DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY

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EDITOR'S NOTE

I must take this opportunity of apologising to subscribers for the late appearance of the last three editions of Miscellany, which has been due to illness and pressure of work. I must also express my heartfelt gratitude to Dudley Fowkes for stepping in to produce this edition and in the process enabling us to return to our normal schedule.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF OKEOVER CHURCH

by J.T. BRIGHTON and D.V. FOWKES

There is no mention of a church at Okeover in the Domesday Book (1086). The entry for Okeover records that the manor was held by the Abbey of St. Mary at Burton as tenant-in-chief, and occupied by Eddulf. It was valued at £1. Ilam and Okeover had also been mentioned earlier in the will of Wulfric Spott (988).

The first references to a church at Okeover are in charters transcribed in the Burton Abbey Cartulary. The earliest reference is in a papal bull of 1185 listing the possessions of Burton Abbey. In a deed of slightly later date (1188-1197), Hugh de Okeover renounced all church patronage as follows - 'Hugh de Okeover sendeth greeting. Be it known that I have no jurisdiction over the patronage of Sheen nor of Okeover nor had any of my predecessors at any time. There are and always were chapels of the church of Ilam which church and chapels canonically belong to the abbots and monks at Burton. And if anybody shall presumptiously say that I claim the patronage of Ilam church or any of its chapels, I hereby of my own free will renounce all such right'. (2) In other words, the surviving evidence suggests that Okeover was a chapelry of Ilam founded some time in the 12th century and belonging initially to the Abbey of Burton.

The next reference to the church is in 1247, in a law suit between Hugh de Okeover and the Abbot of Burton regarding tithes of turbary, heath and pasture. (3) Hugh and his heirs were required to find books and ornaments for the chapel. Evidence increases in the 16th century. We know that Humphrey Okeover was buried at Okeover in 1538, while at the dissolution of the monasteries in 1541, the chapels of Sheen, Caldon and Okeover were granted to the Dean and Chapter of the church of Burton as part of a plan to replace the monastery of Burton by a collegiate church. All the possessions of Burton Abbey were to be held of the Crown by a yearly payment of £63 2s 4d. In 1546 however, this property was granted by Henry VIII to the first Lord Paget and Okeover chapelry therefore passed into lay hands for the first time. (4).

In 1553 we have the first document that reveals anything more than the mere existence of the church, namely an inventory of church ornaments taken on 8 May viz. two vestments, one of white camlet, one of red and green saie; two albs; two amices; one brass pyx with cover; two corporals with silk case; two altar cloths; one surplice; one pair of brass censers; two bells; one sanctus bell; one ring bell; two cruets: Thomas Bafford, Churchwarden. (5) It is not mentioned in the archidiaconal return of 1563, and it is very doubtful if it had acquired parish status by this date.

In 1737 the parish registers (6) begin. It is clear that by this date the church had become regarded as a parish church and also that the living had now become the gift of the Okeover family. With its origins as a chapelry of Ilam, the living was never more than a curacy, with an annual endowment of £20 provided by the Okeover family who appointed the curates. In 1727 Rowland Okeover's Charity had been founded by which he granted a yearly rentcharge of £60 for the maintenance of an organist and 12 boys and girls to be choristers at the church. £20 yearly was to be paid to the organist and £2 each to the choristers. (7) With only a tiny population to call on, the choristers were never, in practice, appointed.

In 1758 W. Wilson, clerk, was appointed to the cure of Okeover by Leak Okeover and a note in the first register tells us that 'In the years 1760 and 1761 the church of Okeover was raisd, repaird and beautified by Leak Okeover Esq., and Mary his wife.' The principal alteration was the complete replacement of the roof and this task was entrusted to Simon File, one of the craftsmen employed by Leak Okeover in the contemporary rebuilding of the Hall. The original estimate for the work survives among the Okeover family papers and reads as follows (8):

> 'An estimate to Leak Okeover Esq. by Simon File for to take the roof of from the Body of the Church att Okeover and to putt a new one on as the plan Directs'.

'I am to saw out the timber and to frame the Roof and make the Cealing floor and the Cove Bracketting as may be wanted within the Church and to Lay the bords for the Lead Covering and to take the old Roof down the timber to be brought and Layd down att Okeover'.

'Plumbers work and Lead to be Cast to seven pound a foot as nigh as posable Wanted 4 tun and a half of lead cast and Layd on for 2s 6d a hundred £11 5s Od N.B. The Lead to be Caried to Ashborn and back again att my Master's Expence'.

'Mason's work to take the old Battelments of and the Course of Stone that is now under it, that is to the Cove that Runs Round the Church, thear I am to putt to Course of Stones to Raise the wall twenty Inches higher then it now is, and to putt the Old Course and the Battelments on again, and to back the Stone with bricks as high as will be wanted for'.

'N.B. the Stone ane Brick to be Layd down ready for use att Okeover att my master's Expence and that no Scaffolding .... is ... hearin Estimated as the plan Directs'.

'I a Gree to do the works as above mensiond for the Sum of forty three pounds'.

Simon File

From the 1830's to the end of the century the considerable quantity of medieval glass in the church was restored by various artists and remounted as memorials to various members of the Okeover family. In 1858 much of the interior of the church was restored to designs by Sir Gilbert Scott. (9) Unfortunately, little is known in detail of this restoration, but the screen and the painted Chancel ceiling resulted from it and much of the stained glass was being worked on at the same time. Much of the present fabric of the church therefore, dates from the 18th century rebuilding and the 19th century restoration.

Use of the church declined rapidly in the 20th century and there seems to have been little regular use since the death of the Rev. John Young, curate from 1875 in 1914. He had also been Rector of Blore-with-Swinscoe, and subsequently Blore, Swinscoe and Okeover were grouped with Ilam to form a large united benefice based on Ilam. With three old parish churches to maintain in a sparsely populated area, Okeover was closed as a parish church and is now maintained solely by the Walker-Okeover family.

POINTS OF INTEREST IN OKEOVER CHURCH

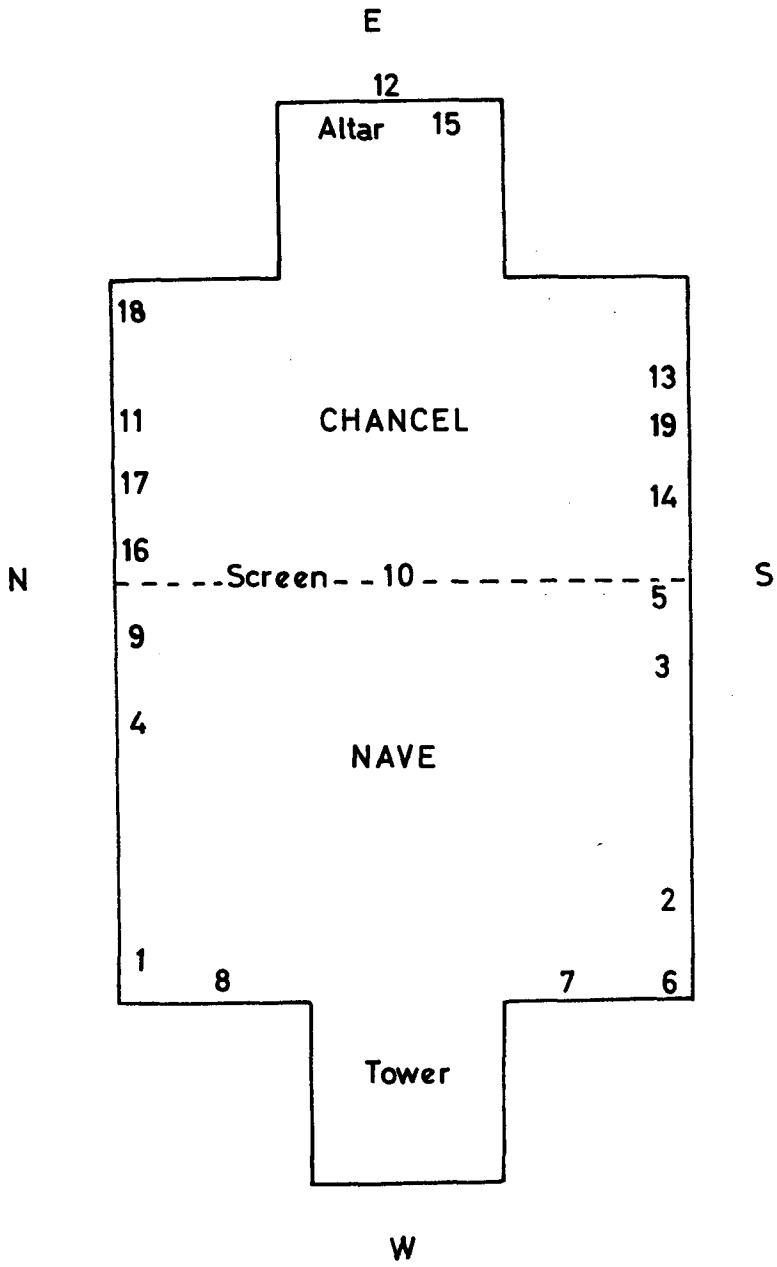
The old glass constitutes the main interest. Much of it was restored in Victorian times as retrospective memorials to members of the Okeover family. The remains of the palimpsest brass are, of course, the other main point of interest.

In the following the numbers refer to the accompanying plan of the church.

a) Nave

Brass - North Wall (1)
Remains of palimpsest brass to Humfrey Oker (Humphrey Okeover) and his wife Isabel and their 13 children, 1538. Converted by Humphrey Okeover from a brass of William Lord Zouch. Fragments recovered in 1897 and remounted. Wife Isabel clearly visible also names of children Philip, Kant, John, Roger, Nicholas, Jane and Elizabeth.

Windows
South West Window (2)
Memorial window to Leak Okeover d.31 May 1765. Good Samaritan and Virgin teaching scriptures to Christ. Style similar to South West Window in Chancel. Could be part of 1858 restoration or possibly the centenary of Leak Okeover's death. Not earlier than mid 19th century.



Sketch plan of Okeover church referring to features picked out in the text

South East Window (3)
Memorial window to Robert Plumer Ward d.3 August 1846. Reclothing the naked Christ. Signed William Warrington, London, 1857. Warrington had worked for Pugin and for Thomas Willement, Heraldic Artist to George III and Stained lass Artist to Queen Victoria. Other work by Warrington can be seen at Grindon and Leek.

North East Window (4)
John the Baptist baptises Christ in the Jordan. No date or signature. Work of the same man as the North Chancel Window, East Window and South East Chancel Window. All incorporate work of the 14th and 16th centuries. All probably done about the time of the death of Haughton Farmer Okeover in 1836. The artist used medieval styles and techniques of painting and staining. Unfortunately his materials were poor and much of the paint has faded away leaving blobs of yellow stain.

Memorials
South Wall. Tablet in memory of Mabel Alice, daughter of Haughton Charles Okeover, 1860-1938 (5)

West Wall. Tablet in memory of Grace Isabel, daughter of Haughton Charles Okeover. Born and died 1863 (6)

West Wall. Tablet in memory of Mary Beatrice Okeover, 1872-1889. (7)

West Wall. Tablet in memory of Mary Ann Plumer Ward wife of the Rev. Charles Gregory Okeover d. 1875 (daughter of General Sir George Anson) (8)

North Wall. Brass tablet in memory of Haughton Charles Okeover, 1858 (9)

b) Chancel

Screen and archbraced ceiling. Result of the restoration to Sir Gilbert Scott's plans in 1858. Recurring symbols of XPS (Christ), INH (Jesus) and (Alpha and Omega) on the ceiling (10)

Windows
North Window (11)
Memorial to Humphrey Okeover (1495-1538) - kneeling in prayer. Figures, heraldry and much of the borders original, but the 19th century restorer has, as in the North East Nave Window, infilled with large diamond quarries. Note also the use of the acorn and oakleaf emblems of the Okeovers.

East Window (12)
Restored by the same man as the North East Nave Window and the North Chancel Window. As the lettering indicates, a memorial to Haughton Farmer Okeover who died in 1836 and the restoration was probably carried out at this time. Most of the glass is again early, however, as in other windows, and the figures, fragments and heraldry have been restored and reset in early Victorian glass. All the tracery lights are early Victorian.

South East Window (13)
Memorial to Mary Ann Okeover, widow of H.F. Okeover. East light - Mary Magdalene: West light - the risen Christ. Again early glass restored in the early Victorian period. Acorn and oakleaf emblems again used in the quarries. Very faded.

South West Window (14)
Memorial to Edward Walhouse Okeover d.30 June 1793, but again Victorian not contemporary. Displays two of the corporal acts of mercy. No signature but late 19th century so could have been erected on the centenary of the death of E.W. Okeover.

Reredos (15)
Erected to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the marriage of Haughton Charles Okeover and the Hon. Eliza Ann Cavendish (daughter of Baron Waterpark of Doveridge) 12 July 1909. Erected by their daughters and son-in-law.

Memorials
North Wall. Female leaning over an urn. Marble memorial to Mary, wife of Leak Okeover, daughter of John Nicoll d.30 January 1764, aged 63, and to Leak Okeover d.31 May 1765. Verse by William Browne 'friend and doctor'. (16)

North Wall. Tablet in memory of Ruth Isabel wife of Capt. Hervey Ronald Bruce, daughter of H.C. Okeover, 1864-1915. (17)

North Wall. Tablet in memory of E.W. Okeover d.30 June 1793 (18)

South Wall. Marble tablet in memory of H.C. Okeover (14.11.1825-20.10.1912) and his wife Eliza Ann (4.4.1838-11.12.1912) (19)

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NOTES ON PLEASLEY PARISH RECORDS

by D.V. FOWKES

(Staffordshire Record Office)

The earliest surviving records for the parish of Pleasley are the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials which date back to 1553. They are in fact among the oldest surviving registers in the county as registration in any form was not introduced until 1536. The first register covers the entire period up to 1796 for baptisms and burials and for marriages up to 1754 when new legislation required the adoption of a new form of marriage register incorporating the publication of banns of marriage with the aim of preventing clandestine marriages. In later years the industrial development of the parish, with first the cotton mills and later the mining industry, was reflected in the steady rise in the number of baptisms, marriages and burials and a corresponding rise in the number of parish registers needed to accommodate them. Numbers fell momentarily in 1849 when Shirebrook, hitherto part of Pleasley, was constituted a separate parish.

A most interesting point concerning the first parish register in the mid-seventeenth century was the apparent disregard of the then rector and inhabitants of Pleasley for the legislation of the Commonwealth designed to take registration out of the hands of the parish priest. The Act of 24th August 1653 required incumbents to give up their register books to laymen who were called 'parish registers'. These officers were to enter all publication of banns, marriages, births (not baptisms) and burials. The parishioners, however, did not even elect a parish register, while the then rector, at considerable risk, continued to record baptisms rather than births and marriages without notice of intention to marry, completely ignoring the stipulations of the Act.

A bound volume of assorted parish papers contains much fascinating material dating back to 1656. Among the earlier material is a list of constables of Pleasley between 1656 and 1727, a copy of the 1664 charter granting a market to the village and an account of the payment of briefs, 1701-1750, for the aid of parishes suffering loss by fire, flood or other means. The volume also contains a remarkable run of summary churchwardens accounts beginning in 1700 and continuing uninterrupted up to 1920. From 1851 the minutes of the annual vestry meeting are also included. In addition there is an extremely good run of overseers accounts from 1700 to 1836 including within it various memoranda concerning parish apprentices and bastardy cases. A further interesting item is an agreement of 1852 between all the parishioners, drawn up at a Vestry meeting, by which any parishioner could 'get and take away stone from the Hill situated in Stanton Lane for building and repairing houses and outhouses in the parish'. Also recorded are the minutes of a vestry meeting at which it was agreed to divert Stanton Lane, again in 1852.

The amount of surviving material relating to the formerly extensive glebe attached to Pleasley rectory is very small indeed. The only glebe terrier is a copy from the Registry of the Bishop of Lichfield made in 1800. At this time there were some 50 acres of glebe land consisting of the Rectory garden and yard, the Service Close, the Gate Close, the Great Quick Set Close, the Little Quick Set Close, and the Common Close. There is also a small amount of late nineteenth century correspondence concerning the leasing of coal under the glebe to the collieries section of Stanton Iron Works Co.

The only item relating to the Church of England Schools among the parish records is a minute book of the meetings of the School Managers, 1884-1900.

Among the later parish records are two district visitor's notebooks, an extremely rare and valuable type of record. The first of these notebooks contains a detailed social analysis of families in various parts of the village and provides a considerable insight into life at Pleasley in this period.

The principal records of Christ Church New Houghton are a complete set of registers of services from its consecration in 1893 up to the present day. Among the most recent records is the form of service used at the opening of the new Church Hall at New Houghton in 1963.

Last but by no means least are the Parish Magazines themselves. The first Pleasley Parish Magazine was published in 1882. Unfortunately, a small number only of the earlier editions have survived but, to compensate, the parish is fortunate to possess a complete series of the 'Standard Bearer', commencing in 1955, which provides a complete record of the activities of the Church in the Parish over the last fifteen years.

The parish records are deposited in the Derbyshire Record Office (D.739)

THE BOROUGH OF DERBY BETWEEN 1780 AND 1810

(John E. Heath, Trent Polytechnic)

INTRODUCTION

The growth of urban units is reflected in the improvements introduced and the urban renewal which took place. In Derby the first series of such improvements came towards the end of the eighteenth century. It might be assumed that the improvements were the work and responsibility of the Corporation - the governing body of the town - but whilst members of the Corporation were involved, the leading personalities who initiated the works were not of the governing group. An investigation of the nature of the improvements, and the people responsible for initiating them, is the aim of this piece of work.

The Town and its government

The town

Derby was similar to many medieval market towns in the latter part of the 18th century. Expanding industrial activity and particularly the development of factory production led to a rapid increase in the population. Between 1712 (1) and 1788 (2) the population doubled to 8563 and in the next twenty-two years this had increased to 13000. (3) Such a growth resulted in an increase in the number of houses from 1637 in 1788 (4) to 2644 (142 unoccupied) in 1811 (5)

This rapid growth of urban populations and the lack of control of building meant that many towns were suffering from overcrowded, unplanned streets and the associated squalor and disease. Expanding trade brought about by the growth of factories placed an increasing burden on the communications, some of which was alleviated by the numerous turnpike acts, but these had little effect on the stretches of turnpikes which passed through towns. The disquiet voiced in connection with the inadequate 'paving and lighting' is shown by the many Improvement Acts passed, as for example, Coventry in 1763, the Act being modelled on one just obtained for Nottingham;(6) Birmingham in 1769; (7) Exeter in 1760; (8) Liverpool in 1786; (9) and Leicester in 1787, (10) with Derby in 1792. As well as the roads being inadequate so too were the bridges. The New Tyne bridge was built in 1790, (11) a new Exe Bridge was opened in 1778 at Exeter, (12) and St. Mary's Bridge in Derby was rebuilt as a result of an Act of Parliament passed in 1788.(13)

The incidence of disease in the towns resulted in the building of hospitals in many of the towns in the eighteenth century; Exeter in 1741; (14) Manchester in 1755; (15) Leeds in 1767; (16) Birmingham in 1769; (17) Leicester in 1771; (18) and Nottingham in 1781. (19)

The Corporation

During the Middle Ages it was usually the burgesses whose initiative and enterprise drove forward the economy of towns like Coventry, Stratford-upon-Avon and Market Harborough, and larger urban units such as Cambridge, Worcester, Hull and York, (20) and the same would be true for Nottingham, Leicester and Derby. These burgesses usually had a trading or an artisan background and once a person was received as a burgess he belonged to a privileged group, which, in the nature of things, became self-perpetuating. From the burgesses were selected the governing body of the town, and their right to govern was obtained under the terms of a charter granted by a Sovereign in return for a cash payment.

Throughout the 18th century until the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, Derby was administered under the terms of the Charter of 1682-1683 (34 Charles II). It was by this Charter that the governing body of the town was altered from one of a Mayor, nine Aldermen and fourteen Capital Burgesses, to one consisting of a Mayor, nine Aldermen, who were to dwell and reside in the Borough, fourteen Brothers and fourteen Burgesses (these being differentiated from the other Burgesses by being called Capital Burgesses), these thirty-eight persons forming the Common Council. (21) This Common Council had the right to make laws, statutes and ordinances, to levy money and to exact penalties, and to dispense privileges to the burgesses.

Aldermen, Brethren and Capital Burgesses held office for life unless removed for ill-behaviour or non-residence. An aldermanic vacancy was filled by the choice of one of the 'better and more discreet' brethren by the majority of the aldermen and the mayor. A vacancy of a capital burgess was filled from among the burgesses, who were inhabitants of the Borough, by the election of the majority of the Mayor, Aldermen, Brethren and Capital Burgesses. (22) As in the case of Leicester, the government of the town of Derby was in the hands of 'a circle more closed than we can really appreciate ....' (23) This self-regulating community in Derby was described by the Commissioners in 1835 as being almost uniformly composed of persons having one opinion upon political subjects, and in order to maintain this position, numerous freemen were created from time to time for political purposes, as for example in the year 1806 when 124 honorary freemen 'were made and sworn'. (24)

During the 18th century the Borough of Derby was represented by two members of Parliament. One of these seats was controlled by the Cavendishes, but although the Devonshire family could influence the choice of the other member, this depended upon the whims of the particular Duke. In the Parliament of 1774 to 1780, John Gisborne (Whig) who represented the Devonshire interest was elected as the 'other' member having defeated Daniel Parker Coke (Tory) in a by-election on 30 January 1775. It is significant that Gisborne received the votes of the Corporation in the closely fought contest. (25) He was unseated in 1776 as a result of a petition complaining of his 'undue influence' over the Mayor, Daniel Parker Coke, who had contested the seat on independent interests in opposition to that of the Corporation and the Devonshire family, took his seat as Member of Parliament for the Borough on 8 February 1776. However, he was heavily defeated in the election held on the 11 September 1780 by Edward Coke (no relation) who stood as Corporation candidate, with the reluctant support of the Devonshires. (26) In order to maintain the Devonshire interest, the Mayor or some other influential member of the Corporation applied to the agent of the Cavendish family for a list of persons 'to be admitted as honorary freemen .....' and the agent of the Duke of Devonshire paid the admission fees. It is clear that without the admission of these honorary freemen the Corporation 'could not have kept the Tories quiet .....' (27) Daniel Parker Coke, who was an attorney and lived in Derby, continued as an M.P. representing Nottingham from 1780 to 1812.

During the 18th century the Corporation was determined to protect its privileges, maintain its civic aristocracy and in particular to prevent expenditure coming on the rates. As Kitson Clarke (28) suggests, the keeping down of the rates as a natural objective particularly for shopkeepers who made up the main body of the Aldermen, whose economic margins were often narrow and whose solvancy was precarious.

As Derby grew in population in the 18th century, the Corporation became less and less representative of the town's changing social and economic structure. By the last quarter of the century there were manufacturers in new industries, an expanding mass of retail tradesmen which had come into existence to serve the needs of the rapidly increasing population, along with numerous ministers of religion, solicitors, barristers, physicians and surgeons. The importance of these professional men, the manufacturers and the bankers and their experience outside the immediate locality cannot be underestimated.

These were the people who saw the need and initiated the improvements in the town.

The Improvement Commissions

During the 18th century corporations appear to have been reluctant to become involved in improvements to their boroughs because the expenditure required would result in an increase in the money which would have to be raised from the inhabitants, this being the only source of finance available. The corporation usually called a public meeting to air the problem. In 1783 a public meeting was held in Nottingham at which dissatisfaction was expressed with the condition of the streets. The Council offered £50 a year for cleansing and paving but this was considered unsatisfactory. Some four years later 'some gentlemen' formed an unofficial improvement committee, but their proposals were not adopted. (29) As a result of this, bodies of people sometimes burgesses, at other times members of the local gentry, presented Bills to Parliament with the purpose of establishing an Improvement Commission. The Improvement Commissions are described by the Webbs as

> '..... bodies of Police, Paving, Street, Lamp or Improvement Trustees or Commissioners .... (who) dealt with matters of daily life ... they introduced a new regulation of individual enterprise and personal behaviour; above all, they levied on every householder new and extra taxation ... They were ... the starting point of the great modern development of town government ....' (30)

This was a time when there were no building regulations and this resulted in the upper storeys of houses overhanging the streets whilst the projecting spouts from the gutters of roofs cascaded rain-water on to passers-by. The streets were unpaved, uneven and full of holes in which garbage was allowed to accumulate, there being no public provision for street-cleaning or the removal of refuse. John Clayton wrote of Manchester in 1755: 'our streets are no better than a common dunghill ....' (30) The streets of most towns were in darkness at night except for an occasional lantern swinging over the doorway of a shop or house. Even on nights when there was a full moon, little illumination penetrated the overhanging buildings. There was little or no protection for the person who ventured out at night.

It was not however, until 1748 that local acts were passed which established bodies of Improvement Commissioners and these functioned until 1835 when they usually agreed to amalgamate their activities with the newly formed Municipal Corporations. The Improvement Commissioners had their own funds, their own official staff and they wielded their own distinct powers and levied their own rates. As the Webbs say,

> 'They outweighed in importance the old Municipal Corporations ...' (32)

The membership of the paving, cleansing, lighting and watching commissions fell into three categories. An Act could name the Commissioners who were to serve for life and who were authorised to fill any vacancies among their number by simple co-option. The Commissioners might be elected though there was usually a high qualification for eligibility, and also there was a substantial qualification for the voters. In the case of Derby, the Improvement Commissioners were made up of individuals belonging to a specifically defined class, that is all owners and occupiers of dwelling houses in the Borough rated at £20 or over per annum, but the qualificatio varied from place to place.

St Mary's Bridge

The first major improvement to be initiated in Derby was the rebuilding of St. Mary's Bridge, the key to access to the town from the east. It is suggested that the earliest reference to the 'Great Bridge of Derby' is to be found in a Darley Abbey charter which was drawn up sometime between 1233 and 1248 (33) though Professor Darlington suggests sometime in the 13th century (34). This charter suggests that a stone bridge was built before 1248 to replace one built of wood, but within one hundred years it was in such a bad state of repair that the Corporation had to obtain permission to levy a 'pontage' or bridge-rate. In 1587 the bridge was partially destroyed by floods (35) and it was this rebuilt bridge which was causing concern in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Hutton criticised it for being only wide enough for single-line traffic, in addition to which the steeply rising roadway made it impossible for a waggoner crossing to see if his way ahead was clear. (36) In the Derby Mercury (37) it was described as ' ..... inconvenient and dangerous to the Public'. According to the same newspaper the Corporation were considering applying for an Act of Parliament for the purpose of rebuilding the bridge but an unidentified group of citizens were proposing to raise sufficient subscriptions to avoid the necessity of imposing a toll, thereby relieving the lower class of the expense. A public meeting was called by the Mayor on 17 September, as a result of which it was resolved that Mr. Strutt, Mr. Cheshire and Mr. Dadford should 'view the State and Condition' of the bridge. (38) Their report was to the effect that the bridge had to be rebuilt, and a request was made that the bridge should be built by subscription and not by Act of Parliament. It was agreed that the subscription list should remain open until 1 January 1788, the Corporation subscribing £500, or £300 and giving up their property (not identified) at the west end of the bridge, towards a total required of £3,500 (Sir Robert Wilmot had suggested £4,000 but this was thought to be too much). If the sum of £3,500 was not subscribed the Corporation was to go ahead with the original plan for rebuilding the bridge under the Authority of an Act of Parliament. (39) This delay would seem to have suited the Corporation which was at the time engaged in replacing the Sadlergate and Gaol Bridges which straddled the Markeaton Brook (40) in the centre of the town.

It would appear that the Corporation was uncertain of the total that would be forthcoming from the subscription and they went ahead with a petition for a bill on 1 February 1788 for the rebuilding of St. Mary's Bridge. The bill was referred to Mr. Long and Lord George Cavendish (M.P. for Derbyshire). (41) Lord George reported to the House on 17 April that the petition was not within the standing orders of the House of 23 May 1786 relative to the building of bridges, as it was neither for erecting a bridge, nor for the renewal or alteration of any Act of Parliament passed for the purpose. The clerk to the Corporation John Leaper, was called upon 'to prove the allegations' and it was ordered that leave should be given to bring in a Bill for rebuilding the bridge over the River Derwent etc. and that Lord George Cavendish and Mr. Mundy (M.P.'s for Derbyshire) and Lord George, Augustus Henry Cavendish and Mr. Edward Coke (M.P.'s for Derby) should prepare the same. (42)

An effort to get the bill withdrawn and to let the cost of the bridge be covered by subscription was made by the Sheriffs, Robert Wilmot and Edward Sacheverel Sitwell, but because it was necessary to purchase houses and land at the approaches to the bridge, it was thought imprudent to withdraw the bill and this resulted in the amendments to the bill being inserted.

The bill received the Royal Assent on 11 June 1788 having received several amendments before the third reading on 6 May. Previous to that, however, on 26 April 1788, it had been agreed by the Committees for the Mansfield and the Nottingham Turnpike and the Corporation that the three bodies should form the Standing Committee for putting the Act into effect. This Standing Committee agreed that the bridge should be the property of the Corporation who would be responsible for its upkeep upon its completion, and it set out a list of tolls, even though it had been agreed that the bridge should be built by subscription. The signatories to this agreement were the Mayor (John Hope), Samuel Crompton, Thomas and William Evans, William Strutt (Junior), Thomas Lowe, Samuel Hope, William Leaper Smith and Richard Leason. (43)

The Commissioners as established by the Act, (44) were as set up by the Standing Committee on 26 April 1788, the qualification being the possession of land to the yearly value of forty pounds, or the possession of a personal estate of £800, with the exclusion of victuallers and interested parties. The Act gave the Commissioners full authority to go ahead with the contracts for the bridge, and authority to collect tolls. The tolls were to remain the same as for the old bridge in the case of passenger traffic, but were reduced for goods traffic and further reduced for the carriage of coal (45)

However, the collection of subscriptions had continued so that by 28 July 1788 they totalled £4,200, resulting in the Corporation agreeing to rebuild the bridge by subscription. These contributions ranged from £300 each from the Duke of Devonshire and Edward Miller Mundy (both M.P.'s) to 17 guineas by ten people of Sawley, where a bridge was also being built at this time, £10 from Sandiacre and several other villages lying to the east of Derby, and 3/6d. from many individuals. An anonymous correspondent to the Derby Mercury suggested that a list of non-subscribers should be published and that an official should be stationed on the central arch of the new bridge 'to chalk in large characters on the back of every such mean-spirited person'. (46) On 2 February 1789 £2,500 of the subscribed monies had been put out to interest at 3½%. (47)

The first meeting of the committee was called for 5 July 1788. There is no minute book of the proceedings and most of the information about the building of the bridge is gleaned from correspondence. The committee, probably at the suggestion of William Strutt, asked Thomas Harrison of Lancaster to submit drawings and an estimate for the building of the bridge. Harrison appears to have had difficulty in completing the drawings, having only recently completed his first bridge over the Lune at Lancaster and at the time was working on the Sawley (Harrington) bridge and the one at New Mills (Milford), both in Derbyshire. In a letter to Mr. Leaper who was Clerk and Treasurer to the Commissioners, dated 14 March 1789, Harrison's nephew apologised for the delay in the completion of the drawings as a result of his uncle being in Scotland. Again on 1 May 1789 there was a further apology. The delay in getting work on the bridge started occasioned a comment in a letter to the Derby Mercury: (48)

> 'Should the present generation live to see the first stone of St. Mary's bridge laid .... believe me, I shall.... give it the name of
>
> SNAIL BRIDGE
>
> because it creeps on so very slowly .....'

It is possible that some of the delay may have been occasioned by the correspondence which William Strutt, one of the Commissioners, engaged in with Harrison regarding the design of the bridge. (49) Work however had got under way with the demolition and re-building of houses and buildings belonging to Mr. Deverell as early as 2 February 1789. (50)

Apparently there was still doubt about the funding of the bridge at the beginning of 1789, because the Twon Clerk inserted the following in the Derby Mercury on 31 January:

> 'Whereas it has been insinuated that the Corporation were desirous that St. Mary's Bridge should not be built by Subscription; it is therefore unanimously resolved, that it will be proper to publish the following Resolution of a Common-Hall on 26 of April last.
>
> "Resolved unanimously, that it ever has been, and still is, the wish of the members of this Corporation, both as a public body and as Individuals; that the said bridge may be rebuilt by Subscription, and not by Act of Parliament, in order to prevent the lower Class of People the Expence of Toll".
>
> Resolved that the £200 paid to the Treasurer of the Bridge more than the original subscription of this Corporation, is the strongest proof of their earnest wish to re-build the said Bridge free of Toll'.

The drawings for the bridge were received by the Commission on or about 10 May 1789. (51) Harrison's estimate for the three arched bridge was £315.18s.8d. the only alteration from the working plan drawn up being the extra depth of the foundations of the piers.

Harrison wrote to Leaper (Clerk) and Ward (Treasurer), both solicitors acting for the Commissioners, on 25 June 1789 pointing out that he would not be able to supervise the Sawley bridge as well. He included in this letter his fee for expenses which was approximately 5%.

The Commissioners put out the work to tender and received ten quotations ranging from masons at Colne in Lancashire, and Tamworth, to John Cheshire of Derby who was at the time building the Sawley bridge. The successful quotation was the one from Samuel Lister of Bromley near Leeds, who had already worked with Harrison on the Lancaster Bridge and on the 'new bridge' in Manchester, and John Stanley of Duffield. They agreed to complete the rebuilding of the bridge by 29 September 1791. The articles for the rebuilding were signed by seven of the Commissioners, they being: William Strutt, Samuel Crompton, Thomas Evans, William Evans, Thomas Lowe, Samuel Hope and William Leaper Smith, and they placed the supervision in the hands of a Charles Moore.

In the building of the bridge, the Commissioners encountered many problems. The valuation and purchase of property and the storage of building materials was a frequent problem usually dealt with by either Strutt or one of the Evans. On 16 December 1789, William Evans wrote to the Commissioners that Rope House had not been valued and it was soon to be demolished. He also pointed out the need for a wharf to hold the Red Lead and a road to be made from the turnpike to the wharf. Eventually it was arranged for materials to be laid on Mr. Porter's land at the west end of the bridge, adequate compensation being arranged. Site alterations were made and these increased the cost and resulted in the bridge-builders not being able to meet the completion date. In a letter to the Committee, Mr. Stanley of Duffield wrote that he had done all in his power to get the Bridge forward and that he had borrowed money to pay the workmens' wages. He continued: '..... Mr. Lister has taken the foreman away to other works'. This was presumably to the bridge Lister was building at Milford (New Mills) in 1792. (52) Stanley called on the Committee to settle the accounts as there was problem in obtaining a supply of stone. As a result of the delay a surety of £1,000 paid on the 27 January 1790 to Edward Sacheverel Sitwell, the Rev. Robert Wilmot, John Radford, Thomas Evans, John Hope, William Evans, William Strutt and William Snowden, was forfeited by Lister, Stanley, Joseph Lister (also a mason of Bromley, Leeds) and Samuel Bestwick, a farmer of Horsley Woodhouse on 25 August 1792, with an entreaty to the Commissioners for their indulgence and a request for a further delay to 1 December 1792. Cash flow appears to have been one of the problems. In a letter written to the Commissioners on 5 July 1793, Lister requested that they pay Mr. Harrison his bill for work done at the bridge, and place it to his account 'as he is in much want I believe'.

A further agreement was signed on 9 June 1794 between Samuel Lister (described as architect of Derby!) and John Crompton, the Rev. Charles Hope (Clerk), John Hope, Thomas Mather, William Strutt, Mathew How and Robert Hope for the building of fences, or bankwalls on each side of the road to the west side of St. Mary's Bridge and to flag the footway with Yorkshire stone and curb it with Duffield stone at a total cost of £126.13s.0d. and to the satisfaction of William Forester of Derby, a mason who had been appointed to superintend the work. Towards the end of the work on the bridge there was a shortage of money and the Commissioners examined each piece of work and the accompanying accounts. In one instance there is a reference to overcharging by the labourers for ale, but no details are given. The Commissioners also quibbled over payment for extra work that was necessary in connection with the piers. Eventually however, the bridge was handed over to the Mayor and Burgesses in 1794, (53) but there does not appear to have been an official opening ceremony. The Commissioners however continued to meet until 1796 to complete work on the rebuilt houses, as for example the alterations to Mr. Eaton's house at a cost of £50, (54) and to clear up the accounts but there does not appear to be a final balance sheet.

From the foregoing it appears that whilst the Commissioners worked collectively in arranging of the contracts, Strutt and the Evans were particularly involved in the negotiations. Whenever an agreement was signed the seven Commissioners who were signatories were drawn from William Strutt, the Cromptons and Evans's, Thomas Lowe, the Hopes, William Leaper Smith, Edward Sacheverell Sitwell and Robert Wilmot.

Paving and lighting the town's streets

The Corporation of Derby had been ineffective in dealing with the condition of the thoroughfares of the town during the 18th century. It was a regular practice throughout the century for the Borough Justices

> 'to present the several parishes of the Borough, wherever any highways needed repair; to adjourn the hearing if the parish officials appeared and undertook to execute the repairs at once; to inflict a fine if this was done; to allow time for the execution of the work; and only to enforce the fine in case "of default"'. (55)

In 1774 a town's meeting was called by the Mayor to ask for subscriptions to a fund to repair the streets, (56) but the money raised did not go very far and the streets showed little improvement although Pilkington was able to write in 1789 that new paths had been laid in the town with broad, flat stones for footpassengers. (57) In the Derby Mercury three years later, it was reported that.

> 'a nightly watch has been established in this town; and as we have before remarked, there wants only the streets paved and lighted to render it a comfortable residence for natives and visitants.... and an honour to the public spirit of the inhabitants: this is an improvement without which all others will be like building a palace in the midst of a bog ... we hope, therefore, this great object will be speedily effected, and in a way that will be the least burthensome and the most agreeable to the general wish'. (58)

It should be noted that at this stage there is no reference to the lighting of the streets. In fact there were some eighty lamps and lights in the streets at this time which were maintained out of a sum of money given to the town in 1738. (59)

On the 26 February 1792 the Derby Mercury stated:

> 'The flattering encouragement which the gentlemen who wish for the proposed improvements of the town, have met with on their application for consents to the sale of Nun's Green, this morning affords the public a pleasing prospect of seeing the town of Derby paved and lighted on the economical plan proposed by the Committee. They can now assure the public that there remains little doubt but Nun's Green will be sold, and the money applied for purposes that will save the inhabitants a very serious tax, which would certainly fall upon them should the improvements take place without the aid of Nun's Green'.

It is clear that the promoters of the bill were anxious to get the paving and lighting scheme in operation with the minimum of expense to the property owners of the town. In order to do this the proposers wished to sell the area of common-land adjacent to the town centre called Nun's Green. To propose this the instigators of the bill must have had the support of the Corporation because the town's Cheese Fair was held on the Green, the burgesses had the right to graze animals, stack timber and collect furze, whilst the Town Harriers had their kennels on the Green. (60) By an Act passed in 1768 (61) a body of Commissioners which included the Corporation had attempted to regularise the use of the area but apparently to no avail because the digging of gravel had continued, houses had been erected on the common land without permission, and areas of stagnant water made the area unpleasant.

A public meeting called for 14 February 1791 considered the Report of the Committee apointed to prepare a 'Plan for more effectually paving and lighting the Streets'. The meeting appeared to be more interested in the money and support that would be forthcoming should the Act be obtained without opposition. (62)

The subscription list was His Grace the Duke of Devonshire (£300), Thomas William Coke (£100), Members of Parliament respectively for the County and the Borough: Jedediah Strutt, John Crompton and Dr. Crompton(£50 each). The committee set up to prepare the Bill consisted in the main of the Aldermen, the attorneys and solicitors, bankers and businessmen.

The proposal to sell Nun's Green met with strong opposition which expressed itself in the form of broadsheets, open letters, prose and songs and which had strong support in Parliament, from Lord Porchester and from the unseated Derby M.P. Daniel Parker Coke, who was at the time representing Nottingham. Arguments for and against the scheme were presented at length during the while of 1791 and until the amendments to the bill were passed on 27 March 1792. William Strutt was the Chairman of the Committee which was preparing the bill and had to counter the powerful opposition which arose 'in consequence of mistaken views and partly from political feeling .....' (63) A fighting fund was set up to oppose the Bill, and the opposition point of view was presented by John Harrison, a local solicitor. The opposition is summarised in a broadsheet issued on 5 April 1791 by 'An Inhabitant'. He lists three groups - those who believe in taxation as a just means of raising money for any improvements; those who are more interested in self than in the benefit of the public in the selling of Nun's Green, and those who are opposed to all forms of public improvement if expense is involved. Several plans were suggested for the raising of money, about £4,000 in all, to meet the demands of the scheme as is shown by the broadsheet issued on behalf of Daniel Parker Coke, M.P. In this it is interesting to note that the Committee appear to have held meetings when he could not be present. More evocative language was used in the broadsheet of 25 January 1792. Whilst the opposition stressed the need to protect the interest of the poor, the Committee spent much effort in countering the misrepresentations that were put forward.

The bill was referred to the Committee stage on 8 February 1792 soon after which a petition from several Burgesses and other inhabitants was received. (64) It appears that Daniel Parker Coke did not oppose the bill at the Committee stage. (65) It is of interest that it was the aim of the proposers to bring in the bill 'when Mr. Coke was in Lincoln, only Mr. Crompton and Mr. Strutt to know'. (66) On the 15 March 1792, it was recorded that: 'the Parties entitled to the Right of Common on the Green, called Nun's Green, by the Bill intended to be sold have given their consent to the Bill to the satisfaction of the Committee (except about 401 Persons entitled to Right of Common on the said Green, who refused to Consent to the Bill, or could not be found: and that the whole Number of Persons entitled to Right of Common are about 2000).' (67) The Bill with its amendments was passed on 27 March 1792 and Lord George Cavendish took it to the House of Lords. Simpson wrote to Strutt on 8 May 1792 (68) that the Committee had met at the House of Lords to examine the witnesses, Alderman Eaton and his son, Thomas, Mr. Gibson and Mr. Dugdale. Their evidence does not appear to have been very convincing and Simpson wrote of 'victory' but he also commented on the delay in the second reading of the Bill in the Lords, because of the 'absence of friends'. (69) With the help of these 'friends' the bill received the Royal Assent on 15 June 1792. Coke however continued to exploit the apparently unsatisfactory situation.

The Commissioners, who consisted of all the owners and occupiers of dwelling houses in the Borough rated at £20 or over per annum, met at the Town Hall on 2 July 1792. It was stipulated that a Chairman should be elected at every meeting, a Clerk, Treasurer and a Collector or Collectors of the Rates or Assessments be appointed. The Act itemised the streets which were to be paved and pitched and held the parishes and Corporation responsible for certain roads and the bridges already built. The Commissioners were instructed to provide lamps and authorised to supervise the taking down of signs, penthouses, porches etc., and to instruct householders to affix spouts and gutters down the sides of their houses. The rate was assessed at up to 1/8d in the £1 for the first three years, and after that at 9d. in the £1.

As regards Nun's Green, the Commissioners were empowered to set out roads and alter the line of the brook, this alteration to be vetted by either William Jessop or Benjamin Outram (engineers and partners in the Butterley Company). Nun's Green was to be divided into lots and auctioned, but sitting tenants were allowed to purchase former allotments at the original price of purchase.

The Commissioners took over the responsibility of the stretch of the Manchester turnpike road where it passed through the town, i.e. from the Spot to the New Inn, at a cost of £1,000. They were also given the authority to widen streets where necessary. The sweeping of footpaths, except on Sundays, was the responsibility of the occupiers of the abutting premises, and the removal of soil was forbidden other than by contractors.

This was a much more comprehensive act when compared with many passed at this time which were usually restricted to either paving or lighting.

The Commissioners elected a committee which met for the first time on 13 July 1792. Those present were William Strutt, William Evans, Dr. Darwin, Richard Bateman, Thomas Lowe, Daniel Lowe, Dr. Fox, Samuel Fox and Charles Upton with Nathaniel Edwards as Clerk. Immediately they set-about realigning the brook which passed through Nun's Green. Previous to this an arrangement (70) had been made through Benjamin Outram with the miller, Francis Agard, who owned the Cuckstool Mill on the brook and who was opposed to any alteration of the brook's course. Other surveyors used for the alterations included a Mr. Saunders and Mr. Richard Roe. The Committee also advertised for the supply of flagstones from Ealand Edge in Yorkshire for paving the carriage ways. (71)

It was decided to pave the streets most badly 'injured' by heavy carriages, those being Full Street, St. Mary's Gate and Bold Lane, but because of an insufficient quantity of stone it was not possible to do all these in the first year. It was decided that a proposal 'that the carrying of water from the Houses in pipes down the sides of them as directed', would cause additional trouble and expense wherever a new pavement was made, and should be suspended for the time being. (72) The Committee placed advertisements in issues of the Derby Mercury following this date for scavengers (73) and for the lighting of the present number of lamps

> 'plus any additional number which the committee may think necessary for the ensuing winter'.

The advertisement for the latter was as follows:-

> 'Persons willing to supply .... with 70 new Lamps and to light 160 lamps from Michaelmas to Lady Day next .... to send in proposals.....' (74)

Some of the money for the Improvement Commission came from the trustees of the London to Brassington Turnpike Road who had 'executed to the Treasurer a mortgage of the Tolls for securing to the committee the sum of £1,000 at interest after the rate of five per cent'. Other money came from the sale of Nun's Green which was disposed of in parts, (75) but no figure is available for the sale of the land. Other money came from the rate based on the house rate.

The Commissioners were also able to reduce the number of night watchmen from twenty to ten, due to the use of a watch-clock first used by William Strutt in his mills. The operation of this is described at length in the Reports from Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in England and Wales. (76)

The Commissioners had problems with the balancing of their budget. On 24 April 1812, Mr. Duesbury (William Duesbury III of Derby Porcelain) who was the Collector of the rates was reported in the minutes as having become insolvent, added to which there was an accumulation of three years of uncollected rates.

On May 20 a meeting took place between members of the committee appointed by the Corporation, and the Paving and Lighting Commissioners to readjust and settle all outstanding financial matters between them. As a result a sum of £436 5s. 5d. was paid by the Corporation to the Commissioners for work done by the Commissioners on behalf of the Corporation between 1792 and 1811. (77)

The improvement to the streets of the town therefore, came as a result of the endeavours of a few public spirited individuals who, although supported by the burgesses, were left to see the proposals acted upon. William Strutt was the prime mover supported by his fellow cotton mill owner, William Evans.

In the minute book for 26 December 1829 is recorded the following:

> 'This was the last meeting at which Mr. Strutt attended being prevented by ill health. He had been a constant and most efficient attendant at the meetings from the first meeting under the late Act in July 1792, to this date, scarcely ever being absent and the constant chairman'. (written in December 1849) (78)

The Derby Infirmary

The initiative to establish an Infirmary in Derby, as in other towns, appears to have stemmed from the gentry and clergy rather than from the Corporation or the businessmen of the town, although both parties were soon involved. To set up a hospital required a financial base and support which was different from that required by the other improvements and also differed in that it did not require an Act of Parliament. An unofficial committee appears to have been formed during or before January 1803 because the Minute Book for the proposed Derby Infirmary (79) begins with an entry for 7 February. Compared with other towns this was a late establishment: for example, Exeter (80) had had an infirmary sixty-two years by this date, and Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and Leicester were all established by 1771. During the last two decades of the 18th century, the town of Derby and the county was served by the Nottingham General Hospital founded in 1781, two of its chief benefactors being Richard Arkwright of Cromford in Derbyshire (£200) and the Duke of Devonshire (£100). (81) Annual sermons, as in 1786, (82) were preached in Derby and county churches at the request of the Governors of the General Hospital, the receivers for Derbyshire subscriptions being William Strutt and John Drewry. The significance of 1786 was that the Nottingham General Hospital was enlarged by the addition of the Derbyshire Wards (male and female). This call for money would appear to have occasioned a letter dated 9 January 1786 from A.B. to the Derby Mercury (83) entitled:

> County Hospital at Derby
>
> 'On considering the subject of County Hospitals or Infirmaries a Reason will not readily occur to any Man why an Establishment of the same kind has not taken place in the County of Derby as well as in every County bordering upon it.... The writer ..... is personally disinterested as to the Foundation of a General Hospital at Derby, but as he must always hold himself under Great Obligation to the Town ... he is induced to call upon the worthy Inhabitants ... to take the Business into their serious consideration ....'

Dr. Erasmus Darwin had established a dispensary in the town in 1784 (84) where doctors could give voluntary advice to the poor but this failed through lack of support, although a successful one was opened a few years later. (85) In the same way that the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Hospital developed in association with such a dispensary (86) it can be assumed that this is what happened at Derby.

Certainly Erasmus Darwin was involved in the initial thinking although he died some nine months before the committee to establish the Infirmary got under way.

The Committee appears to have been given a lease of life by a letter from the Rev. Thomas Gisborne of Yoxall Lodge along with Isaac Hawkins Browne who were executors and trustees of the estate of Isaac Hawkins of Burton, regarding a projected donation to the Infirmary of £5,000. (87) This is followed by a letter from F.N.C. Mundy of Markeaton Hall to the Mayor of Derby which elicited a reply from the Town Clerk in which it was resolved the the county and town of Derby would erect and support an Infirmary; the Corporation would subscribe £500 and help in providing the necessary land; and thanked the Rev. Gisborne and F.N.C. Mundy for their endeavours to establish the Infirmary. (88) Mundy, in a letter to the Duke of Devonshire, refers to the setting up of an Infirmary in Derby as being the idea of Dr. Darwin, Mr. Gisborne and himself; he goes on to ask for his support, particularly in laying the schemes before the 'Grand Jury at the approaching assizes'. (89) Mundy wrote that he had already informed the Magistrates of the proposal at the last Quarter Sessions. The Duke of Devonshire replied to F.N.C. Mundy offering to give 'serious thought to £2,000'. (90) As foreman to the Grand Jury, Mundy also wrote to Sir Robert Wilmot of Chaddesden Hall (High Sheriff), instructing him on behalf of the Grand Jury to appoint a 'General Meeting of the County and Town of this place on 5th April'. (91) The meeting was agreed to, and was advertised in the Derby Mercury on 24 March 1803.

In a letter to Mundy, in which he offers an annual subscription of five guineas, Gisborne is anxious to point out that the £5,000 donation would have to await the appointment of a Treasurer at the General Meeting. (92) The joint treasurers appointed were John Crompton, Receiver General for the County, and Thomas Evans, County Treasurer, both of whom were bankers. At the General Meeting it was decided that Committees should be established in each Hundred in the County and also in the Borough of Derby 'with such Gentlemen as they shall think proper to appoint to assist them, shall be such a committee to collect subscriptions by a personal application in their Districts'. It was agreed that when most of the money had been subscribed, a general meeting of subscribers should be called to consider the carrying out of the plan. Thanks were expressed to Thomas Gisborne, Isaac Hawkins Browne and F.N.C. Mundy, the initiators of the scheme, along with thanks to the medical gentlemen who were not named, who had offered their professional assistance free. It was also decided to call upon the clergy to assist in the collection of subscriptions. (93)

On the 4 October 1803, a General Meeting (94) was called of all subscribers of £50 upwards who would form a Committee, any five of whom would be deemed competent to transact business. The first call was made upon the subscriptions (25 per cent) by 1 January 1804. (95) At the first meeting of the Committee held at the County Hall on 1 November 1803, the following were present: Lord Vernon, Sir Robert Wilmot, Francis Noel Clark Mundy, John Port, William Drury Lowe and Philip Gell representing the County gentry, the Rev. J. Wilmot, the Rev. John Ward,the Rev. D. Flamstead, the clergy, Thos. Evans, William Strutt, Joseph Strutt (businessmen), Thomas Saxelby (a grocer), John Harrison, Charles Upton, Richard Bateman, William Jeffery Lockett (attornies), Dr. Forester Forester and H.F.P. Hadley (surgeons) with John Horrocks acting as Clerk and Secretary.

It was decided to approach Mr. Carr of York, although retired, to draw up the plans for the Infirmary, and to call on Mundy, Forester, William Strutt, Robert Wilmot, Bateman and Thomas Evans to look for a site. (96)

Following this, a letter was sent by the Clerk of the Committee to the Mayor regarding the purchase from the Corporation of the whole of the land called Bradshaw Hay (13 acres) originally part of the estate of Isaac Borrow which had been conveyed to the Corporation on 14 June 1718. This site met the requirements of the committee as being: airy and dry, abounding in good water, near the town, and a reasonable price. Although the area of Bradshaw Hay was more than was necessary it would 'prevent any kind of nuisance from approaching the Infirmary....' (97)

On the 4 February 1804 a meeting of subscribers approved the purchase of the land, the Trustees to be the Lord Lieutenant of the County Lord Vernon, Lord Chesterfield, Lord Scarsdale, the M.P.'s for the County, Sir Robert Wilmot of Osmaston and F.N.C. Mundy Esq., Dr. Forester, Richard Bateman, D.P. Coke, M.P., and E.S. Sitwell. Until the time came for the commencement of building, the land was let by Auction in two lots for three years,

'subject to the lot nearest the Town of Derby to the privileges of conveying the water from the spring to the ground to be reserved for the use of the Infirmary'. The management of the site was vested in the hands of Dr. Forester, William Strutt and Mr. Upton. (98)

An advertisement for Plans of the Infirmary which was to be plain and simple, and of stone, with a Fever Ward with separate entrance (with 12 beds), the whole building to have eighty beds with two day rooms (one for each sex) was placed in the Derby, Manchester, Birmingham, Leicester and Nottingham newspapers. The sub-committee to vet the plans was made up of Forester, William and George Strutt and Saxelby. (99)

On the 4 August 1804 the Committee received the sub-committee's report on the fifteen plans submitted

> ' some drawn without any knowledge of the subject; some without the requisite pointed out in the advertisement, others inconvenient, extended and expensive and none designed on the principal of the greatest economy or the convenience of the persons employed, nor with the greatest advantage to the patients. They are therefore, under the painful necessity of disapproving them all.....'

Under the terms of the advertisement the most approved plan was that of Mr. Rawstern of York. (100) But it is clear that none of the plans was satisfactory, William Strutt having his own ideas. The sub-committee decided to add further requirements in the planning of the Infirmary. These were to include

> 'a simple means of completely and perpetually ventilating every ward with fresh unviolated air, at the same time increasing the temperature, by a small expense, to any given degree....'

and to include improved water closets so that

> 'if one of them was purposely filled with a suffocating vapour, that vapour so far from entering the House, would not be perceived even in the closet by a person entering immediately afterwards....'

In these two 'demands' can be seen the hand of William Strutt who had installed a heating and ventilating system in his Milford and Belper Mills. (101) Strutt's involvement is also seen in his seeking advice on a suitable steam engine for the Infirmary from George Augustus Lee of Manchester. (102) The steam engine 'was installed to pump water, wash, etc.' (103)

Because of the dissatisfaction with the plans submitted it would appear that Strutt and the Committee decided to go ahead with their own plans. Accordingly, a plan of the Sheffield Hospital was purchased for £3. Throughout the planning, economy was the keynote as for example, it was decided to only use panes of glass which were 12 inches by 8 inches. The final design of the building was carried out by Strutt and the working plans were drawn by Mr. Browne (one assumes Isaac Hawkins Browne). (104) From these plans a model was constructed 'to correct some of the errors' and to show the project to the public. (105) At this same meeting Gisborne and Browne, who were two of the initiators of the scheme, were added to the list of Trustees of Bradshaw Hay.

On the 1 December 1804 the remainder of the subscriptions were called in, which after the purchase of the land, allowed £5,000 to be invested in consols at 3 per cent. (106) A list of the subscribers appeared in the Derby Mercury on 30 January 1805 and contracts were made for the supplying of the stone. The original estimate for the building was £10,500 but the expenditure by 1 June 1809 had amounted to £17,870.3s.4d. donations amounting to £31,238.19s.0d. The Infirmary was opened to patients on 4 June 1810 (107)

The building of the Infirmary involved a larger group of people than had been engaged in the rebuilding of St. Mary's Bridge or in the paving and lighting scheme, largely because it was seen as a county project, thereby involving the county landowners and the county clergy. However, the work of seeing the project through fell largely on the shoulders of William Strutt and Thomas Evans along with Charles Upton and Dr. Forester.

The new elite of Derby

The local government of Derby in the last two decades of the 18th century was firmly controlled by the small group of aldermen and to a lesser degree by a few of the brethren. None of these 'city fathers' was elected, each one of them having attained their position of authority, initially by being accepted as freemen of the Borough. Having achieved that status they progressed through the hierarchy at the discretion of their associates, the capital burgesses, the brethren and the aldermen. It was difficult for a newcomer to the borough to break into this closed circle and indeed only after many years could a family, usually the second generation, be accepted into the 'inner group'. In this respect it is interesting to note the small number of individuals of the town who achieved the office of Mayor between 1750 and 1840. During that ninety years only twenty-nine people held the mayorality of the Borough, and within that number the control of family groups is significant. These men were the 'unelightened opinion', (108) who gained a grip on municipal politics.

The aldermanic group in Derby in 1791 (109) was made up of traders or bankers. The new industrialists like Strutt and Evans and the solicitors of the town are listed amongst the Brethren. It was this group which provided the men who realised the need for improving the facilities of the town and who provided the initiative. Of the aldermen, only John Crompton in his capacity as Receiver General for the County, and the grocer, William Snowden, who were both involved in the setting-up of the Infirmary were actively involved in the improvements. The involvement of the other aldermen would appear to be only in terms of representing the Corporation and not as active participants.

The mainspring for these Commissions and for the setting-up of the Infirmary rested in the hands of the Evans family, the Strutts and William Leaper with assistance from 'outsiders' such as the Batemans, the Rev. Charles Hope, the Darwins, W. J. Lockett and Charles Upton.

Samuel Crompton and Thomas Evans formed a partnership in 1771 establishing the Crompton and Evans Bank. About 1781 Crompton left the partnership which became Thomas Evans and Son. (110) The Evans were also industrialists whose other interests diversified into iron, copper, paper and tin milling, brickmaking, the making of lead, corn milling, flint grinding and cotton manufacture. (111) The Cromptons' banking interests continued as a separate entity and in 1784 they had banks at Derby and York. (112) It is interesting to speculate upon the popularity of the Cromptons because although the family gave food to the poor and to the burgesses, in the same year the fence of his property was pulled down and some of his sheep were stolen. (113) Richard Lowe, who owned estates to the north of Derby at Denby and who was a woollen draper in London in 1771, joined the banking partnership of Raymond, Williams, Vere, Lowe and Fletcher. This bank continued under various titles until his death in 1785. (114)

The professional men involved in the schemes included the solicitors, John Leaper, Richard Bateman, Erasmus Darwin (Junior) and Charles Upton; and the doctors, Erasmus Darwin, Francis Fox and in the case of the Infirmary, Richard Forester Forester and H.F.P. Hadley. Many of the Commissioners were included because of their connection with an associated trust such as the Mansfield-Derby and Nottingham-Derby Turnpike Trusts, and therefore took little part in the new ventures.

Most of the main activists, who were outside the Borough's governing clique, met in at least three activities. Intellectually some met at the Derby Philosophical Society's monthly meetings chaired by Dr. Erasmus Darwin, its founder.

Its members included William Strutt, Dr. Crompton (son of Samuel Crompton), the Rev. Charles Hope, John Leaper, Samuel Fox and Sir Robert Wilmot. (115) Of Strutt's relationship with Darwin, it was written in the Derby Mercury 12 January 1831:

> '.... Dr. Darwin, with whom he lived on terms of intimate friendship, and almost daily intercourse, from his first arrival in Derby in the year 1781 down to the time of his death in 1802....'

A similar group belonged to Drewry's Book Society and included in 1792/3 the Strutts, Samuel Fox, Dr. Crompton, Daniel Parker Lowe and the Evans's. (116)

Several of this same group were members of the Unitarian Church in Derby. The Cromptons, Strutts, Foxes, Batemans, Drewrys, Leapers and Daniel Parker Lowe were all attending the church in the last twenty years of the eighteenth century. (117) Their belief in Unitarianism gave them a rational and intellectual approach to the problems of religion and life.

Such a tight-knit group would inevitably have some bearing on what went on in the Borough and often complemented and countered the Corporation clique. Apart from being involved in the activities so far mentioned, they were members of various committees including the one for the Relief of the Poor in 1793, (118) whilst William Strutt and Samuel Fox were members of the Select Committee for regulation Sunday Schools in 1789. (119)

Socially the Cromptons, Foxes, Darwins, Uptons, Evans's, Drewrys and Forester Forester met at the Strutt's town house, the evidence for this being in the numerous personal letters in the Strutt Collection, and at the Evans's. (120) This close-knit group was further strengthened by inter-marriage. Samuel Crompton married the only daughter of Samuel Fox (121) whilst the son of Samuel Fox married Martha, the second daughter of Jedediah Strutt. William Strutt, the first son of Jedediah Strutt married Barbara Evans, sister of William Evans of Darley Abbey, who in turn had married Elizabeth Strutt, first daughter of Jedediah: (122) The inter-relationships are involved.

From the foregoing it is clear that the main-spring behind most of the activities that took place in Derby between 1780 and 1831, the year in which he died, was William Strutt. His obituary notice recalled that he had either 'personally planned or contributed in a great degree' to the erection of all the bridges in the town; that his most important public work was the obtaining and carrying into effect of the Act for Paving and Lighting the town, and that he had been involved in the establishment and management of the town's gas works, and the relief of the lower parts of the town from flooding. In addition he had established and supported Friendly Societies, Savings Banks, the Lancastrian School and the Mechanics' Institute. He was also the inspiration behind the many new ideas incorporated in the Infirmary. He had 'no motive than the public advantage'. (123)

Strutt and his group conform to the pattern found in other towns. Of the group who directed many of the improvements in Leeds in the 18th century, Kitson Clarke wrote that they were unquestionably middle class and palpalby non-conformist and based largely on a professional class which included ministers of religion, solicitors, barristers, physicians, and surgeons, all of whom were of necessity well-educated according to the standards of the day. But it was not only the professional class. There was a number of men occupied in commerce and industry whose life-style closely resembled that of the professional class. The development of factory production saw the bankers and manufacturers taking the lead rather than the merchants. (124) In Derby it was the Foxes, the Lowes, the Cromptons and particularly the Evans's and the Strutts who took the lead - the bankers and the manufacturers.

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NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF NORTH WINGFIELD

by D.V. Fowkes

(Staffordshire Record Office)

Pre-industrial North Wingfield

For two years from Autumn 1976 to Spring 1978 a local history class was held in North Wingfield under the direction of the author. Much of the time was taken up looking at the history of the village in the 19th century when dramatic changes were taking place with the coming of the large-scale coal industry. In the latter stages of the course however, the opportunity was taken to look at various aspects of the history of the pre-industrial village, a stable community of 100-200 people which appears to have changed little between the medieval period and the opening decades of the 19th century. This was a far more difficult task than the study of the 19th century history as at the time of writing there are few surviving estate records relating to the village, and the parish records contain little other than the parish registers. The study of the traditional village therefore, rested heavily on the tithe map and award of 1844, (1) the fine series of glebe terriers among the diocesan copies of the terriers in the Derbyshire Record Office and, to a lesser extent, on the probate inventories deposited in the Lichfield Joint Record Office.

The chief purpose of the exercise, bearing in mind the limited amount of time available, was to find out something of the early field system of the village. The absence of any parliamentary enclosure award suggests that the open fields had been enclosed by private agreement over a long period. Despite the considerable gap between the date of probable enclosure and the tithe map and award, the field names and pattern of fields of 1844 provided many clues. Due to this continuity, some field names could be tied in with the glebe terriers of the 1670's, at which date there was still a small amount of enenclosed land remaining. North Wingfield parish church had some 80 acres or so of glebe at this date, making the terriers an important source in the absence of estate records. Enclosure had clearly been in progress for centuries before this: in the Elizabethan Manor Court book, (2) for instance, there are few references to un-enclosed land, while the medieval deeds transcribed in the Leeke Cartulary (3) make no reference to open arable land in the township.

Morphology of the settlement

As the accompanying map shows, the ancient nucleus of the village was in the area known as 'The Town', with the much smaller detached nucleus of the parish church and its associated buildings on Church Hill. The area between the Town and this group was completely undeveloped. The Townwas bordered by the village green, shown on the tithe map as considerably larger than it is today, and from the fieldname evidence even more extensive in past centuries. Another interesting point is that farms stayed put in the area of the Town, not moving for the most part into more convenient locations in the enclosed fields.

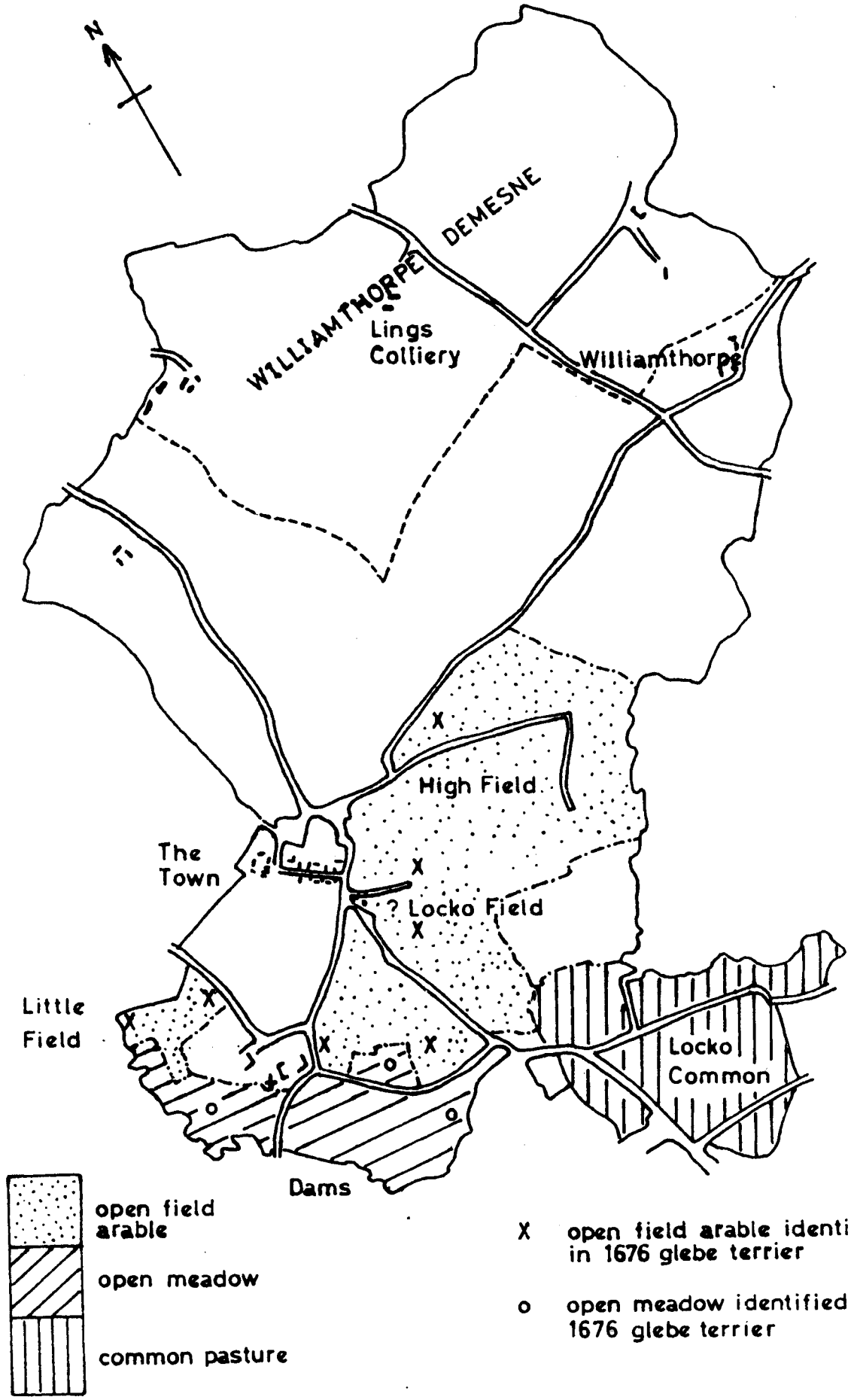
The secondary settlement of Williamthorpe in the north of the township formed another small nucleus, but the greater part of Williamthorpe consisted of an undeveloped monolithic block of Hunloke property, later the site of Williamthorpe Colliery, known as 'Williamthorpe Demesne' in the tithe award. The tenurial structure was in marked contrast to North Wingfield village where there was no dominant owner but a large number of small landowners, many of them owner-occupiers.

The Field system

The evidence suggests that the arable land was concentrated to the east and south of the Town, with the exception of the Little Field which lay to the south-west. The most easily identifiable of the three fields is undoubtedly the High Field to the east of the Town. The name persists in a large number of field names, in company with the name Hilly Lands (referring to strips or 'lands' in the open fields), and there is a well-defined series of fossilised strip fields running east-west in the area of the High Field.

THE PROBABLE OPEN FIELD SYSTEM OF NORTH WINGFIELD

Base map tithe map 1844



The area of open meadow land, the land preserved in grass for hay, is easy to locate and define, occupying the area adjoining the Rother and its tributary Locko Brook, on the southern boundary of the township. The area was known as the Dams and parts of it were still divided into strips in the 1670's. The common pasture, Locko Common, is no problem. It occupied a well-defined area in the south-eastern corner of the township and is referred to in several 14th century deeds transcribed in the Leeke Cartulary. There is no evidence to suggest that the area to the north and north east of the Town was ever farmed in anything other than enclosed fields.

The economy

Farming was virtually the sole basis of the township's economy until the coming of Lings Colliery early in the 19th century. The charcoal ironworks, often referred to as being in 'North Wingfield' was in fact in the neighbouring village of Pilsley, and in the 1801 census an improbable 224 out of the 240 inhabitants were said to be engaged in agriculture. Small-scale mining in shallow bell-pits doubtless took place but there is no documentary record of this at present.

North Wingfield township was an area of small farms, all under 100 acres, with the emphasis always on mixed farming. 16th and 17th century probate inventories show that, in common with much of the coalfield, farmers in North Wingfield invariably had an interest in both livestock and arable farming with the livestock sector probably providing a slightly greater share of the income, particularly from the sale of fat cattle. Most farmers kept a few pigs and poultry in addition to cattle and sheep, while the traditional coalfield crops of wheat and oats are much in evidence.

Population

It is particularly difficult to make any assessment of the population of North Wingfield before the first census of 1801 because such figures as there are relate to the whole parish and not to the townships. However, the parish registers do indicate which township in the parish children being baptised came from and which township people being buried came from, and it is therefore, possible to gain some idea of trends for the 17th and 18th century registers. Even allowing for out-migration, the limited evidence suggests that there was a considerable increase in population in the later years of the 18th century, when there was a regular excess of baptisms over burials. Further, Pilkington in 1788 (4) states that there were 40 houses in the township as against 51 in 1801. All this points to a population of around 180-200 in the 1780's, and a probable population of between 100 and 150 in the 17th century when the annual number of baptisms was half that in the late 18th century.

North Wingfield in the nineteenth century

Like so many villages on the coalfield North Wingfield underwent dramatic physical, economic and social changes in the 19th century with the arrival of the large-scale coal industry in mid-century. The physical changes in North Wingfield were at first less marked than in some places as the new colliery population was housed in a small number of rows of cottages for much of the century, but by the end of the century ribbon development along the roads radiating from the Town resulted in the linking of the traditional nuclei and the destruction of the early settlement pattern. As a result of these changes the population increased from 240 in 1801 to 2973 in 1901.

In relative terms the decade of greatest change was between 1841 and 1851 when the population increased dramatically from 250 to 668, almost a threefold increase. The first 40 years of the century show an almost static population with in fact a small decline from 1821 to 1841, in common with so many rural areas, with large numbers of people migrating to the expanding towns. Lings Colliery was already in existence in the 1820's but it was the coming of the North Midland Railway in 1840 and the building of a branch to Lings and Pewit Colliery in Pilsley that seems to have precipitated the great expansion of the coal industry in North Wingfield.

The new population

The North Wingfield mining community of 1851 consisted almost entirely of newcomers to the village, only three of the 114 men described as miners in the 1851 census being born within the parish of North Wingfield, and only one from the township of North Wingfield itself. The majority (82%) of the miners in fact originated either from other parts of the Notts/Derbys coalfield where mining had developed earlier or from neighbouring villages. Thus 32 men originated from the Nottinghamshire coal mining parishes of Selston and Greasley, and another 26 from the Alfreton/Ripley area to the south. Only four men were born outside Notts or Derbys: two in Co. Durham and two in Staffordshire. North Wingfield between 1841 and 1851 was therefore, the focus of a wave of essentially short-distance migration to its developing collieries. An interesting aside on the migration from the Erewash Valley area was the apperance of 12 framework knitters or laceworkers among the colliers' families. Another interesting point is that many of the incoming colliers were single men so that, as so often is the case in developing industrial settlements, there was a considerable excess of males (371) over females (297) in 1851.

Four rows of cottages were provided for the colliery workers and in 1851 the colliers were almost totally resident in these. 107 out of 114 lived in either Lings Row (51), Bottom Cross Row (25), Top cross Row (15), or Speedwell Row (16). Only four lived in the old-established nucleus of the Town, two at Locko Brook and one at Williamthorpe. By 1861 dispersal was in progress, as the newcomers began to be integrated with the 'native' predominantly farming population.

The effect on the occupation structure of the village was, of course, equally dramatic. In 1801, as we have seen, 224 out of 240 inhabitants were said to be involved in agriculture: in 1831 40 out of 57 households were said to be engaged in agriculture. In 1851, however, coal mining had suddenly become the principal occupation with 128 men, or just under half of the working population, employed in coal mining. Farming very much retained its actual strength with 64 people (23.6%) still employed in farming in 1851, but its relative position had obviously dropped dramatically. Almost two-thirds of the working population was therefore, involved in either mining or farming in 1851, with the residue largely employed in either the service trades (shopkeepers etc.) or in domestic service. Like most developing coalfield villages of the day, North Wingfield had a small brickworks at Perry Bar at which four men from the village were employed in 1851.

The overall effect of the influx of colliers on the village must have been tremendous. After centuries as a little-changing farming community, the population had now trebled in the space of a few years, and there was now as much chance of walking down the village street and meeting someone born in Greasley, Selston or Alfreton as someone born in the village. The immediate physical impact on the village was less dramatic, with the miners housed in the four crowded rows initially, and the expanding colliery well away from the village centre: in terms of appearance, North Wingfield would still appear overwhelmingly agricultural in 1851.

Other characteristics of the population of North Wingfield in 1851

The population of North Wingfield in 1851 was a very young population with 90% of the inhabitants aged under 50, and just under one third (30%) aged under 10. Exactly one half of the population was aged under 20. This was no doubt due to the fact that many of the people moving into the village were young people attracted by the work prospects offered by the new collieries. The presence of a large number of young single men is demonstrated best of all by the fact that in the 15 to 30 age group there were 112 males and only 66 females.

The only school provided in North Wingfield before the building of the National School in 1854 by the Wingerworth Colliery Co. was in the vestry of the parish church, so it is hardly surprising that only a relatively small proportion of this young population attended school in 1851. In the age group between 5 and 14, 35% of the boys and almost exactly half the girls attended school, an overall average of 43.6%. Almost as many boys in the same age group are listed as being at work, the vast majority (22 out of 26) being miners aged from nine upwards.

Only a few of the girls were at work, and predictably they were house-servants. Approximately one third of both the boys and the girls were not classed as either being at school or at work, and these presumably just helped their parents.

Although the mid 19th century is very much the zenith of the era of the domestic servant, there were predictably few in North Wingfield, dominated as it was by coal mining in terms of occupations and lacking any resident gentry. Only two people, the Rector and a 'gentleman farmer' had two servants: 12 other people, 8 of them farmers, had one.

The development of educational facilities in North Wingfield

One way in which the rapid development of North Wingfield in the mid 19th century is reflected is in the provision of educational facilities for the continually increasing number of children of school age. As mentioned above, the first school in the village was the school held in the vestry of the parish church. This remained the only school until 1854 so it is perhaps not surprising that large numbers of the expanded young population of 1851 did not attend school. Even to accommodate the numbers who did attend, somewhere other than the vestry must have been involved, presumably a mixture of schools in neighbouring villages and private academies. The eventual response to the sudden increase in population was the National School of 1854, financed by the Wingerworth Colliery Company, the owners of Lings Colliery. In the 1861 census, 127 children attended school, a reflection no doubt of the increased school provision as well as the increased population.

By 1871 however, there had been another large increase in the population to 1155 following the opening of Alma Colliery, and with even greater expansion in neighbouring Clay Cross, the old parish of North Wingfield was an obvious candidate for the setting up of one of the new school boards which could be set up in areas where existing educational provision was deficient under the 1870 Education Act. In 1876, therefore, the Clay Lane School Board was formed and took over the 1854 National School, and in 1878 the log book of the Board School begins. An early innovation of the School Board era was the introduction of an evening school from 6.30 p.m. to 8.30 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. The 'school pence' in these early days of the Board School were 4d. per week for each child aged above 9, 3d. per week for each child aged 7-9, and 2d. per week for each child aged under 7.

Right from its takeover by the School Board, the accommodation at the old National School was considered inadequate. In 1880 the H.M.I. reported that the master was doing his best but could not do justice to himself because of the crowded conditions, and in 1881 there were said to be 113 in one room. Again this is not surprising as the population of the village had again spectacularly increased from 1155 in 1871 to 2044 in 1881. Something clearly had to be done and in 1882 £4000 was borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board for the erection of new schools. By 1883 the new Board School had been completed and the old school was handed back to the Wingerworth Colliery Company. It was used until 1887 as a technical school by the Colliery Company but it then closed for good and eventually became incorporated in the Miners Welfare. The 1883 Board School is still in use as the village school.

Full Circle

In the closing years of the century the next great 'revolution' in the population and form of the village came with the opening of Hardwick and Williamthorpe collieries, the third generation of collieries in the parish. The northern part of the parish was changed beyond recognition with the development of the colliery villages of Holmewood and Williamthorpe: the population increased from 2973 in 1901 to 4667 in 1921, and the corresponding number of houses from 549 to 984. The population continued to increase over the 20th century, but betwen 1961 and 1971 it fell from 8012 to 7477, reflecting the decline of coal mining in the village as the exposed coalfield was exhausted.

Coal mining has now ceased, so in less than a century and a half the village has been through the full circle of development, exploitation and exhaustion, and it now begins a new career as a predominantly dormitory village.

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Book Notes by D.V. Fowkes

Peakland Lead Mines and Miners by H.M. Parker and L. Willies: Moorland Publishing: £1.95

This latest lead-mining volume from Moorland is an excellent introduction to the lore, language and landscape of the lead-mining industry, as indeed one would expect from a volume by two of the leading figures among the lead-mining fraternity. The text is built around 87 well-chosen plates, many of them previously unpublished. The book also has the unusual virtue of not dwelling entirely on the past, bringing the story right up to date with photographs of the Ladywash Mine at Eyam and Middleton Mine. Yet another worthwhile addition to any lead-mining bibliography and a must for visitors who want to learn to understand the lead-mining landscape.

Curiosities of the Peak District by Frank Rodgers: Moorland Publishing: £2.95

This book arose from a series by the author entitled 'County Curiosities' published in the Derbyshire Advertiser over a period of five years. Most places of interest in the county have somehow found their way into the 163 'curiosities' and any visitor to the county will find it a handy source of all manner of historical and topographical information,mixed in with folklore, myth and legend where appropriate. As one would expect in a book by Frank Rodgers, the photographs are of a uniformly high quality.

A History of Shirland and Higham by Gladwyn Turbutt: Published by Ogston Estates: available from the Ogston Estates Office, Higham. (Tel: Alfreton 2045) £6.50 (postage and packing extra). 308 pp 43 illustrations. A beautifully produced companion volume to Mr. Turbutt's earlier history of Ogston. A full review will appear in a later Miscellany.