asylum within three years. However, demand continually outstripped capacity. At Mapperley, patient numbers increased constantly throughout the final decades of the nineteenth-century, rising to around 670 patients. The financial cost to the local community was high. In 1900, the Asylum's total outgoings amounted to £19,270 (or about £2.2m today). Most of this cost (£16,552) was met by the Poor Law Guardians from Nottingham and its surrounding area, at about £26 p.a. per patient treated. Small sums came from paying patients, who comprised about 10 per cent of the Asylum population.

The term puerperal insanity was used in the nineteenth-century to cover a spectrum of postnatal mental problems. The most common were puerperal mania and puerperal melancholia. Mania generally presented as erratic and uncharacteristic behaviour, incoherence, outlandish or grandiose tendencies and over sexualisation. Melancholia was a depressive state in which the patient was lack-lustre, unable to eat, slept too much or too little, was unkempt, unmotivated and could have thoughts of ending their own life. Postnatal psychosis, as it would be understood today, is distinguished by hallucinations, delusions and paranoia alongside the symptoms of more generalised mental illness, such as confusion. The women suffering this more extreme form of puerperal insanity do not seem to have been identified uniquely within the Mapperley records but are categorised in the same way as less extreme cases. One particularly illuminating example of this is that of

Mary, a thirty-eight year old pauper housewife admitted in 1898. Mary had eleven children, all living, and had given birth ten weeks prior to admission. Her condition is listed as puerperal mania but is clear from the description of her symptoms that she was more than likely suffering from postnatal psychosis:

"she states she has made a sacrifice of herself to Almighty God because of a dragon which is devouring the people of Bulwell, also that there is a secret concerning her husband which was revealed to her in a dream... she has had dreams of ill boding, about the dragon, says that her husband is in prison on her account and that she must go to court tomorrow to give evidence. She is continually speaking about religion, says that she only wishes to live to serve God."

Despite this colourful narrative, the mothers of Mapperley seem not to conform to what might be popularly perceived as the nineteenth-century lunatic. Most patients were not chronic cases but simply suffering a transient form of mental illness that could and would pass. The perception and treatment of postnatal mental illness at this time was linked to the values placed on women. This meant as wives, mothers and the way in which they were 'meant' to behave: as nurturers and guardians of the home. The way in which insanity was defined was linked to the perceived deviations from this acceptable behaviour.

The puerperal women of Mapperley also bear testament to the classless and undiscerning nature of postnatal ill-health. Annie, admitted in 1898 as a private patient from a family with the means to do so, was a distinctly tragic case. Her baby had been stillborn and yet she continued to



care for it and tuck it into its bed as if it were living. She was also a widow but claimed that her husband would be coming to see her soon. Presented as violent upon admission, she claimed she had three young men to whom she was engaged, and laughed excessively. The contrast between what was clearly her deep grief, and her apparent over-zealous engagement with the opposite sex, provides an evocative example of what, to nineteenth-century sensibilities, was a woman clearly requiring the skill of the psychiatrist to restore her to 'true' womanhood, behaving in a socially acceptable way. It is possible to see in her case how puerperal insanity was deemed a relatively curable disease; grief is transient and Annie simply required care and attention through that difficult process. In contrast, Clara was a machinist and lived in relative poverty.

She was admitted in June 1907 with a diagnosis of puerperal insanity, having given birth to an illegitimate child two weeks prior. She was listed as *"laughing at nothing"*, rambling in conversation and staring vacantly. She would pull at bed clothes, claimed that she needed no rest and that her bedroom was a *"chamber of horrors"*. The records describe her as a thin, malnourished woman in poor mental state. The very existence of her illegitimate child alone would have been proof of a woman in poor mental state. The link between female sexuality and madness had been increasingly cemented during the nineteenth century, especially when it took place outside of marriage.

Another issue that becomes clear when examining the records of Mapperley's mothers is an undeniable link between isolation and postnatal mental illness. Elizabeth was admitted in November 1898 and was diagnosed with melancholia related to excessive lactation.

Her notes state that her home was *"very comfortable"* and she was *"never short of necessities"*. She had six children, the youngest of which was one year old, and she continued to nurse this child. Elizabeth was admitted due to several threats and half-attempts to take her own life. The notes record that this state of mind began to take hold after a quarrel with her sister, who had previously been of some support to her. Elizabeth was unusual in terms of a puerperal diagnosis in that her last birth had been over a year prior. However, the fact that she had six children and was still nursing her youngest meant that likely she was a woman under significant strain, especially following the estrangement from her family.

May, admitted in 1889, also exhibited this *"unnatural"* desire to end her life and abandon her children. She threatened to poison herself, claimed that people were trying to chloroform her and that her children were in danger. She had given birth six weeks prior to admission and her state of mind had deteriorated since she had developed mastitis about two weeks post-birth. She was the wife of a collier and had a *"comfortable home"*, but with no family nearby. Her fear of being chloroformed may well have been linked to a birth trauma, as chloroform was frequently administered during labour in the nineteenth century. Ironically, it was believed that if a woman could not remember the pain of childbirth she would be less likely to suffer with puerperal insanity. Sarah, who was admitted in 1898 due to being *"hard to control"*, was another housewife with no support network, having lost her mother while pregnant. There is a particularly evocative quote from Sarah in which she states her *"waking hours are like hell and her sleeping like heaven"*.

The women of Mapperley may be separated by the new mothers of today by over a century but a commonality between these groups of females persists. Postnatal mental ill-health holds no distinctions as to whom it inflicts and is commonly understood to disproportionately affect those who are isolated or otherwise under stress. The World Health Organisation, for example, studied a sample of 25,000 women suffering with postnatal depression in 2008, and found that a lack of a social support network was one of three high risk factors alongside a history of depression and stressful life events. In that respect, the 'sticking plaster' of a curative stay in the asylum in 1897 cannot be deemed wholly in opposition with a course of antidepressant medication in 2017. 📖

Carly-Emma White
Nottingham Trent University

Ironically, it was believed that if a woman could not remember the pain of childbirth she would be less likely to suffer with puerperal insanity.

IMAGES LEFT TO RIGHT: SARAH, COURTESY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES. CLARA, COURTESY NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES. WOMAN WITH PERPETUAL MANIA, COURTESY WELCOME COLLECTION.

Stories from the Stone Wood

A thousand years of Charnwood life

BY JOSEPH HALL

On May 21st 2017, Beaumanor Hall in Woodhouse, Leicestershire, hosted a one-day heritage event. This was to celebrate Charnwood Roots; a HLF funded Victoria County History project which for the past four years had delved into the history of north-Leicestershire's Charnwood region. The day's main attraction was a bespoke exhibition showcasing the work of over 650 volunteers, who had pored through thousands of documents, recorded people's memories, investigated earthworks, and recovered 4,468 datable artefacts from 89 test-pits.

The aim of such a vast undertaking was to gather together the research needed to write Charnwood's own entry in the latest Victoria County History series. The VCH aims to produce a fully researched history of every town, village, and hamlet in England, from the earliest times to present day. The first volume for Leicestershire was published in 1907, followed by two further post-war volumes produced under the direction of W. G. Hoskins. During this time Hoskins also successfully lobbied for the VCH to include social history alongside fields of study which were already well-established in the series, such as manorial descents, landed estates, and economic, landscape, and religious history. In this way he hoped to include the lives of those everyday farm-labourers and factory-workers who made up the majority in the parishes being researched.

With around 6,500 pieces of historical information stored in the Charnwood Roots databank - soon to be publicly accessible online - narrowing the exhibition's scope was vital. Using Hoskins's approach, the exhibition focused on the personal stories of Charnwood's past residents, telling a social history of Charnwood in the process. The aim of the exhibition, titled *Stories from the Stone Wood: A Thousand Years of Charnwood Life*, was to bring these stories to the public.

The exhibition covered three large ground-floor rooms at Beaumanor Hall, and consisted of over 50 panels, 24,250 words, and 169 images. Each room was themed chronologically, from medieval, to early modern, to modern. Artefact display cases also offered visitors a more tangible experience of the past, displaying items ranging from Ulverscroft Priory's decorated medieval floor tiles, to the poignant fire-damaged log book of a German navigator who was killed when his plane was shot down over Loughborough in 1940. Life in Charnwood during World War Two was also displayed via an oral history installation.



FLOOR TILE FROM ULVERSCROFT PRIORY

Broken up into easily digestible sections, it was the texts within the exhibition panels themselves which told the stories. One section on medieval religious life recounted, among numerous other narratives, a farcical visit the Bishop of Lincoln paid to Ulverscroft Priory in 1438. Prior John Annesley got off on the wrong foot with the Bishop when he could not produce the priory's foundation document, nor the record of his own election as prior. The bishop also soon discovered that the priory was 100s (c.£25,000) in debt, and had not submitted an annual account for over three years. Discipline was also lax. Brother Rodyngton, for example, would roam the forest without permission,



THE PERAMBULATION ROUND CHARNWOOD FOREST 1754, COURTESY OF LEICESTERSHIRE RECORDS OFFICE

catching wild animals and scandalising the neighbourhood by spilling priory secrets, whilst Brother Broghtone received money from his family, which he then lent out. When reprimanded, he boldly declared that he was free to use his money as he saw fit, "without asking leave of anyone in the world!" Other stories were more sombre in tone, such as that of the carpenter Richard de Bredon. A Coroner's Roll from an inquisition held in 1363 recounted how Richard had been working on the steeple at Long Whatton when, losing his footing whilst carrying timbers, he fell 50 feet to his death. Personal stories were also brought to light from amongst the paperwork of official bureaucracy. One Inquisition Post Mortem document from 1288 recounted that the tenants of William de Ferrers of Groby had been allowed a measure of creativity when paying their rents, with five pounds of pepper, nine pounds of cumin, five pairs of gloves, an ounce of silk, six dozen iron arrows, or one clove of gillyflower all being

acceptable alternatives to cash. In another example from 1270, Adam, the son of Ralph the Clerk of Quorn, paid part of his rent with a wreath of marigolds.

The lives of individual Charnwood residents were also extracted from seemingly dry and impersonal documents, such as those relating to the Poor Laws. The Old Poor Law, in operation between 1601 and 1834, was often tailored to meet individuals' needs, and was even flexible enough to allow for exceptional cases. The exhibition showed that in 1795, John Brown of Rothley obtained help from local officials after he was shot whilst visiting Barrow. In the same parish only a few months later, the pauper Mary Woolerton was also given free medicine after a "mad dog" bit her. The New Poor Law, passed in 1834, was far stricter, and introduced the now-infamous workhouse. Those who found themselves inside the workhouse were forced to live a regimented life, separated from family and divided by age and gender. Strict discipline was also enforced, and many inmates fell foul of these draconian rules. In 1868 young Thomas Hill was "put in a dark hole" ▶

In another example from 1270, Adam, the son of Ralph the Clerk of Quorn, paid part of his rent with a wreath of marigolds.



Struck over the head with a poleaxe by Walter Atte Halle, the Chaplain escaped and staggered home before dying three days later.

and given little food for 15 hours for wandering into the wrong yard at Barrow workhouse, and five years later William Smith and Susan Wootton were each given 21 days' hard labour for having "improper connexion" in the bath-house.

Crime and conflict often generated much in the way of paperwork, even in medieval times, and, as such, many documents survive which attest to this. This was shown in the exhibition by a series of panels which included stories of affray, robbery, mis-selling goods, and the unusually common crime of blocking paths with dungheaps. More serious crimes were also recounted. For example, one 1364 Coroner's Roll told of an inquest held at Swannington to investigate the death of the Chaplain of Hugglescote. Struck over the head with a poleaxe by Walter Atte Halle, the Chaplain escaped and staggered home before dying three days later. In a caption perhaps more relatable to modern audiences, a court session held at Belton in 1464 showed an absent-minded scribe writing the words "Robin Hood in Sherwood stood" – a line from a contemporary song – on the court roll itself. Realising his lapse in concentration, he quickly crossed it out.

The exhibition also covered education. One story among many involved a school in Mountsorrel, which was founded in 1840 in the back room of one Miss Jacques. Pupils were allowed to earn pocket-money by "grubbing out" the moss from between the cobblestones in the garden during break-time. For every full bucket they would be paid ¼ of a penny, although Miss Jacques would press the cobblestones down with her foot before measuring. Working lives were another focus of the exhibition, and Account Books were mined to highlight the stories of medieval peasants like Alice Swon and her children, who harvested crops owned by Grace Dieu Priory. Apprenticeship Indentures from the 18th and 19th centuries were also used to show how Charnwood's boys and girls climbed out of poverty by learning trades. Whilst most went into ordinary professions such as carpentry, framework knitting, midwifery, or household management, in 1757 Elizabeth Newton of Mountsorrel became apprenticed to a gingerbread maker, and in 1893 Harry Wesley of Woodhouse Eaves moved to Leicester to learn the confectionary business.

The lives of those who extracted Charnwood's natural resources were also recounted. Kay Porter lived close to Mountsorrel as a girl, and recalled that chips of granite would sometimes bounce down the main road when the quarrymen were blasting. Granite dust also covered the town, and Kay was 15 before she realised that blackberries were supposed to be black rather than grey. Whilst providing work for many, such dangerous industries also



WHITWICK COLLIERY MEDAL

had their darker sides. In the early hours of April 19th 1898, a fire began in pit number five at Whitwick Colliery. In the mine that morning were 42 men and boys. The fire soon spread to the timbers propping up the roof, which collapsed trapping 35 miners in a shaft filled with suffocating carbon monoxide. Not one survived. The youngest victim was 13-year-old John Albert Gee, who had raced to the furthest part of the pit to warn other workers of the fire.

One panel which vividly brought to life the everyday concerns of the common people told the story of the *Charnwood Opera*; a protest ballad penned by an unknown author and performed at the 'Holly Bush' pub in 1753. The story it tells concerns William Herrick, who in 1748 expanded his estate by encroaching onto lands set aside for common use. The next year he enclosed yet more land, and posted warreners around the fences to guard against trespassers. These enclosures housed Herrick's many warrens - a valuable source of income - and many of his warreners were armed with guns. To oppose what they saw as ongoing theft of common land, local men armed themselves with pitch-forks, spades, and pickaxes. They met at Charley Knoll and confronted Herrick's men. A fight broke out and in the confusion a local protester named William Stevenson received a fatal head wound. Whilst many of the rioters were subsequently arrested, nobody was ever convicted of the murder. However, the rioters did manage to regain their rights to the common land, at least for a while. In 1753, a few short years after the riot, the *Charnwood Opera* was written. It remains the only surviving example of a protest ballad against enclosure. Consisting of seven songs which would have been set to the tunes of popular folk songs of the time, it was likely written to both commemorate the events at Charley Knoll and to remind people of the importance of resistance in the face of further attempts to enclose land. One song, *The Coney Warren*, was addressed to William Herrick and a Swithland landowner, and describes the mood of many locals who felt impoverished by the manorial lords' selfish grasping of common resources. In addition to its inclusion in the exhibition, parts of the *Opera* were also recited by the Grand Union Folk Club, perhaps for the first time in over 250 years. 📖

These examples are just a few of the many stories told in the exhibition, which is modular and can be broken down into themes or time-periods to be displayed in smaller sections. If you would like to display the exhibition at your own venue – in full or in part – a catalogue listing of its panels can be obtained by emailing Dr Julie Attard on jad17@le.ac.uk. Whilst the Charnwood Roots Project has now come to an end, the next step for the Leicestershire VCH Trust is to fundraise for the next stage: writing-up and publishing the book – or books – for Charnwood. To find out how you can help with this, either by volunteering, becoming a Friend of the Trust, or joining the 200 Club, visit www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/leicestershire

Joseph Hall
Charnwood Roots Project

Lost Legends:

BY GEMMA CLARKE

Capturing the hidden cultural contribution of the African and African Caribbean community in the UK

October 2017 marked an important milestone, the thirtieth anniversary of Black History Month in the UK, providing an opportunity to reflect and recognise the contribution that the African and African Caribbean community have made to the cultural landscape. *Lost Legends*, the brainchild of social enterprise Serendipity, sought to celebrate this milestone by recording, documenting, and archiving many unique histories and hidden stories in Leicester. In particular, the project focused on creating resources for all of Leicester's communities to engage with, whilst preserving a piece of Black British heritage for future generations.

Black History Month in Leicester has been coordinated by Serendipity since 2011. Its *Lost Legends* project, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Leicester City Council and Arts Council England, has embarked upon a multifaceted collaboration that captured key events and pioneers in the city over the last three decades. The *Lost Legends* website includes an online media archive of oral history clips and videos and a blog of archival materials, which continues to be updated as new information is uncovered. A month-long exhibition, held at Newarke Houses Museum, showcased Leicester's story within the context of a wider Black British history and perspective, featuring unique memorabilia and ephemera from Leicester's pioneers, alongside world renowned artists who have performed in the city. The project's outputs included a short documentary film that highlighted the current political debates and a publication, *Lost Legends: 30 Years 30 Voices*, capturing the varying perspectives of artists, activists, elders, young voices and trailblazers, each with a connection to Leicester. Throughout every aspect of *Lost Legends*, Serendipity posed the question: *What does Black History Month mean to you?* ▶



LOST LEGENDS EXHIBITION LAUNCH, FREEDOM ZAMPALADUS WITH JOE ALLEN, 2017, COURTESY OF SERENDIPITY



Pawlet Brookes, Chief Executive Officer and Artistic Director of Serendipity describes how Black History Month came about:

“Black History Month in the UK started in 1987 and actually it grew out of civil unrest in the 80s. In the early 80s we had riots across the country and the outcome of that was that the government threw money at Black organisations. It was those organisations that have driven Black History Month forward.”

Riots started in Bristol in 1980 and Brixton in 1981, and quickly spread to other cities such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds and Leicester. This can be set against a backdrop of high youth unemployment, inner-city deprivation and racial profiling from the police in the form of the ‘Sus’ Laws, which chiefly impacted on young Black men. Funding enabled the African and African Caribbean community across the UK to develop new opportunities, such as Black History Month. In Leicester, this began with the creation of the Leicester Caribbean Carnival in 1984, with the first Carnival taking place in 1985, and the development of new spaces for community groups and organisations which included purpose-built venues such as the Highfields Workshop Centre (now the African Caribbean Centre) and Ajani Women and Girls Centre, the first Black women’s Centre in the Midlands. Raddle’s Bookshop (founded in 1979) was a place where the African and African Caribbean community found resources and books about their heritage and culture not widely available in mainstream book shops. These spaces provided a service to the African and African Caribbean community in Highfields,

Leicester, giving them new opportunities to learn, share and promote their history, thoughts and perspectives on their culture.

The *Lost Legends* exhibition, and its companion publication *Lost Legends: 30 Years, 30 Voices*, worked to position local Black history with those events happening nationally and internationally by including a timeline of key milestones from the last two hundred and fifty years. For example, Una Marson became the first Black female broadcaster at the BBC in 1939, and Elaine Hinds became the first Black telephonist for the Leicester General Post Office in 1964. The first Black MPs were elected to the UK Parliament in 1987, and Joseph Allen was elected to Leicester City Council in the same year. Adkyaaba Addai Sebbo is widely acknowledged as the founder of Black History Month in London, with the first event taking place in October 1987. In Leicester, events celebrating Black history had been taking place for many years under the leadership of Wolde Selassie (1953-2015), who advised and supported the programme through the Leicester African Caribbean Citizens Forum (LACAF) and was Chair of the Black History Consortium. Wolde, as an activist, worked tirelessly within Leicester’s African and African Caribbean community and was well-known as a poet, educator and percussion tutor. It is the stories and contributions of people such as Elaine Hinds, Joseph Allen and Wolde Selassie that Serendipity felt was important to document.

Lost Legends has also uncovered many hidden stories, such as boxer Larry Gains, who lived in Leicester during the 1930s. Larry was born in Canada in 1900 but he made his first professional appearance in 1923 in London as ‘The Toronto Terror’. As a Black boxer, Larry Gains was barred at that time from competing for the British Championship, but he did compete for the

“In the early 80s we had riots across the country and the outcome of that was that the government threw money at Black organisations.”

WOLDE SELASSIE, COURTESY OF EARLE ROBINSON



Coloured Heavyweight Champion of the World, a title which he won in 1928 and 1935. He won 17 of the 18 fights he had in Leicester from 1930 to 1937, including one in June 1931 against Phil Scott, heavyweight champion of the British Empire, at the Tigers’ ground on Welford Road in front of a crowd of around 34,000 people. It ended with a knockout in the second round. Something of a local celebrity at the time, despite being little acknowledged in Leicester today, a photograph from 1932 shows Larry Gains judging a Fancy Dress Carnival competition on Shrove Tuesday at St Chad’s Church, Leicester.

Leicester was also home to Laurel Aitken (1925–2005), well-known as the ‘Godfather of Ska’ and an innovator in this genre of music. Born in Cuba, Laurel lived in Jamaica and London before moving to Leicester in 1971. Laurel’s hits include *Boogie in my Bones* (1958), *Little Sheila* (1958) and *Rudi Got Married* (1980), and his legacy can be seen in the work of contemporary artists such as Pauline Black, The Selecter, Madness and The Beat. In 2007, a commemoration was held, with a Heritage Foundation Blue Plaque placed at Laurel Aitken’s former home. Other local musical pioneers include Millie Munroe and Pearl Ricketts, and their band *Eastern Variation*. Formed in 1973, the band was one of the first in Leicester to feature both black and white musicians. They released several records including *Baby, I Love You*. Millie and Pearl also appear as gospel duet, *The Foster Sisters* and have received numerous accolades and awards and have worked closely with the community to share their passion for music.

MILLIE MUNROE (LEFT) AND PEARL RICKETTS (RIGHT), COURTESY OF MILLIE AND PEARL



Leicester has also been called home by the more familiar face of fitness pioneer Derrick ‘Mr Motivator’ Evans, who became a television success in the 1990s promoting well being and fitness on morning television. Actor Josette Simon, also from Leicester, was the first Black female actor to appear in a lead role with the Royal Shakespeare Company when she was cast as Rosaline in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* in 1985.

Alongside homegrown trailblazers, *Lost Legends* has provided a opportunity to recognise those who have contributed to the cultural dynamics of the city, such as Cy Grant, who performed as Othello at the Phoenix Theatre, Adelaide Hall who appeared at Leicester’s Haymarket Theatre and Billy Eckstine who appeared at De Montfort Hall. Fortunately, through research, programmes and newspaper articles could be found for these performances. However, other ephemera has been apparently lost altogether, not to be found in the deposits of local venues or archives. Such is the case of Ella Fitzgerald’s performance at De Montfort Hall, for which little or no documentation could be found, despite the recollection of the event by many.

Black History Month 2017 has celebrated the key achievements of Leicester’s pioneers and trailblazers with almost 2,000 people visiting the *Lost Legends* exhibition during October, and nearly 200,000 viewing the *Lost Legends* film online (via *The Guardian’s* coverage). Now Black History Month looks to the future, continuing to be celebrated every day of the year, giving all of Leicester’s communities the opportunity to learn about the contribution African and African Caribbean people have made to their city, and the opportunity to share in this unique history and heritage.

Pawlet Brookes Chief Executive Officer and Artistic Director – Serendipity

Gemma Clarke Project Researcher – Serendipity

Amy Grain Administrator – Serendipity

About the book

The *Lost Legends* online media archive is accessible to all and can be found at www.lost-legends.serendipity-uk.com along with a link to the *Lost Legends* film. Copies of *Lost Legends: 30 Years 30 Voices* publication are available to purchase on Amazon or at www.serendipity-uk.com/shop. For more information about this and other Serendipity projects, please contact 0116 257 7316 or email info@serendipity-uk.com.



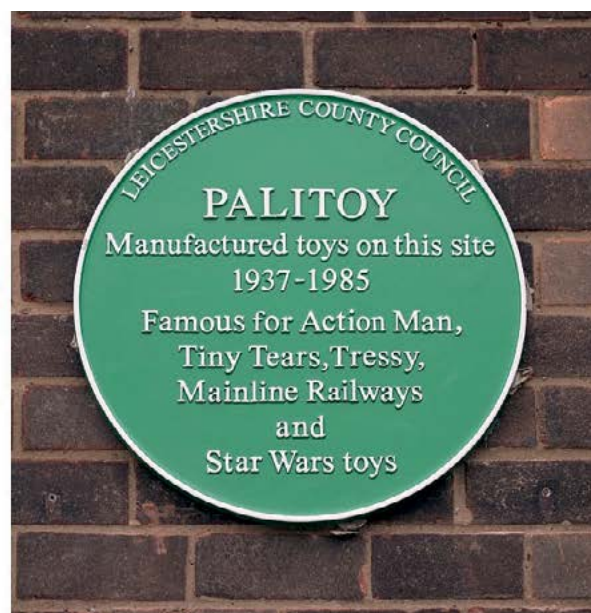
Leicestershire's

BY BOB BRECHIN

toy story



COURTESY LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



A former factory in Leicestershire, which was responsible for popular children's toys such as Action Man, Tiny Tears, and Star Wars figures, has been honoured with a green plaque. On Thursday 2nd November the plaque was installed at the "old toy factory", on Jackson Street, which is now the Coalville Business Park. The company, Palitoy, manufactured and marketed some of the most popular toys in Britain - from 1937 to 1985 - before it ceased trading. Bob Simpson, who was managing director between 1969 and 1981, was at the unveiling, along with many former employees.

Councilor Pam Posnett, Leicestershire County Council's cabinet member for green plaques, said: "Palitoy not only helped to stoke children's imaginations with its classic toys, dolls and games, it also helped to put Coalville on the map."

Palitoy began making soft-bodied dolls in Coalville in 1937 in a former billiard hall situated on Owen Street. Cascelloid, Palitoy's owners, was founded in 1919 in Leicester. Alfred Edward Pallett, barely 18 years old, had failed his accountancy exams and was trying to make a living selling typewriters. Thinking that this was not a career that would excite him, instead he started a business of his own in the emergent world of plastics. Making a trip to London with an example of a plastic container to hold a bar of soap he came back to Leicester with a substantial order from Woolworths.

He then had to make them. Renting a former boarding house on Britannia Street, he had to first de-louse the building before ploughing all his savings into buying sheets of celluloid and some presses. He completed the order for Woolworths, then began making other products. His first toy in 1920 was the Flitafast windmill. This was just a summer line, so he moved on to baby rattles, and in 1925 his first doll, Diddums, based upon the illustrations of quirky characters by Mabel Lucy Atwell. This was one of the first examples of character merchandising. Many other character dolls followed.

In 1927 his workforce had grown, and the turnover was £10,000 (equivalent to half a million in today's terms), but he was almost put out of business when a disastrous fire occurred at the Britannia Works. Celluloid is extremely flammable and, if not the cause, would have certainly stoked the flames. Undeterred, he opened up another factory nearby.

In 1931 Pallett sold the business to the large plastics concern Bakelite Xylonite Limited (BXL), and with that came the brand-new Britannia Works for Cascelloid on Abbey Lane in Leicester. In 1935 the name Palitoy was registered, but wasn't used by Cascelloid for its toys until the Coalville factory was operational two years later. After the War, a new factory was built for the Toy Division on 3 1/2 acres of ground behind the old billiard hall and the business of producing toys was re-established. Cascelloid would become pioneers in injection moulding and blow-moulding. By the end of the 1940s, it introduced "petal-skin vinyl" - a soft, natural-feeling plastic, which led to the introduction in 1953 of Yvonne, "the doll of the century". Previously dolls either had painted hair or a separate wig was glued on. Cascelloid pioneered "real" hair - that is nylon plastic filaments stitched into the soft vinyl dolls head - which could be washed and styled.

In the early 1960s, BXL came to the conclusion that Cascelloid should concentrate on its growing industrial products sector. Over the years, especially with the advent of blow-moulding, the factory on Abbey



YVONNE DOLL OF THE CENTURY

Lane was producing all sorts and sizes of polythene bottles, from those for washing up liquid to 20-gallon carboys. It was decided to sell off the toy division, Palitoy, but first it had to be transformed into something that would attract buyers.

Miles Fletcher was employed, with his marketing manager Bob Simpson, to turn what was basically a manufacturing/sales operation into what could potentially become a modern toy marketing company with up-to-date manufacturing facilities. It started with the manufacture under license of Tressy in 1964. Barbie, Mattel's fashion doll with accompanying pocket-money outfits, had been selling phenomenally well since 1959, and Pedigree had copied the concept in the UK. Tressy was another fashion doll - but with a difference. Her hair grew. The following year, from the same American company as Tressy, Tiny Tears was introduced. Some of the old products that were looking jaded were cleared out of the catalogue, but Miles and Bob realized that what was missing was something for the boys. Enter Action Man - from Hassenfeld Brothers, also in the USA. Initially, Action Man was basically G I Joe in Palitoy packaging, but as the years progressed he became essentially British, with the introduction



of British uniforms, including The Household Cavalry and the SAS, and vehicles such as the Land Rover and Scorpion Tank. And, of course, he got his Palitoy-inspired gripping hands.

In 1968, Palitoy was sold to the US giant General Mills, and over the next twelve years, turnover increased, from what had been £300,000 before Tressy, to a massive 30 million. This was achieved by the introduction of new products from sister companies in the General Mills Toy Group, from sourcing from other companies around the world, and brand-new designs coming out of the expanding design department at Coalville: products such as Striker, Girls World, Action Force, and Pippa. Marketing put together ranges such as Discovery Time, Pocketeers and a wholesale division called Bradgate. Parker Games was introduced in 1971 with a comprehensive range from the sister company in USA, and this was expanded with new games designed and developed at Coalville. The company even took on the mighty Hornby with its own Mainline Railways, which was totally designed and developed from scratch, with an emphasis on detail and authenticity. In 1978 Kenner's *Star Wars* toys were launched, and, through Palitoy, found their way into British homes. *Star Wars* would change the business of toy marketing worldwide.

With the release of the second *Star Wars* film, *The Empire Strikes Back*, the demand for the toys rose substantially. Because of the interest, the BBC Newsnight team visited the factory and described Palitoy as "a goldmine on top of a coalmine". Yet within a few years both the coalmine and the toy company would be consigned to the annals of history. In 1985 General Mills decided to divest itself of its Toy Group. Two years previously, over production, falsely confident marketing plans, and too many inferior products from too many companies, saw the boom and hype of video games turn into a slump. General Mills Toy Group took a tremendous hit. In the UK the Palitoy name went. The factory site at Coalville remained in operation as Kenner Parker from 1986, employing its former Palitoy staff, whose numbers had already fallen significantly. Within two years it was owned by Tonka, who would later sell out to Hasbro. The factory was finally sold in 1994, with the last manufacturing machine for Playdoh moving to Ireland.

Bob Brechin, former Chief Designer at Palitoy, who nominated the factory for the county council award said at the unveiling:

IMAGE TO THE LEFT: ACTION MAN
IMAGE TO THE RIGHT: TINY TEARS 1965

"It is 80 years since Palitoy toys were first made in Coalville in an old billiard hall still standing on the site, and I thought the famous toy company should be celebrated with a green plaque at this special time. 2019 will be the centenary of its founding in Leicester. My hope is that the green plaque may be the catalyst for a permanent heritage centre in Coalville so that people will remember fondly such toys as Action Man, Tressy, Tiny Tears, Pippa, Mainline Railways, Girls World, Parker Games, Care Bears, Star Wars and Striker."

Bob Brechin
Former Palitoy Chief Designer (1967-1984)



Exploring the East Midlands: Involving communities in historic environment research

BY DAVID KNIGHT AND BLAISE VYNER

Our exciting new website provides an interactive resource for studying the archaeological and built heritage of the East Midlands. Created with Historic England funding as a part of a national strategy to develop regional research frameworks, the website is designed to inform future research and inspire work by local communities.

It takes the form of an updatable web resource that gives users from a variety of research backgrounds the opportunity to contribute (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>). Read on to find out the purpose of this evolving resource, how it was developed, and how you can use and contribute to it.

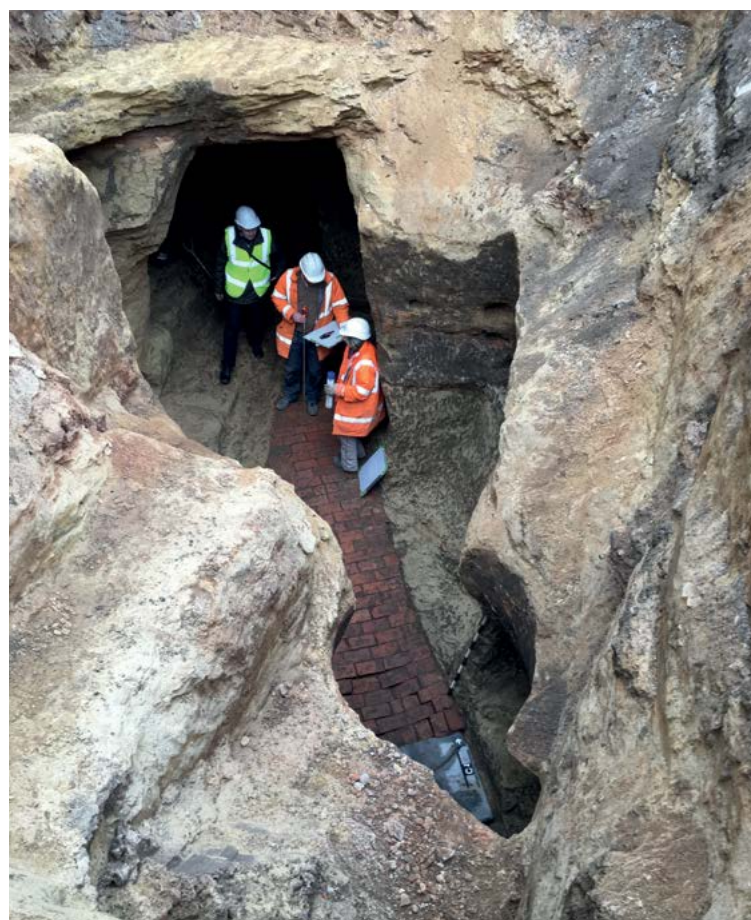
What is the research framework?

The framework comprises three key elements:

- Regional overview: a summary of current knowledge of the archaeological and built environment resource of the East Midlands.
- Research Agenda: to generate our key questions for future research.
- Research Strategy: to establish measures for advancing our understanding of the questions identified in the Agenda.

How was the framework developed and why is it important?

Work on the Research Framework began nearly twenty years ago with a series of county studies that provided the foundation for a regional overview entitled *The Archaeology of the East Midlands*. That volume provided the first general review of the evidence for human activity in the region: from the appearance of hunter-gatherers during warm phases of the last Ice Age to the late 20th century. Later work generated a Research Agenda and Strategy, published in 2012 under the title of *East Midlands Heritage*. Both works have been widely recognised as valuable resources for further study, and are used extensively in the planning process as guides to investigations of archaeological sites and buildings threatened by development. Each stage of the project has involved extensive consultation with community groups, independent researchers and members of university departments, local government authorities, contracting units and other organisations with interests in the region's archaeology and built environment. The framework thus provides a rare example of a document which has been made with these partners, rather than being done for them.



RECENT WORK IN CONVENT STREET, NOTTINGHAM FOR NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY REVEALED A CAVE COMPLEX THAT MAY ORIGINATE IN THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD, PROVIDING A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE UNDERSTANDING OF THE MORPHOLOGY AND USE OF CAVES. A KEY OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH STRATEGY (PHOTOGRAPH: D KNIGHT; © TRENT & PEAK ARCHAEOLOGY).

Creating a digital resource

We have focused in recent years upon finding sustainable – and accessible – methods of ensuring long-term maintenance and enhancement of the framework, and of encouraging input from independent archaeologists and community groups. It was decided to explore the potential for utilising wiki software, as seen on our website, as a medium for wider engagement. Projects such as the *Scottish Archaeological Research Framework* (<http://www.scottishheritagehub.com>) have shown the potential of this approach, and we have established a methodology that we hope will assist the development of other regional research frameworks.



BOAR'S HEAD MILLS, DARLEY ABBEY: LASER SCAN OF LONG MILL, SHOWING LOWER FLOOR AREAS (RED AND PURPLE) WORN BY WORKERS AS THEY MOVED AROUND THE MACHINES, ADDING TO UNDERSTANDING OF THE INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THIS BUILDING. THIS PROJECT WAS CARRIED OUT AS PART OF THE HERITAGE LOTTERY FUNDED YOUNG ROOTS PROJECT. SOURCE: DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

What does our website offer? The texts of the 2006 and 2012 publications have been converted into a series of interlinked web pages which we encourage users to view and comment on. Access is provided via a standard web browser. An initial version of the website was launched in 2017, and we are currently monitoring it to establish its effectiveness for encouraging community involvement. The knowledge gained from this pilot study will inform a sustainable strategy for long-term maintenance and enhancement of the resource. We hope that this article will encourage you to consult the wiki, update it with your own discoveries and provide feedback on how the site can be improved.

How to contribute

We are interested in receiving updates on archaeological projects, building surveys, documentary research and other work that sheds light on key topics in the Research Agenda: for example, the changing forms and functions of the caves of Nottingham, and the development of the Derwent Valley as a focus of the Industrial Revolution. Recent examples of work addressing these questions include the two projects that are illustrated here: excavations of a hitherto unrecorded cave complex in Convent Street, Nottingham (<http://confetti.ac.uk/nottingham-caves/>) and laser-scanning of industrial and domestic buildings in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (<http://www.derwentvalleymills.org/learn/learning-schools/school-projects/the-technology-then-technology-now/>). To contribute to the wiki, visitors should log in to the home page and register as a new user. Information and comments on the regional

How to get involved

To access the Research Framework and to find out how to contribute, visit <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/Getinvolved/>

David Knight
Trent & Peak Archaeology

Blaise Vyner
Blaise Vyner Consultancy

Further reading: Nicholas Cooper (ed), *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Agenda* (Leicester, 2006). David Knight, Blaise Vyner and Carol Allen, *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Nottingham, 2012). Regional Research Frameworks: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/research-resources/research-frameworks/>


overview, Agenda and Strategy can then be added, along with details of forthcoming conferences, meetings and other events. We are also keen to receive feedback on how the website might be enhanced to create a more user-friendly resource, and for this purpose would be pleased if users could contact us directly at emherf@yorkat.co.uk.

Research Fund

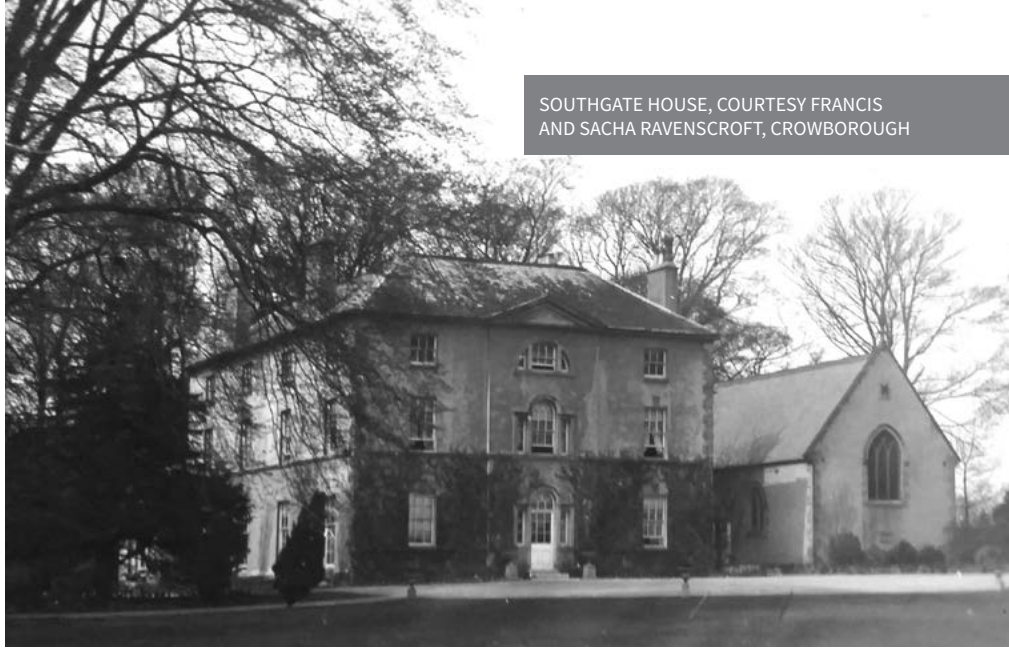
Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society

Do you need funding for a research project on the history of Leicestershire or Rutland?

Applications are invited for research which focuses on the history and archaeology of Leicestershire or Rutland. Research which places evidence from these counties into a broader framework is also welcome. However large or small your project, and whether it takes place in the archives or in the field, we would be happy to discuss it with you. For more details, grant criteria, and how to get in touch, visit our website at: www.lahs.org.uk



SOUTHGATE HOUSE, COURTESY FRANCIS AND SACHA RAVENSCROFT, CROWBOROUGH



Henry Bowdon – Tales from the life of a Derbyshire country Squire

BY CHRISTIANE MÜLLER-HAZENBOS

Southgate House, located north-east of Clowne, Derbyshire, is a paragon of a modest, medium-sized English country house. Unlike many houses that were primarily summer or week-end residences for affluent metropolitans or industrialists, it was continually inhabited.

Its history provides a microcosm of English social history over the last two and a half centuries. Initially built before 1757, demolished ca. 1786 and rebuilt in 1787, it was the Butler-Bowdon family's main seat for about 150 years. The house, which once had two entrance halls, a drawing and a living room, kitchens, servants' quarters, and 13 bed and dressing rooms, as well as other amenities of daily life, survives today as a restaurant and hotel.

The Butler-Bowdons originated from Bowdon near Altrincham, Cheshire (hence the surname). The family moved to Chapel-en-le-Frith, Derbyshire where they are attested since the early 14th century. During the mid-1700s they relocated to Pleasington near Blackburn, Lancashire, where in 1841 they merged with the Butler family. Eventually they moved to Derbyshire, via Whetstone/Wheston to Beighton Fields, Barlborough and Clowne.

The family was firmly rooted in the Catholic faith. They considered themselves recusant, and in this way were closely linked to many large and influential British Catholic families. Family values and Christian charity played a superordinate role in their lives, and they lived according to the family motto *vanus est honor sine factis*, which for them meant the exertion of responsibility, attentiveness, unpretentiousness, humility and communal spirit. Wealthy, although never ostentatious, they owned land, shares in a colliery and other natural resources, possessed manifold objects of value and, like many other Catholic families, were safe keepers of some notable church treasures (the *Book of Margery Kempe*, the 'Butler-Bowdon Cope').

One of Southgate House's most illustrious inhabitants was Henry Bowdon (1814 - 1875). He, his wife and their two daughters lived at Southgate House for the best part of 25 years. Henry belonged to the most powerful members of landed wealth during his time in his parish. He was the first son of John Peter Bruno and Mary Martha Bowdon (née Ferrers) of Southgate House and Beighton Fields Priory. After his father's death in 1850, Southgate House passed to Henry, and with it an estate which comprised, alongside the house and its staff, and, a number of cottages, farms and tenants. Henry married Henrietta Mathilda (Harriet) Blount in 1853, and only a little later the couple became parents to Alice and Constance.

Henry was a pious man, a staunch Catholic, who "loved to dwell in conversation on those hard days of the Church, and showed the loyal feelings and principles of one who had received the inheritance of faith through a suffering ancestry." Local press reports describe him as "truly a country squire, whose happy domestic house was always open to his family and friends, and venerated and cherished by his tenantry and labouring classes around him, ... ever ready with a pleasant word or chat with all, and in this lay the secret of the affection and esteem in which he lived and died." Henry must have been a man of robust health and good appetite who treated his stomach "like a carpet bag", but he was not indestructible. We know that in his mid-40s he suffered from toothache and face ache, as well as from bouts of rheumatism and neuralgia. Yet despite his generally strong physical condition, it tragically was a 'simple' bronchitis that put an end to Henry's life. His final resting place at the walled enclosure behind Beighton Fields Priory is a lasting testament of his standing.

What really sets Henry apart is that he kept a diary. Although the original is lost, a compilation of entries was published in two articles in Spinkhill's Mount St. Mary's College's in-house journal *The Mountaineer* in 1914. The notes span over two decades of Henry's life, between 1854, the year after his marriage, until a week before his death in 1875. The contents are a window into the past and the life of a Derbyshire county squire and his family in an English country house during the mid-19th century, the heyday of the Victorian era. The 174 recorded entries showcase Henry Bowdon as a keen and witty observer of proceedings at Southgate House and Beighton Fields Priory, the homesteads of his family, and at Spinkhill, the family's place of worship and spiritual home. Many entries record the great national and international historical events of the time: for example, the taking of Sevastopol (1854) and the end of the Crimean War, the Sepoy Mutiny (1857), Prince Albert's temporal entombment in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle (1861), the triumphant arrival of Princess Alexandra of Denmark in London (1863), the 'Great Sheffield Flood' caused by the burst of the Dale Dyke Dam (1864), and the 'Fenian Rising' (1867).

Yet his main focus was his connection to Mount St. Mary's College. Forty-three entries in his diary revolve around dealings with its members of the clergy, activities at the boy's school and the regular entertainment the college offered, and 32 are dedicated to local and national proceedings within the Catholic Church. Henry proudly records his passion for hunting, shooting and fishing and his successes over the years (in 34 meticulous entries). From 1859 he also focused on local weather phenomena (19 entries). Commenting on this obsession, the author of the articles in *The Mountaineer* noted: "English weather always provides surprises but Derbyshire weather during the period provided wonders" (Diary of Henry Bowdon Part I, p. 110). As a Liberal, magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Derby, Henry also kept tabs on his involvement in local politics and other regional issues (17 entries). He comments without any show of self-pity on his bouts of sickness which prevented him from attending mass, but never from

pursuing the pleasure of the hunt (five entries). Food is an occasional topic (five entries), as is coal mining (four entries) and sports (five entries).

As well as attending to occasional errands within Derbyshire, Henry undertook the occasional private journey, e.g. visiting his nun sister at Oulton Abbey, a then Benedictine monastery in Staffordshire (1858), sightseeing at Crystal Palace and gardens at Sydenham Hill, London (1858), hunting at Plowden, Shropshire (1860), socialising with politicians in London (1863), viewing an arts exhibition at the Royal Academy, London (1869), holidaying at the beaches of Southport and Filey with his family (1870), or taking care of health issues at Harrogate (1871, 1874). The Catholic cause took him to Preston (1864, 1866), and he also attended

LITTLE BUTLER-BOWDON BOY IN DONKEY-DRAWN CART IN FRONT OF SOUTHGATE HOUSE, COURTESY TOM BUTLER-BOWDON, OXFORD



"English weather always provides surprises but Derbyshire weather during the period provided wonders"

Christmas was not a time for sentimentality for Henry: "Had the usual commotion in the kitchen. We dined at three. Two sets of singers and an old horse came" (1867). Proceedings in the kitchen must have fascinated him: the simple procedure of pickling eggs warranted an

entry in the diary (1862). Things became serious when in 1870 an over-heated baking oven caused a dangerous fire in the back-kitchen chimney. Henry, however, kept his stiff upper lip: "Luckily with men, ladders, water and beer we got in, put it out after some time of anxiety."

One of the biggest events in Henry's later life was when the family attended a ball at Chatsworth House near Bakewell, Derbyshire (1871). The journey involved three hours of travelling by horse-drawn carriage each way, but the presence of royalty made the effort worthwhile: "The ball was very crowded, very little dancing, the supper was in the Sculpture gallery; and looked well in the midst of the Statuary. The Princess of Wales who danced a little looked very charming. We got home at 6 all having enjoyed the night."

Perhaps not surprisingly, there are few references to the domestic staff of Southgate House in the diary. At the time when Henry and his family lived there, a varying number of live-in servants saw to their daily comfort (local staff who only came for

the day notwithstanding): five in 1841, nine in 1851, seven in 1861, and eight in 1871. There was the usual fluctuation within the workforce, possibly less due to inappropriate treatment than the fact that especially women never stayed long in service as they were expected to give up work after marriage.

Life seems to have passed in orderly lines at Southgate House and judging by the entries in his diary it appears that Henry felt secure in these routines. Nothing is reflected in the diary from which we can glean a clear personal stance. Most of his observations remain neutral and detached, but there is the occasional flash of laconic humour and the love for his family shows. If the sources are to be trusted, the Butler-Bowdons displayed exactly the class consciousness which was expected of them by society, their conduct characterised by an absence of hubris. They always appeared to know their place within the world they inhabited, or as Alastair Bruce, Downton Abbey's historical advisor, summarises, "The key to the aristocrats' view of the world was not privilege, it was duty. The manners reflect the struggle that they all had to achieve a perfect moral approach to life. The immaculate presentation was a statement of moral correctness to all." ¹³

Christiane Müller-Hazenbos
Author of *Southgate House and Its Inhabitants*

Quotes taken from: 'Extracts from the Diary of Henry Bowdon Esq. Part I', in: *The Mountaineer*, Mount St. Mary's College, Spinkhill, Volume VI, No. 34 Easter 1914, p. 108ff. Extracts from the Diary of Henry Bowdon Esq. Part II., in: *The Mountaineer*, Mount St. Mary's College, Spinkhill, Volume VI, No. 35 Midsummer 1914, p. 135ff.



LITTLE BUTLER-BOWDON GIRL ON DONKEY IN THE GARDENS OF SOUTHGATE HOUSE, COURTESY TOM BUTLER-BOWDON, OXFORD

meetings of leading Catholics in London (1865, 1874) and Leeds (1870). Despite his interest in international politics, Henry showed no inclination to leave the British Isles to visit the continent or go any further afield.

Henry's accounts of his private life are irregular but detailed (22 on family matters, 12 on domestic life). Regular family visits to Henry's sister at Beighton Fields Priory or the Ferrers family at Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire (1872) were important and Henry recorded these events carefully. Even more important were joint undertakings such as walks and picnics. He sounds quite alarmed when his daughter Alice had a riding accident with her pony during a local walk (1865). The apparently health-conscious family went 'watercressing' in a near-by village (1866), and travelled to a picnic at Castleton in a carriage and four accompanied by members of Mount St. Mary's College in 1866. Holidays proved to be a source of amusement for Henry who drily comments, "Southport especially celebrated for want of men and for numbers of women, children, donkeys and shrimps. Also for wind and sand" (1870).

Henry had a soft spot for his daughters which not only shone through in his worry over Alice's misfortune, but also in notes on Constance cutting her eye teeth (1859) or giving "a cat's tea party" (1868). Neither did the fate of the family pets leave him untouched. When Polly, the parrot, died aged 50 (1874), he becomes almost lyrical: "She was buried in a quiet unostentatious manner under the weeping ash at the top of the Orchard, where many of her deceased relatives and friends lie interred." Educational entertainment was a popular pastime at Southgate House. In 1861, the Fathers from Mount St. Mary's College came over with a *laterna magica* and performed conjuring tricks, and in 1875 "the ladies went to Spinkhill School' where one of the Fathers gave a lecture on *Chemistry and also some experiments.*"

The Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company Limited

BY DEREK SEATON

One hundred and forty years ago a new benevolent organisation was founded in Leicester. Readers may be interested to know of the origins of the Coffee House movement and the impact which it was to have upon the lives of working-class people in the town. In order to combat the abundance of inns, taverns and beerhouses, and the resultant social problems caused by heavy drinking in Victorian England, the concept of coffee houses, where working men and women could relax and meet their friends, was born.

Coffee houses were not new, of course, having flourished in larger towns and cities from the eighteenth century. They functioned as defacto offices: as places of business, as well as social spaces, for the middling classes. Falling prices and reduction in duties in the 1820s saw coffee consumption triple. Duties on both tea and coffee were further reduced in the 1840s and 1850s. Working men, instead of taking their lunch to work, began to buy hot meals. For the Temperance Movement this presented both a challenge and an opportunity: to provide an alternative to the pub, chop house or beer shop where working men could buy food and refreshment in an alcohol-free environment.

The movement which originated in Dundee in 1853, by pioneering Temperance philanthropists, spread rapidly and resulted in the formation of the Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company Limited on 25 July 1877.

By 1889 thirteen coffee houses operated in Leicester. The list of premises, all of which were open from 5.00 am to 11.00 pm daily, appeared in *Spencer's Illustrated Leicester Almanack* 1889 as follows:

THE GRANBY GRANBY STREET near General P.O.	THE WEST BRIDGE Near the WEST BRIDGE
THE RUTLAND Corner of WHARF STREET and HUMBERSTONE ROAD	THE GREAT NORTHERN Opposite the GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY STATION, BELGRAVE ROAD
THE HIGHCROSS Corner of HIGH STREET and HIGH CROSS STREET	THE COBDEN Corner of HUMBERSTONE ROAD and COBDEN STREET
THE MIDLAND CAMPBELL STREET, near Railway Station	THE ST. MARGARET'S Corner of LOWER CHURCH GATE, near St. Margaret's Church
THE EASTGATES Near the Clock Tower	THE VICTORIA GRANBY STREET, opposite the General Post Office
THE WELFORD Corner of MARLBOROUGH STREET and WELFORD ROAD	THE PAVILION VICTORIA PARK, open during summer months
THE ALBERT BELGRAVE GATE, Corner of NEW PARLIAMENT STREET	

Following the building of the Leicester branch of the Young Men's Christian Association in 1903, at the end of Granby Street, the ground-floor Windsor Cafe was owned by the Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company Limited. The company's list of food available was also advertised in *Spencer's Almanack*.

GENERAL PRICE LIST	
Cup of Coffee)
French Coffee, small cup)
Cup of Chocolate)
Cup of Tea)
Superior Tea, small cup)
Glass of Milk	) 1d
Plate of Potatoes)
Hot Sausages)
Roll and Butter)
Roll and Cheese)
Lunch Cake)
Custard)
Scotch Scone)
Cheese Cake)
Twist	) 1d
Pork Pie)
Sausage Roll)
Ham Sandwich	) 2d
College Pudding)
Plate of Ham)
Plate of Corned Beef	) 2d and 1d
Corned Beef)
Sandwich	) 1½d
Boiled Egg)
Bun)
Roll	) ½d
Biscuit)
Soda and Milk, per glass	) 1½d and 2d
Lemonade Splits, per bottle	) 1d
Soda Water Splits, per bottle	) 1d
Ginger Ale, per bottle	) 1d
Ginger Beer, per bottle	) 1d
Lime Juice, per bottle	) 1d
Soup from 11 until 2 - per basin, 2d; half basin, 1d)
Cigars, 2d each; or 7 for 1s; 1½d each, or 9 for 1s)
Tea, Coffee and Cocoa sold out-door, at reduced rates)

It is important to point out that most of the Leicester Coffee Houses were the work of the Leicester-born architect Edward Burgess. A member of a Quaker family, he was born in 1847. He was also the architect to the Leicester School Board and a number of his very impressive school buildings still adorn our urban landscape to this day.

Sadly, few of the original coffee house buildings remain. There are, however, three wonderful examples which have survived to remind us of the magnificent architecture of the coffee houses here in Leicester and the benevolent ideals with which they were associated

The splendid building on the corner of High Street and Highcross Street did not begin its life as a coffee house. The premises, which had been occupied by the Leicester Co-operative Society as a "butcher's meat store" (*Leicester Advertiser* 21 December 1878), were purchased from the directors of the Society for £2,600 and underwent extensive alterations by Edward Burgess.

VICTORIA COFFEE HOUSE, GRANBY STREET, LEICESTER



HIGHCROSS COFFEE HOUSE, HIGH STREET, LEICESTER



EASTGATES COFFEE HOUSE, EASTGATES, LEICESTER



The success of the company, however, is primarily attributable to the recognition of the public and, especially the working classes, of a great social want.

It was formally opened on Monday 16 December 1878 as the Highcross Coffee House at a well-attended meeting presided over by the Reverend James Went MA, Headmaster of Wyggeston Hospital Boys' School. One of the attractions of the building was the inclusion of "a bagatelle room in which chess, draughts and dominoes will be provided."

This pleasing red brick building, dressed with white masonry and surmounted by a turret, was accorded Grade II listed status on 27 September 1993. The former coffee house has undergone a metamorphosis and is now, ironically, The High Cross, a free house owned by J.D. Wetherspoon.

At the other end of High Street, on the angle of Eastgates and Church Gate stands the magnificent Eastgates Coffee House, again designed by Edward Burgess. The building contains certain characteristics which are similar to those incorporated in the famous Ossington Coffee Palace at Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire.

The building contractors for the Eastgates were John Oliver Clark and David Garrett, 9 Willow Street, Leicester and the cost was recorded as being "upwards of £4,000 exclusive of fittings". On the ground floor there was a coffee room, whilst excellent first-class and second-class dining rooms were situated on the first floor.

The Eastgates Coffee House was formally opened on Monday 15 June 1885 by Lady John Manners, the sister-in-law of the Duke of Rutland. These central premises, in addition to providing facilities for working men and women, also attracted a more affluent clientele which included doctors, lawyers and their wives who preferred an alcohol-free environment.

Opening the establishment Lady John Manners said,

"I have felt the greatest possible pleasure in coming to Leicester to-day to assist at the ceremony of opening the Eastgates Coffee House, which, I understand, is the twelfth of this kind that has been opened in Leicester since October, 1877".

"The first coffee house - the Granby - was opened in 1877, and in December of the following year three houses were opened, the income of which was £7,439. In 1879 three more houses were opened, when the income had increased to £12,811. In 1880 two more houses were established and the system gradually increased until now, by the opening of this house, there are 12 houses in the town, the income derived from which is now £24,523".

"The success of the company, however, is primarily attributable to the recognition of the public, and especially by the working classes, of a great social want. We may be quite sure that the working classes would not patronise the houses unless they were well kept up, and every attention was paid to their comfort".

Architectural features include the elegant half-timbered gables and attractive Ipswich bay windows similar to those to be found on Sparrowe's 16th century house in Ipswich. The arched ground floor is a modern re-arrangement of the architect's original design work which resembled the Coffee Palace at Newark. A lead covered cupola adorns this remarkable building.

Following an extensive restoration, the former Eastgates Coffee House, deservedly, acquired Grade II listed classification on 2 June 2011. It is currently occupied by Cruise, a designer clothes store.

Another survivor of the Coffee House era in Leicester is the imposing Victoria Coffee House in Granby Street. This was the largest and most palatial of the town's coffee houses and was built in 1887, the year in which the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign was celebrated, hence its prestigious name.

Once again Edward Burgess was the architect. It was erected at a total cost of almost £25,000, the builders being John Cornelius Kellett and Son, 24½ Asylum Street, Leicester. The opening ceremony was performed by the Duchess of Rutland on Thursday 20 December 1888.

Designed in French Renaissance style, carved in Stanton stone with a conical roof covered in Whitland Abbey slates, the Victorian Coffee House deservedly became a Grade II listed building on 4 August 1993. It is now a popular venue with diners at the Italian restaurant San Carlo.

The Leicester Coffee and Cocoa House Company Limited finally disappeared from the local scene in 1922 but in its time the movement fulfilled an important social need within the locality. 📍

Derek Seaton
Leicester Group, The Victorian Society



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