Rutland Record
The Rutland Local History and Record Society

The Society is formed from the union in June 1991 of the Rutland Local History Society, founded in the 1930s, and the Rutland Record Society, founded in 1979. The Society is a Registered Charity, and its aim is the advancement of the education of the public in all aspects of the history of the ancient county of Rutland and its immediate area.

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Enquiries relating to the Society's activities, such as membership, editorial matters, historic buildings, or programme of events, should be addressed to the appropriate Officer of the Society. The Society welcomes new members, and hopes to encourage them to participate in the Society's activities at all levels, and to submit the results of their researches, where appropriate, for publication by the Society. The address of the Society is c/o The Rutland County Museum, Catmo Street, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW, telephone Oakham (0572) 723654.
Contributions and editorial correspondence should be sent to the Editor, Rutland County Museum, Catmos Street, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HW. An information sheet for contributors is available.
EDITORIAL

The Rutland Local History and Record Society

During the last year, negotiations have taken place between the Rutland Record Society and the Rutland Local History Society which have culminated in the merging of the two Societies. At an Extraordinary General Meeting on 6th June 1991, the Record Society voted without dissent to wind itself up and to transfer all its assets, and its members, to the Local History Society - which had, in its turn, agreed to a change of title and constitution to reflect the wider interests of the enlarged Society. It seemed appropriate that the senior of the two Societies should be the one to continue in being and to foster their now united interests and activities.

All those concerned with the merger believe that with its greater membership the Rutland Local History and Record Society will be able to represent the historical interests of the ancient county of Rutland with a stronger voice, and the Council of the RRS and the Committee of the RLHS have been grateful to the Societies' members for their support.

The new Committee is determined to continue the publication of the annual journal, the Rutland Record, and of such other occasional publications as it can, to the same high standard. It will continue to work for the preservation of all types of records and archives, ephemera, and photographs of Rutland, and will continue to support the work of the Rutland County Museum in conjunction with the Friends of the Museum and the members of the Rutland Field Research Group for Archaeology and History. It looks forward to continuing good relationships with the Leicestershire Record Office.

The Society will also continue the work of the RLHS in monitoring planning applications in Rutland, especially where they affect listed or historic buildings and conservation areas, and has established a Sub-Committee to do so. Many of these are for small-scale developments or alterations about which little need be said, but others would bring about undesirable changes in character or use where representations on behalf of the Society have to be made. Fortunately, few present problems on such a scale as those for Burley-on-the-Hill, whose history formed the subject of the tenth anniversary issue of the Rutland Record, and whose future will be the subject of a public enquiry while this issue is in press.

In the same field, the Society will continue to be associated with the George Phillips Award, formerly presented annually through the Rutland District Council jointly with the RLHS for a building whose construction or restoration is seen as the most historically sympathetic.

To its members, the Society will continue to offer not just the Rutland Record but a continuing programme of activities - lectures, excursions and visits - such as have already proved their worth. Members are encouraged to take an active part in these events, and to advocate membership of the Society to their friends and acquaintances of like interests. Through these activities and publications, the Society will also be able to keep members whose family roots lie in Rutland, but now live further afield, in touch with their home county.

This emphasises the fact that the charitable aim of the Society is centred on the identity of Rutland as a historical entity. The loss of county status in 1974, and whatever unknown alterations the changing face of local government may bring in the near future, cannot eradicate a thousand years of history. The 'Roteland' which formed the dowry of the queens of later Anglo-Saxon England will not be lost in a moment through the pushing of parliamentary pens.

Talking of pens - blue ones, that is - this issue of the Rutland Record is the first which, though assembled and prepared for the printer by Bryan Waites, has not been seen through to publication by him. After twelve years, the Society's founding Honorary Editor has decided that eleven annual journals, two research volumes and several occasional publications are enough for any man. This is the Society's loss, for it has taken great pride and pleasure in the reputation for its publications which Bryan Waites has achieved. The variety of subjects covered, their academic value, and their general interest, have earned many favourable comments. It was entirely appropriate that one of the first acts of the newly enlarged Society should be to elect Bryan Waites to honorary membership in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the achievement of its aims.

Contributors

Anthony Squires is a part-time tutor for Leicester University Department of Adult Education. His particular interest is local landscapes and he is currently working on the history and ecology of the ancient woodlands and medieval parks of Leicestershire and Rutland. He contributed to Charnwood Forest, A Changing Landscape, Sycamore Press, 1981, and (with W. Humphrey) The Medieval Parks of Charnwood Forest, Sycamore Press, 1986.

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Sue Howlett trained as a teacher and taught English in comprehensive schools for ten years. She studied for a degree in English as a mature external student of London University and is now working part-time for an M.A. in Historical Studies at Leicester University. At present she is Lecturer in English at Stamford College.

John Barber is the author of the Story of Oakham School, Sycamore Press, 1983, and has made distinguished contributions to all the Rutland historical societies as well as Rutland County Museum for fifty years.

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Brian Hornsey is retired and lives in Stamford. He has a fascination for the history of cinema and has written a great deal about this topic not only with reference to this region but also nationally.

T.H. McK. Clough has been Keeper of Rutland County Museum since 1974. He has edited two volumes on prehistoric stone implements, and has contributed archaeological, numismatic and historical papers to various learned journals.

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Flitteris and Cold Overton: Two Medieval Deer Parks

Fig. 1. A lady hunting, AD 1338-44, based on Bodleian MS Misc 263

Deer parks were a common feature of the landscape of medieval England. They were areas of countryside, usually wooded waste or land of poor agricultural quality, set aside by the crown or the lord of the manor for the retention and hunting of deer. Enclosure was usually effected by means of a pale, consisting of a deep and broad ditch together with an outer bank on which was placed a strong wooden fence. At various places modifications of the pale called deer leaps might be made so that wild deer could enter but could not leave the park.

The first such enclosures were small and noticeably rounded in outline so that the expense of establishing and maintaining the pale could be minimised. With the passing of time some parks expanded to reflect the power, wealth and aspirations of their owners. Many lords saw their creations as integral parts of their manorial economies and aimed to make the parks at least self-financing. This was achieved by setting aside certain areas for the production of wood and timber, for grazing by controlled numbers of domestic livestock and even for the extraction of stone or turf.

Most parks were created between the years 1200 and 1350. Professor Cantor in his gazetteer has listed all the known sites for each English county including a total of fifty-five for Leicestershire and Rutland. Many of those he names did not survive the great social and economic changes which followed the arrival of the Black Death in 1348, after which only the crown and the richest nobles could afford to maintain parks in the traditional manner.

The former parks of Cold Overton, in Knossington parish, and Flitteris, part of the parish of Oakham, are of more than usual interest to the student of medieval landscape. In the first place they are adjacent, the former in part surrounded by the latter, a very unusual feature. Moreover they are separated by the former Leicestershire/Rutland county boundary which follows the western edge of Flitteris and runs between the two pale. Closely associated with this wandering line were the fourteenth century metes and bounds of the Royal Forest of Rutland, also known as Leighfield Forest, which was established in the twelfth century, in part of the woodland recorded by Domesday Book. Examination of these different yet interlinked elements allows us to suggest, at least in outline, possible origins for the two parks in question.

There is no doubt about the date of the creation of Flitteris Park, for in 1250 Henry III granted to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the right to enclose with a ditch and a hedge the wood called Flitteris at Oakham. This was stated to be within the king's Forest of Leighfield and the monarch retained the right to pasture his own beasts in the park at will. The jurors of an inquisition held two years later, however, said on oath that 'the wood is outside the said Forest bordering the county of Leicester.' They added that it was 'above the edge of the Forest and is far separated from the large covert ... by one league.' Seventeen years later the Park is named in a perambulation of the Forest of Rutland, the boundaries of which 'divided Flitteris from the wood of Knossington.' A little later in 1278, a commission was appointed to determine who had taken deer from Flitteris Park without the lord's consent. Inquiries of this kind were far from unusual. The illegal hunting of deer in parks was a serious and widespread problem in thirteenth and fourteenth century England.

An inquisition of 1300, taken after the death of Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, records two parks, both with deer, for his manor of Oakham. One was called 'Flyterys' and the other 'Little Park.' The latter was near the town of Oakham and need not concern us here. Both formed part of the dower of the Earl's widow until her death in 1312. Thereafter, a succession of other absentee landlords and royal relatives held the manor and park until the early fifteenth century and provided ample opportunities for malefactors to hunt illegally at Flitteris.

An extent (valuation) of the manor of Oakham taken in 1340 stated that Flitteris Park contained one hundred acres of land but lacked [cuttable] underwood. Little Park contained 40 acres. The following year a second inquiry records that the park of 'Fletys' was between the park of Cold Overton and the Royal Forest yet outside the Royal Forest.

The Inquisition Post Mortem (1361) of William de Bohun, taken twenty or so years after the first appearance of the Black Death, noted that Fletys was surrounded by a hedge and still contained deer. The Little Park, in contrast, was surrounded by a stone wall. The cost of providing three leagues of boundary hedge for Fletys was twenty shillings and the wages of Richard Baynbrigge, the parker of both parks, were 60s 8d. In 1372 William Flore of Oakham was paid to provide 'for the palisade of 160 acres enclosed within the Park of Flyterys.' A year later a lodge at Flitteris is mentioned.

Two inquisitions in the reign of Richard II again mention both parks. In 1388 the value of the agistment (grazing) of domestic stock in Flitteris was £4 yearly and was demised to John Slygh, the parker and keeper of the warren there. Two years on the value of the same agistment had risen by ten
Three years after Bosworth Field (1485) the Duchess Earl Mowbray, died holding Cold Overton Park. In 1433 John, eighth ion'.

found that the king's deer had 'frequently repaired there [Segrave's park] in large numbers and could not get out again by reason of the method of enclo­
sure'. Segrave, however, was pardoned and was informed he would not be troubled again, 'p rovided the enclosures were amended after the proper fash­
were confident it would not. They reported that the

The origins of Cold Overton Park are much less clear since the documentary record is less abundant and the manorial history more complex. The Park first appears in the records in a perambulation of the Forest of Leighfield of 1226-27, taken prior to the disafforestation in 1235 of that part of the Forest which lay in Leicestershire. At this time the manor was in the hands of the Tatershalls to whom it had come from the Pantulf family in marriage at the end of the twelfth century. It seems most likely that it was Robert de Tatershall (d.1249) who established Cold Overton Park. He was at the same time Lord of Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire, where shortly before 1226 he established the Park of Breedon.

The perambulation of Rutland Forest in 1269 also names the Park, stating that the boundary of the Royal Forest ran from Langham 'as far as the park of Overton and from thence between Flitteris and the wood of Knossington.'19 Sometime after this date the manor and Park were held separately, the for­mer remaining with the Tatershalls (to 1306) and the latter passing to the crown which granted it to the Segraves. In 1301 John de Segrave complained that he had once again been the victim of illegal hunting in Cold Overton Park.20 Forty years later the crown granted John's grandson permission to build a deer leap. The jurors of the inquisition set up to determine whether or not such action would prejudice the stock of royal deer in Leighfield Forest were confident it would not. They reported that the Park was 'outside the bounds of the Forest of Rut­land and is far removed from the nearest covert by one and a half leagues on the north side.'21 However, Segrave did not follow the terms of the licence and the jurors had made a grave error. By 1348 it was found that the king's deer had 'frequently repaired there [Segrave's park] in large numbers and could not get out again by reason of the method of enclo­sure'. Segrave, however, was pardoned and was informed he would not be troubled again, 'provided the enclosures were amended after the proper fash­ion'.22 From the last of the Segraves the Park passed by marriage to the Mowbrays, later Earls of Notting­ham and Dukes of Norfolk. In 1433 John, eighth Earl Mowbray, died holding Cold Overton Park.23

Three years after Bosworth Field (1485) the Duchess of Norfolk held the Park but whether or not it con­tained deer at this time is unknown.24

At the times of their creation both Parks were typ­i­cally sited at the edge of their respective manors and we are fortunate that the landscape of the Parks has changed little relative to that of their surround­ings. The survival of considerable stretches of banks and ditches along the original lines of both pales also enables us to state beyond all reasonable doubt the precise areas originally enclosed in Cold Overton park and almost all of that of Flitteris. That the pale line of Flitteris park partly encloses and accommod­ates that of Cold Overton, the older of the two, to produce a narrow track of 'no-man's land' between the two, adds considerably to the interest of the area.

The boundaries of Cold Overton park extend for a little over two miles and enclose almost two hundred acres. They also occupy noticeably unfavourable topographical lines for retaining deer. Park construction usually involved a careful siting of the pale so that it followed the top of a slope, even a modest one, in order to maximise the efforts which hunted deer would have to make in order to escape. At Cold Overton much of the boundary is sited on downward slopes or at best on flat land. Only along the south east border, along its line with Flitteris, does the pale line attain real topographical advantage. It must be pointed out, however, that in view of the rolling nature of the terrain it would be difficult to improve the general line. In addition, an examina­tion of the agricultural productivity of the soils of the Park shows them to be in no way inferior to those of most of the rest of the parish. Under these circum­stances one may reach no firm conclusion regarding the course of the Knossington to Oakham road which runs along the northern edge of the Park. The little field evidence there is suggests the road's present line is more or less that present at the time of the establishment of the Park's boundaries, that is the Park's northern boundary was determined by the line of the road. The Park's southern perimeter is altogether a more ancient line, being a parish, Hund­red and Deanery boundary.

It may be asked if the 'bulge' eastwards of the county boundary around the edge of Cold Overton Park was created by the formation of the Park in the early thirteenth century or whether, as was believed to be the case at Borough Park on the edge of Charn­wood Forest, the Park's creator used and adapted a more ancient existing earthwork.25 The Victoria County History for Rutland suggests a very early origin for the feature, claiming the discovery of pre-Norman artefacts at the site.26 Modern opinion how­ever doubts the nature of the finds.27 Ancient site or otherwise, the area occupied by this 'bulge' might be considered to occupy a good defensive position since it commands extensive views to the south and east.

The evidence provided by a brief examination of the botanical content of the hedges of the parks tends to confirm the long-established nature of each perimeter.28 At Flitteris the 'hedge' of 1361 was prob­ably a dead hedge and the 'palisade' of 1372 the tra­ditional wooden fence. The present live hedges were
Fig. 2. The two parks are seen from the south. Lady Wood and probably Cold Overton Park Wood are remnants, much-changed in nature, of woodland recorded for this area by Domesday Book (1086) as belonging to the manor of Oakham. The close juxtaposition of the two parks conceals their different origins and subsequent histories. Much of the area covered by the photograph is rich in historical associations and at one time or another was part of the Royal Forest of Rutland.
probably late medieval replacements for these two features. The internal boundaries of the Park are of a much more recent date. The perimeter hedges of Cold Overton Park also appear to be late medieval and the internal boundaries probably date from some time before 1600.

The pale line of Flitteris Park is three miles in length and encloses an area of about two hundred and twenty acres. The topographical advantage it occupies varies very much but, as with Cold Overton, is generally very poor. It is strongest along the eastern edge and where it parallels that of Cold Overton Park; but it is very weak along the southern and south-western perimeter. Along the northern edge it has disappeared entirely and the line, wherever it ran, must have been equally unsuitable. There are no archaeological features within the Park which can be interpreted with confidence. A little ridge and furrow is apparent to the north-west and to the south of the present farmhouse, which itself is a nineteenth century structure. Part of the farm buildings cover the site of a much earlier house which probably marks the site of the park keeper's lodge. A number of gullies towards the north-east of the Park may indicate former internal boundaries of compartments which contained woodland. It is more likely however that these features simply reflect natural drainage patterns. A prominent ditch and bank running from west to east near the supposed northern boundary of the park is certainly a natural line. It was enlarged earlier this century for drainage improvement.\(^9\) Whether or not it was originally adopted as the northern boundary is not known.

The little ridge and furrow within Flitteris Park is to be contrasted with that in the surrounding area, especially to the south and south-east. Here fragments of the pattern of ploughing survive, making it clear that medieval tillage respected the Park's boundaries. Elsewhere, the disappearance of ridge and furrow makes interpretation difficult. What signs there are suggest the limits of ploughing to the open field of Braunston had not reached the Park boundary by the date of the enclosure of the wood of Flitteris. The much later realignment of that part of the Knossington to Braunston road in Braunston parish dates from the Parliamentary Enclosure of 1807. The route of that part of the same road in Knossington parish is of a much earlier date and not later than 1675, when the parish was wholly enclosed.

From this brief summary of the available evidence we must now attempt to account for the origins of the two Parks. It is almost certain that Cold Overton contained some woodland at the time of its creation. Cold Overton Park Wood is first recorded in 1658 when it occupied much the same acreage and site that it does today.\(^{30}\) The records of its flora tend to support its ancient status. Flitteris Park was created by the simple measure of emparking an existing enclosed wood. Although woodland was present throughout the medieval period there has been none since the eighteenth century and there are no flora records. The writer for Leicestershire, and Rackham for East Anglia, have established that the great majority of named woodlands which survived to the mid thirteenth century were most likely to have been survivors of the destruction that characterised woodland history through the one hundred and fifty years following 1086.\(^{31}\) Since useful documentary evidence for our area is almost non-existent for that period we must therefore look at the records of Domesday Book.

The first consideration is the fact that in 1086 Rutland did not exist as a single, independent unit. Indeed, it was not absorbed into the regular shire system until some time in the twelfth century.\(^{32}\) Certain Domesday Book holdings attributed to Oakham manor actually lay in Leicestershire, reflecting pre-Conquest social and economic organisation. A boundary dividing Leicestershire from lands in Rutland must have existed but the details of this are unknown. There is no obvious topographical evidence for its line in the region of the two later Parks, except perhaps around the 'bulge' of Cold Overton Park, as already noted.

Domesday Book for Rutland records two distinct areas of woodland, one for Knossington and one for Oakham. Using the middle figure of the procedure adopted by Rackham, these occupied approximately four acres of 'woodland' and circa six hundred acres of 'wood pasture' respectively.\(^{33}\) Domesday Book for Leicestershire records a further seventeen acres of woodland for Knossington. Leaving aside the two small areas for the present, the most important task is to locate the huge acreage of wood pasture. From a close examination of Domesday Book and the meagre records of topographical interest for the manor of Oakham and its outliers, it can be shown that this huge area of wood pasture straddled the pre-1974 county boundary in the region where the two Parks were to be established a century and a half or more later. This region includes the site of the present Lady Wood.

The results of the writer's research into the history of wood pasture recorded by Domesday Book for other parts of Leicestershire have shown that during the years 1100 - 1230 large areas disappeared in one way or another. Some was destroyed for ploughing by felling and grubbing up of stumps. More frequently it was overgrazed and otherwise plundered over a longer period to the point where it disappeared as useful woodland. At the same time some areas of wood pasture were conserved by purposeful and deliberate enclosure. The fate of the wood pasture in the area of the two parks was probably no different. Rackham and the present writer have noted for their respective areas a strong link between the creation of deer parks and woodland which was well established.\(^{34}\)

The wood of Flitteris, it is suggested, was carved out of one of the more valuable portions of the wood pasture present in the twelfth century. Cold Overton Park was created at a later date from what had been another part of the same wood pasture. The name 'Flitteris' means disputed woodland. This suggests
the early division of manorial woodland was far from equitable, although the participants involved in the squabbings are of little importance here.

The creation of the Royal Forest by Henry I in the early twelfth century also supports this view. The wooded habitat of the deer was disappearing and with it the opportunities for hunting. Precisely the same needs for positive conservation measures were present in Charnwood Forest a century or so later. The establishment of the Royal Forest over so much of Rutland was a heavy-handed response to the royal demand for hunting. That considerable areas of this Royal Forest were treeless by the early thirteenth century is clear from various sources including the Inquiry of 1252, when Flitteris was one and a half miles from the nearest large wood.

The terms of the perambulation of 1226, taken prior to the disafforestation in 1235 of that part of Rutland Forest which lay in Leicestershire, make it clear that the wood of Flitteris had certainly been enclosed by this time and that the western edge of the Wood was following the county boundary. Whether or not it was still within the Royal Forest in the mid thirteenth century is not clear as the evidence is conflicting. The Patent Roll entry of 1250 maintains it was. The jurors of the Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum in 1252 reported to the contrary. Further confusion occurs from the perambulation of 1269 when the boundary is stated to have run 'between Flitteris and the Wood of Knossington'. It seems most likely that the Park had left the Forest by 1252 (and possibly as early as 1235) and that the details of the later perambulation were the result of slipshod surveying and repetition of early inaccuracies. Such occurrences are known from research on other Royal Forests.

The remaining feature of significance requiring comment is Lady Wood. This was once more extensive than at present. All the available evidence, particularly the patterns of fields to the west and north and the botanical nature of their boundaries, provides firm indications of assarting from woodland during the medieval period. Lady Wood, the 'wood of Knossington' of 1269, is therefore a remnant of a once larger woodland which bordered Flitteris at the time of the latter's enclosure as a wood. This, we have seen, was early in the twelfth century. It is apparent, therefore, that Lady Wood is a remnant, much modified in nature over the years, of the huge Domesday Wood of Oakham. Of the two smaller woods also recorded for Knossington and probably discrete entities at that time there is no trace.

The origins both Flitteris and Cold Overton Parks reach back far beyond their first recorded dates. The boundaries of Flitteris are essentially those of a wood demarcated in the early twelfth century as a measure to conserve some of the fast-disappearing woodland recorded by Domesday Book for the manor.

Fig. 3. Coursing the Stag from Gaston Phoebus The Hunting Book (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale)
of Oakham. The boundaries of the wood became those of the Park and these endure as landscape features to this day. The boundaries of Cold Overton Park, on the other hand, took shape later. Here the manorial lord established a park around a small surviving wood on the edge of his manor, but on a landscape which offered little topographical advantage for pale construction and which was probably used for some form of agriculture. Its early demise as a park also reflects its lack of royal connections.

It is hoped that this brief account may stimulate more research into the medieval landscape of Leicfield Forest and beyond before the tide of current change sweeps away the surviving field evidence.

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In assessing the documentary sources available for the history of any area, it is difficult not to make reference to parish records. It is to these the family historian turns for details of his ancestor; it is to these the local historian turns for details of local government and insight into the daily life which it regulated. Where a parish archive has been lost, the local history of the area is correspondingly impoverished. There are many such sad examples and these make all the more significant those parishes where a good series of records have survived. Occasionally, as a welcome addition, one or two unusual documents preserved by a happy accident or some historically-minded parish officer, can further enrich a parish collection. One such case is the records of the village of Preston, a parish of some 1,207 acres about two miles north of Uppingham. The records, held at Leicestershire Record Office, constitute a collection of considerable interest and importance.

It is to legislation of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century that we owe most of the features of a parish-based administrative system which was to survive with little change well into the nineteenth century. One product of Tudor legislation still survives today in the form of the parish register - probably the most frequently consulted document in any Record Office. The first mandate ordering the keeping of registers was made by Thomas Cromwell in 1538. Under the penalty of payment of 3s 4d towards the repair of the church for non-observance, every clergyman was instructed to record details of weddings, christenings and burials conducted within his parish. Unfortunately the mandate neglected to state how such details were to be preserved. As a consequence many entries were made on paper, often kept loose, and few examples now exist. The obvious deficiencies of this system were addressed in 1598 when a further mandate stipulated that each parish should purchase a parchment register and copy into it all the names from older books. The wording of the mandate suggested all names should be copied out but emphasised especial attention to those from the first year of the reign of Elizabeth i.e. 1558. It is as a result of this measure that most parish registers commence not in 1538 but in 1558, since few clergymen troubled themselves to go back further.

The surviving parish registers for Preston commence a little later in 1560 and they run from that date up to the present day. There is only one significant gap, that for the period 1640 to 1649. It is quite common for such lacunae to have occurred at a time when the country was enduring the turmoil of the English Civil War. Indeed, missing records are equally common for the Interregnum period when custody of parish registers and responsibility for registration was briefly taken from the parish priest and given to a new secular official.

Early registers, written in Latin, can require some skill in palaeography but any effort is well rewarded. The interest of the parish register to a family historian is obvious and it is for this purpose that the register is most often searched. It is by far the best source for information on the population before the first national census was conducted in 1801, and as such is of vital interest both to the historian and the student of population studies. Numbers of births and deaths extracted from the register clearly chart times of prosperity and distress for the community. Occasionally too, one is grateful for small insights and historical notes added by the compiler of the register. Often a clergyman would record a significant local event in the register, possibly because it was the record closest to hand or perhaps because he was conscious of the register's significance for future generations. It was probably more prosaic considerations which led to the recording of accounts for enclosing tithe allotment in 1774 and a memorandum of food prices in 1795 and 1796 on the inside of the cover of the Preston register for 1735-1812.

In theory, parish records older than the registers should exist in the form of churchwardens' accounts, since the office of churchwarden emerged in early medieval times. In practice, the survival of records for this period is rare. There were usually two churchwardens, elected for a year by the minister and parishioners. Originally they were responsible solely for the fabric of the church and supervision both of the practical aspects of the church service and the good behaviour of the parishioners. From Tudor times, however, the office acquired an increasing number of civil duties. A good example of this process is an Act of 1532 which enjoined each parish to provide a net for catching pests like rooks and crows. It was the churchwardens who were instructed to provide a fund for payments of bounties. No better impression of the varying duties of the churchwarden can be gained than by consulting the churchwardens' accounts which survive for Preston for the periods 1596-1792 and 1821-1921.

The accounts illustrated, for 1626, list receipts of money from church-owned land. References to the 'balkes in ye wheat = feild' and 'ye 8 butts' allude to
the ridges of the Open Field system still prevalent at this time. Expenditure on church fabric includes payment to the bell founder of Stamford for casting a bell-brass and payment for mending the steeple door lock. Oversight of church services involved regular purchases of bread and wine for communion at special services and even the payment of 8d to Thomas Dalby for 'whipping dogges out of ye church'. Twice a year it was the duty of the churchwardens to attend visitations by the Ordinary (or Bishop's delegate) and there present any matters at fault in the parish - that is, problems relating to the fabric of the church and the morality of its parishioners. Thus expenses include items for attendance at visitations at Uppingham and Weldon (Northants.) together with payments to the 'apparitor' (or official of the Diocesan Court) for preparation of documents. Receipts of payments for use of the parish bull over which the churchwardens had supervision and money paid out for the killing of six hedgehogs and scouring the washpit recall again the many civil responsibilities of the office. There are also payments out for deserving causes such as a 'town in Devonshire that was burnt' and 'one that had been in captivity by ye Turk'.

The burden of the responsibilities of the churchwardens was increased enormously by the Poor Law Act of 1601. The Act was an attempt, originally envisaged as temporary but destined to last for over two centuries, to tackle the growing problem of maintenance of the poor. In medieval times, dependence upon the charity of churches and monastic institutions had been heavy. Repressive measures, ordering branding and even capital punishment for the offence of begging, had been particularly savage. Under the new Act the parish was for the first time made responsible for the relief of its poor. Churchwardens and two or three substantial householders were to be nominated annually as overseers of the poor with the specific duty of maintaining and setting to work the needy of the parish. Funding was to be provided by taxation of every inhabitant - the
parish poor rate. It was to be this system which was to remain largely unchanged until the Poor Law Act of 1834 finally transferred responsibility for the poor from the parish to the Poor Law Union.

In Preston's case there are overseers' accounts extant for the period 1646-1792 and 1796. There are also overseers' disbursement books for most of the eighteenth century and the period 1821-1836. The accounts illustrated list payments made by the overseers in 1651 for such items as two smocks for 'Hudson'; mending William Sheild's shoes and washing his clothes and a 'load of Wood' for Henry Windsworth. A small glimpse is afforded of the less fortunate of Preston's inhabitants and the system which strove, however clumsily, to help them.

From the point when the Poor Law Act imposed responsibility for the poor upon the parish, it became a matter of increasing concern to limit those entering the parish who were likely to become eligible for poor relief. Householders, understandably, were ever keen to keep the poor rate as low as possible. To meet this problem, an Act of 1662 established the system of settlement and removal whereby any stranger entering a parish was liable to be removed by the Justices of the Peace unless he rented a tenement of £10 or could provide a security. Any temporary migrant worker was obliged to bring with him a certificate from his own parish which agreed to accept him back if necessary. Such certificates were carefully filed in the parish chest. Those found begging were liable to be arrested and questioned before a Justice as to their parish of legal settlement. The results of these examinations were recorded and carefully filed whilst the unfortunate vagrant was forcibly removed to his parish of settlement - usually his place of birth or place where he had served an apprenticeship. Such examinations often provide fascinating biographical information about poorer members of society who might otherwise have disappeared without trace. They provide a useful insight into the extent to which people moved around the county. In the example shown here, John Biggs, having been arrested for begging in Chipping Barnet near London in 1771, stated Preston as his place of birth and was duly ordered to be removed there. A sad note at the bottom which records that Biggs died en route between Ketton and North Luffenham highlights the often inhumane treatment of the poor which the Act dictated.

So far, this article has confined itself to documents which are familiar in many parish collections. A less likely survival amongst the records of Preston is a collection of demands for provisions and taxes levied upon the inhabitants of Preston during the English Civil War. The papers were found in the parish chest and at some stage mounted in a scrapbook. One of the earliest documents is a writ of 1635 directing the constables of Preston to levy the sum of
£19 from ‘the town’ (except the parson) as part of a total amount of £1000 demanded from the County of Rutland as ship money. Those delaying or denying payment are to have their goods sold or be committed to gaol. Evidently the threat was sufficient, for the payment was met swiftly and the county suffered a similar levy in the following year. Once the Civil War had broken out, the situation clearly did not ease for the inhabitants of Preston. The burden of maintaining the Parliamentarian army in the area fell heavily upon the locals and there are a succession of receipts for taxes paid towards soldiers’ pay, colours and drums. One particular tax towards the upkeep of the army is levied at a rate of 6s 8d per yard land. The names of the unfortunate inhabitants forced to meet the tax are listed along with their contributions. Illustrated here is a note issued to the constables of Preston on 15 June 1645. It demands
immediate despatch of four quarters of oats, beans or peas to 'Mistress Street's' house in Hallaton where a regiment was quartered, concluding with the chilling instruction: 'hereof faile not at your peril'. It is interesting to find the impact of great national events upon the local community so clearly documented.

It is fortunate indeed that such a rich and varied collection of parish records has survived for Preston and it is certainly impossible to do justice to such a collection within a short article such as this. There are many other records both in the Preston collection and that of other parishes in Rutland which deserve attention and examination in depth. It is to be hoped that the example of but a few of Preston's records can serve to highlight the great wealth and value of the historical information which is to be yielded by the parish archive.

Fig. 5. Demand for army provisions, 1645 (LRO DE 2461/135)

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For further information on parish administration and its records see The Parish Chest by W.E. Tate.
On the morning of Sunday, 16th October, 1887, Edward Thring went as usual to his beloved chapel to celebrate Matins with his pupils. This was to be one of the regular Sundays in the term when Thring would deliver a short, snappy sermon, but part way through the service he was seen to be in pain. After resting in his chair in the chancel, Thring signalled for his chaplain to take charge of the proceedings: calmly, refusing offers of assistance, he walked down the nave and returned to his bed in School House, leaving colleagues and pupils to continue the service, and to wonder at what had happened. For nearly a week Thring fought with death, as about him school work carried on in subdued tones; but on the following Saturday, 23rd October, 1887, his life eventually slipped away.

Uppingham School must surely have a prominent place in the history of Rutland. It has a proud tradition, stretching back more than 400 years to its founding by Archdeacon Johnson in 1584, but the school that we know today owes its greatest debt to its second founder, Edward Thring. He came to this obscure Rutland grammar school when it numbered only a dozen or so mainly day pupils, and when whatever local reputation it had was comfortably upstaged by Archdeacon Johnson's other school in Oakham. How things were to change in the next thirty-four years! By the time of Thring's death, Uppingham had become a 300-strong boarding school with a national reputation, and the headmaster was an oft-consulted educational authority.

So it is right and proper that Thring's work at Uppingham should be of interest to the Rutland Record Society; and it is also right and proper that it should form the subject of the Bryan Matthews Lecture. Bryan spent almost all of his life, as boy and man, in the county, and wrote that most distinguished county history, The Book of Rutland. Generations of Uppingham saw a different side of him, for he was each old boy's link with the old school. It was Bryan, of course, who was commissioned to produce the school's history, By God's Grace, published in 1984 as part of the quatercentenary celebrations. Thring's story is also very much in the tradition of the indomitable spirit of Rutland - exuding an independence and initiative far exceeding the expectations of those London-based bureaucrats intent on easy uniformity. Multum in parvo neatly sums up this diminutive headmaster, whose influence is now felt world-wide; and his tiny school, which now stands proudly in the first rank.

Thring began his long headmastership on 10th September, 1853, with the diplomatic innovation of a whole holiday and a cricket match with his few pupils, a match in which Thring later recalled he scored fifteen with some good swinging hits. No doubt the innings did delight his pupils - and it certainly laid the foundations of the school's proud tradition in the game - but the first years were not to be so idyllic as that first September day. Thring was determined to work the foundation to a greater efficiency than before and to begin at once his educational experiment. This experiment, however, nearly failed completely on a number of occasions: anarchy ruled and the boys did not readily take to his ideas of firm discipline and schoolboy loyalty; the newly appointed masters did not always comply with Thring's dictates, so there was a rapid turnover of staff; and, almost to a man, the governors and trustees took no interest in the advancement of the school.

Gradually, though, success came, and by midsummer 1857 the school was bigger than it had ever been before, and was doubling in size every two years. Trusted staff - 'fellow workers' as he termed them - were now at his side; the headmaster was firmly in command; and the 'great educational experiment', as he loved to call it, was in full swing. It was a unique experiment, and, according to John Wolfenden, a revolutionary one. Wolfenden, later Lord Wolfenden, had been the young Headmaster of Uppingham in the 1930s, and in 1953 he returned to deliver a masterly assessment of Thring's work as part of the celebrations to mark the centenary of his appointment. Thring's work in the early years may have gone unrecognised by his contemporaries, but by the year of his death, and ever since, both his
name and the name of the school that he gave life to were known throughout the land. 'No school has ever impressed me like Uppingham', Thring was told by a visiting headmistress in 1887: 'Other schools may be bodies corporate, but Uppingham has a soul.'

There is no evidence to suggest that Thring had a blueprint for a school crackling in his pocket on the day that he took up his headmastership, for he only gave serious and urgent thought to a career when he became engaged to be married in the summer of 1852. Thring was part way through a European tour when he was diverted to Rome at his parents' bidding. His elder brother was set to make a fool of himself by proposing marriage to a clearly unsuitable German lady. Thring - ever the opportunist - solved the problem by marrying her himself. It proved to be a long and happy marriage, and Marie's contribution to Uppingham life was to be immense. Now, as Thring turned his thoughts to headmastering,

Fig. 2. The original Schoolroom (Stamford Mercury)

Uppingham was the sort of school he would have been looking for. It was small, run-down, and ready for an enterprising headmaster. It was also isolated, always a good quality for an experimental site, but accessible. Railways were approaching Uppingham from a number of directions, and these would be vital if the school was to grow beyond its local Rutland needs and resources. So Thring might have chosen 'an Uppingham', but he did not have a blueprint. His later years shown him to be a pragmatist: if a new idea or an old method suggested itself, and was seen to contribute to the overall aims, then it was adopted and absorbed into the system. It is in this way that Thring's educational thoughts and practices can be traced through the thirty-one years of his life before he came to Uppingham. It was in these years that he formed the ideal of 'True Life'; it was after 1853 that he put the ideal into practice.

The 1850s were an era of turmoil, of progress, of change. The Duke of Wellington had recently died, so severing long conservative links with Georgian times; Europe was alive with revolution, perhaps giving a taste of what the future had in store. The Great Exhibition had come and gone; Marx was busily scribbling in the British Museum; Manning had joined the Church of Rome but Newman had yet to follow; Maurice was inspiring the Christian Socialists in London; Dickens was finishing Bleak House and had written David Copperfield; Kingsley had published Alton Locke and Yeast. The Crimea and the Indian Mutiny, Westward Ho! and Tom Brown's Schooldays, all were just around the corner. These years saw the making of Victorian England and of all the decades in the nineteenth century this was the one that a wise man would choose to be young in. It was an era when able men became great headmasters, for it is probable that no other period of school history saw so many talented men - intellectually gifted, morally earnest and spiritually convinced - choose schoolmastering as a career. Some, like Benson and Temple, went on into the mainstream of the Church, and eventually to the see of Canterbury; others, like Thring, stayed in their schools.

Thring had enjoyed a country boyhood as the son of a Somerset parson and landowner, he grew up in an area rich in Arthurian legend, and he thrilled to the adventure novels of Scott. He became an able classical scholar at Eton, ending his career there as Captain of School, before passing on to King's College, Cambridge. There six years of quiet study brought him academic honours, a deep reverence for the practice of Christianity, an acquaintance with Christian Socialism, and an enthusiasm for Coleridge, Wordsworth and Tennyson. He resigned his fellowship on becoming ordained, and he began his parish work in the slums of Gloucester. His experiences in the local school of St James's formed a lasting impression - and combined with those from his own schooling, and with later impressions culled as an examiner to Rugby and Eton, to give the substance of the Uppingham experiment. It was glorious work at Gloucester, but it took its toll on his health. Two years were spent convalescing in the Thames Valley: here he took private pupils, served as an examiner, began to write text-books - and then in 1853 began his life's work at Uppingham.

There are three ways in which Thring's work may be regarded as revolutionary - as being so out of step with the fashion of their time to be thought cranky, and so commonplace today as to be thought the norm. Two are aims or principles, the third is a method or a system: all three are closely connected with each other, and all spring from his single-mindedness of purpose. Together they form 'the great educational experiment'.

The first is his insistence that individual attention should be given to every child. It would be unthinkable for an educational system today to be based on any other foundation, but this was not the case in mid-Victorian England. Keate was headmaster of Eton when Thring went up in 1832, and alone he had sole charge of a class of 170 boys, whilst just nine assistant masters were responsible for the other 570 boys in the upper school: only the clever and willing had opportunities to learn, the rest were left to fend for themselves. Life as one of the board-
ing collegers was barbaric; each evening all seventy boys were locked in the Long Chamber, completely without supervision. Here boy government ruled, with the younger boys at the mercy of their elders—and what was true for Eton was true at all the public schools. Thring reacted most positively against what he had experienced as a boy, and what he had found in the large classes at St James's. It was the Gloucester children that gave Thring some of his greatest axioms: 'A mob of boys cannot be educated'; 'The worse the material, the greater the skill of the worker'; 'If these fellows don't learn, it's my fault'; and 'The young cannot be dealt with in herds'.

The question of numbers was crucial: classes at Uppingham were limited to twenty-four, and still are, so that every boy would receive individual attention. Boarding houses were restricted to thirty, so that the family influence should not be over-diluted; and the school should not grow past three hundred, for then the headmaster would not know all his boys well. From this developed the notions that care should be taken to match the master to his class; that separate studies and individual cubicles in the dormitories would bring privacy to boarding school life; and that the team of masters had a pastoral role to play above and beyond the classroom duties. Thring thus rejected mass-living, mass-teaching and mass-production; and recognised the importance of education for each and every individual child.

'The first, second, and third duty of a schoolmaster is to get rid of unpromising subjects'. This was Arnold's rule, and boys at Rugby who did not meet with the headmaster's high standards were summarily expelled. This would not do at Uppingham, and Thring saw to it that a comprehensive programme was sensitively applied. The less intelligent boys needed skilful teachers; the less academically gifted needed a broader curriculum; the less distinguished needed opportunities to develop whatever talents they had; the less obedient would conform in a disciplined community; and the less attractive would flourish in caring hands.

The precept that education must be centred on the child was equally important in moral training. Uppingham was a boy-world where, in Thring's words, it was 'safer to trust much than to trust little'. Discipline was based on the principle that each boy was his brother's keeper, for then public opinion could put down crime. As the school grew in trust-worthiness so Thring gave the boys more responsibility, and soon a prefectorial system was used to magnify the headmaster's influence. A sound moral training was fostered through the homely life of the boarding houses, and here the ladies of the school played a vital role, treating the boys as extensions to their own families; through the mingling together of boys and masters in sports, music and other recreational activities; and in lessons learnt in divinity classes or from sermons in the chapel. Thring saw to it that Uppingham was a Christian school in the fullest sense.

Individual attention was the first point of princi-
temper, never brag' were the unwritten rules that promoted manliness. Thring kept a tight control on the development of games for he sought to keep at bay the heartiness and muscularity that ruled at other schools; by and large he succeeded, and Uppingham generally remained sane about matters athletic.

Natural history in the countryside and gardening at school enhanced the moral experience of a communion with nature; art and architecture were studied for their moral worth, with Ruskin as the guide and Turner the exemplar; the design and decoration of the new school buildings reflected Thring's sympathy for the Platonic principle that a soul absorbs its environment; carpentry and metalwork sought to give honour to manual work; and music acted as a 'genial solvent' that was able to penetrate every aspect of school life and so could help develop a new sense of community. All these non-traditional aspects of Uppingham's curriculum were taught by specially appointed masters, equipped with proper facilities, given time in which to play their part, and seen by those in authority to be important in the life of the boys. The aim was to produce a wholeness and harmony; in school and out of school, in work and in play, in body, intellect and soul.

The education of the whole man and the attention to the individual child are the two central legacies that Thring has left to English education; in their wake came a balanced approach to physical education, art and craft as an integral part of the curriculum, a belief in the educational role of music, the importance of attractive surroundings, and a distrust of assessing education by examinations alone. Thring's third revolutionary input was to devise a school system so that his methods should work more effectively.

Once again this sounds commonplace today when every school has a management structure and an administrative machine, but Thring's experience more than a century ago had shown him that other great schools depended for their success on the skills of great schoolmasters, and that when those masters left the school so the standards dropped. This was what he had found at Rugby: Arnold was clearly an ideal schoolmaster, but the school rested entirely on his personality and not on any concrete system that could be handed on to his successors - 'What personal influence could do, he did. What wise and thoughtful application of means should have done, he did not.' Thring intended not to make the same mistake: 'A man must build his ship, as well as be able to command her' was his maxim. It cannot be claimed that Thring was entirely successful in this respect, for many of his cherished aims and methods were discarded on his death, but it was a bold experiment and it lived on in his most successful publication, Theory and Practice of Teaching. Though some of his ideas concerning the individual child and an all-round education were to be rejected, if only temporarily, the principle that a school should have a sound organisational system was readily and uniformly accepted across the whole spectrum of schools. This represents one of the most enduring initiatives from Thring's Uppingham.

'Machinery, machinery, machinery should be the motto of every good school.' By machinery Thring meant all those factors that would promote excellence so that the system did not solely rest on the talented teacher: the right use of a teacher's talents, the ratio of staff to boys, the arrangements in the boarding houses, the provision of educational equipment, and the school's buildings and grounds. When Thring arrived in 1853 the school comprised a house for the headmaster and the boarders; a school-room over by the parish church, now the art school; some studies and a few ball courts. By 1884, the tercentenary of the school's foundation, Thring and his staff had invested £91,000 in new buildings - the trustees rarely supported Thring's innovations - thus giving ample evidence of the confidence the headmaster inspired in his colleagues who had sunk their funds into the venture, and of the substance of his own hefty mortgages and overdrafts. The 300 boys were accommodated in the specially built or properly converted boarding houses for thirty that still dominate the town; adjacent chapel and school-room made concrete a belief in Godliness and good learning; library, museum, carpentry shop and classrooms brought honour to lessons; pavilions, playing fields, fives courts, a gymnasium and an indoor swimming pool supported the physical education; and a sanatorium housed the sick and convalescing. All this...
Thring not only built his school, but commanded it through a thorough administrative system in which he delegated much day-to-day responsibility to his housemasters. This was greatly aided by the quality of the teaching staff, whether classicists or gymnasts and musicians, for Thring was determined to appoint only ‘superior men’ and he saw to it that their talents were fully used and that their rewards were generous. What particularly amazed John Wolfenden was that Thring, who by his own personal indomitable spirit made the school, should have rated so high the importance of the impersonal administrative machine.

That spirit of the man dominated the school. Thring was first and foremost a fighter: he had shown evidence of this at Eton, where he gained the name ‘Little Die First’ from older boys unable to dislodge this pugnacious youngster from a fives court, and his Uppingham career is littered with battles. The school’s trustees were constant foes; meddling government commissioners came and went; uncooperative local bureaucrats saw him take the school to Borth in North Wales to escape the effects of typhoid in the town; and boys, old boys, parents and masters provided short-lived but oft-repeated homegrown opposition. He was tough, revelling in sports and games with his charges, and of a moral strength that sees a job through to the end: here the escape to Borth saw him at his best. He was fun, whether in class, on the cricket field, or at playing charades with the boys of his boarding house; and he had a grim sense of humour and no false headmasterly dignity. One day he came across the team lists for a cricket match to be played that afternoon: ‘Those who have been beaten by Mr Thring’ versus ‘Those who have not’. ‘Ha!’, he is reported to have announced, ‘If that match is replayed, all the boys will be on the same side.’ With all this went a self-confidence that was assertive, almost aggressive. This resulted in an independence that was intolerant of meddling, an authority that demanded total loyalty, and little grace or sense of compromise when challenged. It is these qualities that kept public-school orthodoxy at bay, resisted the efforts of commissioners and inspectors, brought about the founding of the Headmasters’ Conference to secure the independence all headmasters enjoy to this day, and saw to it that the headmistresses should similarly resist government intervention. This confidence was based, for Thring as for many of his contemporaries, on the belief that he was one of God’s chosen people, and that he was doing God’s work. He did not expect that work to be easy, indeed he expected opposition and he was determined to fight it, and to train his boys to do the same: but the unfortunate side-effect of every action being automatically right was that the headmaster did not readily seek advice and help, and that every mild
opposition was seen as treason. He could not have been an easy man to serve under, and the success of the year's sojourn in Wales, an adventure of Old Testament proportions, brought only confirmation of his prophet-like role. The possession of these same qualities probably explains why Thring, unlike Benson and Temple, contemporary but more diplomatic headmasters at Wellington and Rugby, was never offered serious ecclesiastical preferment.

Thring, the prophet, used the chapel pulpit to expound on 'true manliness' and to point the way to 'True Life'. 'True Life' was a principle of action, of thought and of speech: the words appear in countless addresses, in over half of his four hundred sermons stored in the archives, and they regularly punctuate the text of his books; and if the boys wanted to mimic Thring, then they would certainly use this fabled phrase that became fact. Education for 'True Life' aimed to ensure that all man's knowledge and experience should be directed towards creating a society that was morally correct and spiritually certain, and that all man's talents should be used to further the work of earthly progress. Lessons of truth, honour and self-mastery were to be learnt in the classroom, on the games field, in the workshop, as well as in the chapel. Living in a school community, 'an army in the regiment of the brave and the true', prepared the boys for service in the Christian knighthood, working in the slums and outcast settlements that skirted the great cities. Practise religion rather than
local 'yes', for the school grew from strength to strength in the thirty-four years of his headmastership, and, that acid-test for an independent school, it was always full. And there is a 'yes' for the second question too. Some of Thring's thoughts and ideas were becoming generally accepted in his last years, and this golden period saw him much acclaimed as a headmaster-politician and as an educational reformer: in 1885 he was elected president of the Education Society. But what of the other two questions, about the boys and their lives? To follow the headmaster-politician and as an educational reformer: in 1885 he was elected president of the Education Society. But what of the other two questions, about the boys and their lives? To follow the careers of Thring's old boys and to lay their triumphs at his feet does not really answer them, nor is it in accordance with the principle of 'True Life'. Yet the questions need to be answered: were the ideals put into practice?

If what the boys chose as their future careers is an acceptable criterion, then the answer is a definite 'yes'. Taking the best Thring years as reference, that is 1853-1870 and before Thring was pulled out of Uppingham to defend it against a series of political onslaughts, the careers of Uppinghamians are decidedly at odds with those of boys from comparable schools. Rugby in this period produced twice as many boys who followed careers in law or in the armed services as those who entered the church, and at Harrow the church ranked fifth, a long way behind the armed forces, administration, politics, and law. At most there had been a steady decline in the number of boys taking holy orders since 1835, and this includes Rugby part way through Arnold's headmastership. Yet at Uppingham from 1853-70 the church is clearly the most chosen profession, well ahead of law and the armed forces. Two clergy-men were produced for every soldier, and throughout the Thring years the percentage of boys entering the church is higher than at any other public school. In the years after 1870 the armed forces and business come to the top, in agreement with the trend at other schools, yet even here the growth in business as a career choice in the whole of Thring's headmastership, the church ranks third; clear evidence that Thring had been successful in asking his boys to follow the 'True Life'.

Many of Thring's principles and methods were thrown out soon after his death: some were clearly outmoded - it is unlikely that a headmaster who cared so much for the school as a living community would have objected to their replacement - but many were merely out of fashion with public-school orthodoxy. Uppingham now sought to conform, and it cannot be claimed that the turn of the century was the most glorious epoch for these schools. Yet though Uppingham shunned Thringian principles, or more cruelly sought to distort them, other schools did not, and his ideals lived on in the progressive school movement. As early as 1869 Thring had wanted to separate his lot from the fashionable elite and to cast it in with the smaller schools, and it is in that direction that one looks for the life-line from his Uppingham. The essence of his aims and methods could be found successively at Cecil Reddie's Abbotsholme, J.H. Badley's Bedales, G.W.S. Howson's Gresham's, M.L. Jacks' Mill Hill, Thorold Coade's Bryanston and Kurt Hahn's Gordonstoun, sometimes through the action of Thring's old boys or his assistant masters, sometimes through the influence he had on those who visited the school or who had read his works. The spirit too had influence through the efforts of the educationalists L.P. Jacks, E.B. Castle and Alec Clegg, and when, more recently, the time was found to be ripe, Thring's ideas found their way back to Uppingham, to the whole spectrum of independent schools, and indeed pervaded the English educational system. There cannot be many in today's teaching profession who know nothing of Edward Thring and 'the great educational experiment', he is very much the teacher's teacher. Multum in parvo indeed!

On the day of Thring's death John Skrine, the trusted lieutenant, went to the headmaster's study to write the letters that would break the news. On the desk he found the sermon that Thring had been writing the letters that would break the news. On the desk he found the sermon that Thring had been writing.
After writing these words Thring turned to his diary, and closed the day’s entry almost in prophecy, with no full-stop at the end of the sentence - ‘And now to bed, Sermon finished, and a blessed feeling of Sunday coming’

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Fig. 1. Stretton Church

A Puritan parish

The tiny parish church of Stretton, which now rarely holds more than a dozen people, must in the 1630s have echoed to the powerful rhetoric of a preacher who was to become one of the most influential Puritan ministers of England’s ‘Puritan Revolution’. Even before the arrival of Jeremiah Whittaker in 1627, the parish of Stretton was well-known for its Puritan sympathies. During the reign of Elizabeth, the parish was included among the landholdings of the Puritan Sir James Harington, who appointed as Rector his chaplain Henry Hargreaves. Hargreaves was complained of for Puritan activities throughout Rutland, and in 1590, with others, ‘was presented for permitting an unauthorised minister to preach at Oakham’.

Puritans placed far greater emphasis on preaching, than what they regarded as superstitious ritual, and encouraged the holding of ‘lectures’ which were sermons delivered without the accompanying church service. There were many complaints against such preachers and ‘lecturers’ throughout the late Tudor and early Stuart period. Although Hargreaves held several parishes, his influence on the parishioners of Stretton may have been considerable since he died and was buried there in 1622: his will can be seen in Northamptonshire Record Office.

Records of the diocese of Peterborough yield many examples of complaints against various Rutland parishes for Puritan resistance to what were seen as the government’s ‘Papist’ impositions. These included the railing in of the communion table at the East End of the chancel, insistence on the wearing of surplices and use of the Prayer Book, kneeling or bowing the head and making the sign of the cross at baptism. Just before Whittaker’s arrival in the parish of Stretton, women at Stretton and Clipsham apparently ‘snatched their children out of the priest’s arms at baptism before they could be signed with the cross’. Whittaker presumably abandoned such Anglo-Catholic practices since in 1640 complaints were made by the Bishop’s representatives about the position of the communion table at Stretton, which was obviously not being set apart as an altar.

Other evidence suggests that the small village of Stretton may have contained a stronger Puritan tendency than many of its Rutland neighbours. Between the years 1620 and 1650 it is recorded that nine emigrants left the county of Rutland for New England. Whereas six of these came from six separate parishes, three came from Stretton. These were John Fletcher, Andrew Bacon and Nathaniel Bacon, who all settled in different areas of Connecticut and Massachusetts. In addition, William Bacon, who had been born in Stretton, emigrated from Coventry to Salem. Some of these departures to New England may have been caused partly by economic factors, such as the enclosures and depopulation of farms, but it is likely that religion played a significant part, as in so many other places.

Jeremiah Whittaker

On 13th April 1627 the newly arrived Lord of the Manor, Robert Horsman, appointed a new minister to the parish church of Stretton. Horsman’s choice was Jeremiah Whittaker, a Yorkshireman and graduate of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Horsman must have noticed the clergyman’s talents during the period that Whittaker was master of the Free School at Oakham, where he married Chephtzibah Peachey, the daughter of another Puritan minister.

The parish register which Whittaker began to keep in 1631 opens with the baptism of his son Jeremy, who was born in April of that year and was buried sixteen months later. During his ministry at Stretton, Whittaker and his wife had several more children, while at least two other families chose for their daughters in subsequent years the unusual name of the minister’s wife, Chephtzibah. The Puritan activities and family life of Jeremiah Whittaker were recorded by his ‘much endeared Friend and Brother’, Simeon Ashe, in the funeral sermon preached in 1654:

While he continued Schoolmaster at Oakham he undertook a Lecture there weekly, besides many sermons preached occasionally in neighbour Congregations. During his abode at Stretton, besides his Pastorall imployment twice every Sabbath, his constant weekly Preaching at Oakham, he was a principal prep to hold up Lectures in the neighbourhood ... no man was more frequent in assisting in Days of Humiliation in private, both in Rutlandshire and in the adjoining Counties whenever invited thereto ... his ordinary course was, together with Prayers, to expound some parts of the Holy Scripture to his own Family twice every day ...

Jeremiah Whittaker was one of the nine future Puritan lecturers who had attended Sidney Sussex
College, regarded by William Laud, the unpopular Archbishop of Canterbury, as 'a hotbed of Puritanism.' Here he would probably have known Oliver Cromwell, who entered Sidney Sussex in 1616; it was to this college also that Robert Horsman sent his eldest son Robert in 1632.

During the 1630's Stretton clearly had in Jeremiah Whittaker a minister of strong Puritan beliefs who never shrank from an outspoken commitment or involvement in the wider spiritual affairs of the area. It is clear from family wills that there was a close friendship as well as similar religious sympathies between the Horsman family of Stretton Manor and their Puritan Minister. Robert Horsman's sister Ann, whose will is dated 1629, bequeathed forty pounds to Jeremiah Whittaker, while his wife was to receive 'a damask cupboard cloth and a pair of fine holland pillowberes'. His sister-in-law, Mary Pickering, also left bequests in 1633 to 'Mr Whittaker, my good and faithful paistuer' and his wife. Robert Horsman made sure that the church of Stretton was endowed with sufficient glebe land to support the minister and his growing family. A document in Northamptonshire Record Office, bearing the signatures of the chief parishioners including John Browne of Stocken Hall, records the allocation of 'four acres and an halfe of ground in ye Eastfields, to be enjoyed by the incumbent as glebe lands belonging to the churche for ever.'

It is possible that Robert Horsman was the unknown neighbour who saved Whittaker from imprisonment when he opposed the policies of King Charles I to relax the strict Sunday observance laws and to impose the English Prayer Book on Scotland. According to the account by Simeon Ashe:

While he lived in Rutlandshire he refused to read the book allowing of Sports upon the Sabbath, though it was with commands and threatenings pressed upon him. And when he was called to give in his answer about the Collection amongst ministers to maintain the War against Scotland, he openly told the Bishop and Chancellor that his Conscience could not yield thereto. This his answer exposing him to great danger both to his life and liberty in those times, a neighbour through his unknown knowledge. This he was ignorant of and when he heard it he expressed, with many complaints, much grief of heart...

Opposition to the religious policies of Charles I and his ministers was increasing dramatically. Meetings and activities critical of church policy were held throughout the diocese of Peterborough; ministers from Rutland attended several protest meetings with Northamptonshire clergy held in Kettering. On August 27, 1640, Sir John Lambe wrote to Archbishop Laud:

On 25th August last there was an assembly of Northamptonshire ministers and others at Kettering, where they concluded against the Oath and agreed not to take it. ... The chiefest were Mr Ball, of All Saints, Northampton, Mr Gill, Rector of Titchmarsh, ... two of Rutland and others. I must refer to you what is fit to be done with these assemblies.

The oath in question was the 'Et Cetera' Oath, binding clergymen not to consent to any changes in the episcopal government of the church and therefore unpopular with Puritans who were beginning to suggest that bishoprics should be abolished. Mr Gill of Titchmarsh would have been well known to Jeremiah Whittaker and Robert Horsman through Horsman's marriage to the sister of Mr Gill's patron. The likelihood that one of the Rutland ministers attending this meeting was Jeremiah Whittaker is confirmed by the source of John Lambe's information, a letter from Francis Hill quoted in Bull's History of Kettering:

... and one Mr Whittaker of Stretton had certain arguments besides, which likewise were examined and proved ... They concluded never to take the oath but rather to lose their livings.

Any likelihood that the Puritan ministers would be deprived of their livings at this point was overtaken by events. Nationwide opposition to Laud and the King's policies had reached such a pitch that by the end of the year the Archbishop of Canterbury was impeached by Parliament, imprisoned and finally executed four years later.

**The Protestation**

Jeremiah Whittaker remained in Stretton for a further year, and must have organised the signing by parishioners of the Protestation, a public declaration of support for Parliament agreed by the House of Commons on 3rd May 1641. The wording was such as to appeal to a broad section of opinion, and may have served to unite a large proportion of the population, despite its implied attack on the King's High Church reforms. Few loyal members of the Church of England could blatantly object to its diplomatic promise to defend:

'as far as lawfully I may, with my life, power and estate, the true reformed religion, expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England, against all Popery and Popish innovation within this realm, contrary to the said doctrine, and according to the duty of my allegiance to his Majesty's royal person, honour and estate; as also the power and privilege of Parliament, the lawful rights and liberties of the subjects, and every person that shall make this Protestation in whatsoever he shall do, in lawful pursuance of the same ...

[Fig. 2. Contemporary illustration of a minister and his parishioners taking the Protestation (BL TTE 116 (49) f.4)]
At a time when King Charles was suspected of moving the Church of England closer to Rome, and his Catholic wife's influence was alienating moderates, the Protestantism became a powerful symbol of support of Parliament in its opposition to royal policies. There is evidence that it was signed in several Rutland parishes, and a list survives in the British Library of signatories from Hambleton.14 The parishioners of Streton were persuaded, no doubt by Jeremiah Whittaker, to declare their parliamen
tarian sympathies. Among the records of christen­nings, burials and marriages, Streton’s register records ‘The names of all the inhabitants of Streton that take ye protestation according to ye order of Parliament March 13 1641’ (1642). The list is head­ed by the signature of Robert Horsman junior who also seems to have added his father’s name, followed by those of Thomas Hibbins and Jeremiah Whittaker. Forty other names follow, mostly written in the same hand.15 Whether the names were offered will­ingly or unwillingly is an open question. There is no record of participation by the lower ranks of Streton in the Civil War and the parish records fall silent for the following ten years.

National Recognition
Jeremiah Whittaker was soon to find a wider audi­ence for his preaching than the tiny congregation of Streton. In January 1641/2 King Charles agreed to a petition from Parliament to set up a programme of monthly fasts or ‘humiliations’ throughout the king­dom, ostensibly to pray for resolution of the troubles in Ireland. These involved suspension of Parlia­mentary business on the last Wednesday of every month, with two sermons preached to Members in St Marg­aret’s, Westminster. Ministers were invited to par­ticipate on the recommendation of members of parliament, and it was probably his patron’s cousin, Gilbert Pickering, who nominated Jeremiah Whittaker. A year after the programme began, Jeremiah Whittaker preached his first sermon, entitled Eirenopoias: Christ the Settlement of Unsettled Times.16 A brief extract gives only the smallest hint of the passion and revolutionary rhetoric that must have been the familiar weekly diet of Streton parishioners:

We complain of the sad misunderstanding between King and Parliament, that wicked Counsellors seduce him, that bloody Cavaliers are about him, that Countries are plundered, Inno­cents afflicted and thousands in many places made desolate, but have we not greater cause to complain of that misunderstanding between God and us? ... When you see the hand of God shaking the Nation, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that God may exalt you in due time ... Say to the King and Queen, humble yourselves, sit downe, for your Prin­cipalities shall come downe even the Crown of your Glory ... 17

Whittaker’s move to London was to be permanent; in the words of Paul S. Seaver, he:

seems to have come to London determined to make amends for the years he had lacked an important pulpit, for he preached twice weekly in Southwark, where he was lecturer at St Mary Magdalen, Bermondsey, and once at Christ Church Newgate in addition to weekly sermons at the Abbey!18

As the Civil War moved towards an early stalemate, Parliament formed an alliance with the Presbyteri­an Scots, whose violent opposition to the Prayer Book had been the catalyst leading to war. The Scots demanded reform of the Church of England along Presbyterian lines, a move supported by large numbers of the more moderate Puritans. On 12th Feb­ruary 1641/2 the House of Commons ordered its members ‘to bring in names of such ministers as they severally and respectively thought fit to be employed for the settling of the affairs of the church.’ Again on the probable recommendation of Gilbert Pickering, Whittaker was nominated to the newly formed Westminster Assembly ‘for the settling the Church government and vindicating the doctrine of the Church of England from all calumnies and aspersions.’19 From this point Whittaker’s destiny had taken him off the narrow stage of Rutland affairs to the wider and more challenging arena of Westminster.

Search for Church Settlement
After leaving Streton, Jeremiah Whittaker’s career prospered. He was closely involved in the work of the Westminster Assembly and in 1647 was appointed its Moderator.20 On the sequestration of the former incumbent he had become pastor of St Mary Mag­dalen, Bermondsey, and was involved in the reor­ganisation of the London parishes along Presbyterian lines, being appointed Trier of the Tenth Classis. He also continued preaching at St Margaret’s, Westminster and was paid £37 10s for nine months’ service in 1649.21

Despite the extended efforts of the Westminster Assembly to establish a nationwide Presbyterian Church of England, these attempts finally came to nothing as Independents gained in prominence both in Parliament and in the Assembly, while the need to placate the Scots diminished. Whittaker was involved with the production of a new Directory of Worship which was to replace the Prayer Book; this was rejected by the King in the proposed Treaty of Uxbridge and although County Committees were directed to distribute it to parishes, it was never uni­formly enforced throughout the country. Whittaker was also appointed to a committee to review the new Confession of Faith, in place of the Thirty-Nine Arti­cles. The final work of the Assembly in which Whit­taker was also involved was the less important revision and publication of the Metrical Version of the Psalms.22

It is clear that Jeremiah Whittaker retained his Presbyterian sympathies rather than following the Independent path with its tolerance of sects and desire to abandon the hierarchy of the church. In his funeral sermon, Simeon Ashe attested to Whittak­er’s support for the Scots:
He had often told me that England’s late breach with Scotland, and the bloodshed, with other sad consequences thereof, had taken such impression upon his heart, that the sorrow would never be removed till his death.23

Near the end of his life Whittaker wrote to Cromwell recommending a book which upheld the priesthood in these words:

May it please your Highness to pardon this boldness in presenting this boke composed by some godly men to appease the heat of present controversies, wherein is proved that ye office of ye Ministry is not ye Invention of man, but ye institution of Jesus Christ, that ye necessity of this office is powerful.

This letter to Cromwell also makes clear the painful state of Whittaker’s health ‘being confined to my chamber under extreme tormenting paines of ye stone, which forceth me to cry and moane night and day.’

Jeremiah Whittaker died in 1654, following a painful illness. His courage in enduring the agonies of ill-health were described in intimate detail by Simeon Ashe, for the edification of the gathered congregation:

In the latter part of his time he was for sundry years exercised frequently with the painful diseases of the gout and the stone. Notwithstanding the reiteration of these tormenting pains he attended upon his Ministry both at home and abroad, while he was able to creep into the Pulpit or to crawl unto the Congregation... After his death Master Hoilard opened his body... who found both his kidneys full of ulcers.

Jeremiah Whittaker was buried in the parish church of St Mary’s, Bermondsey, the parish which witnessed the spread of his reputation. No doubt his influence was also felt in the quieter backwaters of Rutland, inspiring an outpouring of poetic tributes beyond the Restoration, a time when several of his Rutland neighbours hastily rediscovered their Anglican and Royalist sympathies. Charles II’s Declaration of Indulgence of 1672 was the opportunity for Edward Horsman’s house in Stretton to be licensed as a Non-Conformist chapel.

Whittaker’s death was more publicly mourned in London, inspiring an outpouring of poetic tributes including the following uplifting elegy by R.B., Parishioner:

To the memory of his dear friend and Pastor Mr J.W. deceased
Beloved this shadow whose admired worth Nor pen, nor tongue is able to set forth, He whose vast soul walk’d through the Isle of Man Is here confined in a shorter span. Whose worth the world, though twere as big again Were much too short and narrow to contain. Sweet were his life and death, his weal spent daies Began with goodness and expire’d with praise: His lamp was ever burning, never hid; And when his tongue preacht not, his actions did; And to his death he stil sought faeths good light, And then his Lamp exchanged his borrowed light For an immortal lustre, and here lies, Enshrined, not dead, for vertue never dies.

And now that I have taken upon mee to speake, Let not your Highness bee angry with your poore servant if he implore your pitty and pardon and protection for ye safe return to Mr Cawton, a sincere servant of Christ who being involved in ye business for which Mr Love suffered death hath ever since suffered a voluntary banishment, in great Extremity and hardship. May not ye blood of Mr Love suffice for that offence? Have not others done in other kindes as much and more and yet found favour? Beseech your Honour sweeten ye begininge of your Government with Arts of Grace, and oh that such a day of Reliefe might come that your Highness might see it both for your Honour and safety to proclaime liberty to ye Captives and this openinge of the prison to them who have long beeune bound. The God of glory helpe you to lay such foundations of common Equity and rightouesnes, that you may leave ye nation in a better condition when you dy, than you found it; that you may give up your Account with joy. Which is ye harty prayer of Your Highnes humble servant.

Fig. 3. Whittaker’s letter to Cromwell c. 1654 (B.L. Add 4159 f.113)

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Joseph Matkin (1853–1927), Rutland’s Unsung Voyager\(^1\)

Of the many titles that have been assigned to the present era, surely it is ‘the Information Age’ that best captures the uniqueness of our times. With the technology of information so visible to us daily, however, we are likely to ignore one subtle but far-reaching feature of the age, namely the *democratisation* of information. Not only do the modern media bring the news of the day to the poor as well as the rich of all nations, but those who now belong to what were known in the 19th century as the working and middle classes are themselves often the subject of media attention.

One manifestation of this democratising process is the increasing mindfulness of historians for the lives of the not-so-rich-and-famous, or, to speak more generally, for social and family history as opposed to political and diplomatic history. This concern - to capture the experiences and outlook of those who were not among the elite of the social hierarchy - exists, too, in the history of science and exploration, especially during this year of the Columbus Quincentenary.

First-hand accounts of the great voyages of discovery and exploration were nearly always told by, and from the perspective of, those in command: senior officers and (by the 19th century) embarked

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\(^1\) PHILIP F. REHBOCK


Fig. 2. Joseph Matkin as a young man. Scripps Institution of Oceanography Archives
scientists. Of course it was not unusual for a member of the crew 'below decks' to keep a journal or diary, but rarely did such accounts reach print. Thus we have relatively little direct knowledge of the difficulties endured and triumphs enjoyed by the common seaman during these great expeditions.

Until quite recently this was true of one of Britain's most illustrious voyages, the great four-year oceanographic circumnavigation of H.M.S. Challenger (Figure 1). The Challenger expedition, a joint venture of the Royal Society of London and the British Admiralty, was the most lavish instance of government-sponsored 'big science' of the Victorian Era. Departing from British shores in December of 1872, Challenger sounded, dredged and trawled the floors of the world's oceans at no fewer than 362 locations, before her return in June 1876. The results of the voyage, encompassing the physical, chemical, geological, zoological and botanical dimensions of the oceans, were published in an unprecedented fifty
quarto volumes during the ensuing twenty years. These Challenger Reports\(^2\) are still widely accepted as constituting the foundation for the science of oceanography.\(^3\)

But the nature of life below-decks aboard Challenger - a subject of special interest because of the tensions that are now known to occur among officers, oceanographic scientists and seamen - was left to speculation until now. In 1982, a collection of nine original autograph letters written by Challenger's Ship's Steward's Assistant and Rutland native, Joseph Matkin (Figure 2), to his family was purchased at auction in London by the British Museum (Natural History). The following year Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California, received a second, larger collection of letters, donated by Matkin's granddaughter. Also made available by the Matkin family was a notebook of nearly 850 pages into which Matkin's first cousin, John Thomas Swann of Barrowden, had carefully handcopied the letters Matkin had written to him during the voyage. All told, the known Challenger letters of Joseph Matkin number sixty-nine (Figure 3).

As residents of Rutland may recognise, Joseph Matkin belonged to the Oakham printing family. His parents, Charles (1817-1874) and Sarah Craxford Matkin (1824-1903) were married in Uppingham in 1851. Joseph and his older brother Charles (1852-1924) were born in Uppingham, but by the mid-1850s the Matkin family had established itself, and the Matkin Printing and Stationery Store, in the High Street, Oakham. Two more sons, Will (1855-1883) and Fred (1857-?) followed. The printing enterprise became quite successful and was subsequently managed by three generations of Matkins (Figure 4). In 1977 it was sold to new owners and now bears the name 'Matkins Printers Limited'.

Young Joseph Matkin attended school in Oakham and concluded his education at the Billesdon parish free school in Leicestershire (Figure 5). His parents were evidently anxious that all the boys had a strong academic foundation, for Matkin later wrote: 'Few children in our station of life have had so much spent on their education and start in life.'\(^4\) His experience at the Billesdon school was apparently quite positive; the headmaster, a Mr Creaton, is mentioned respectfully in Matkin's letters, and there is an extant letter from Matkin to the headmaster's wife.

About 1867, at the age of 14, Joseph entered the merchant marine as a 'boy' and set off to see the world. In December of that year he sailed for Australia aboard the Sussex, returning aboard the Agamemnon the following summer. Soon thereafter he sailed again to Australia, this time aboard the Essex, but on this trip he remained in Melbourne for a year, working in furniture and upholstery shops. He returned to England by 1870. On August 12th, 1870 he entered the Royal Navy, serving successively as ship's steward's boy aboard H.M.Ss. Invincible and Audacious.

Matkin was transferred to H.M.S. Challenger on November 12th, 1872, just a month before the expedition would set off. Unlike many of his fellow crew members who deserted Challenger during the next
3½ years, Matkin, who often recorded their desertions in his letters, remained with the expedition until the ship's return to Sheerness in June 1876.

Early in the voyage, Matkin was promoted to ship's steward's assistant. His responsibilities, as near as can be reckoned, were to assist the steward in the victualling of the ship, principally by managing the provisions issuing room. It was while standing at a desk in this storeroom, probably the largest space that he could call his own, that he seems to have composed both the letters and the three-volume journal (regrettably now lost) from which portions of the letters were extracted.

What does a sailor on the world's first oceanographic circumnavigation write home about? Was he aware of the purposes and the historic significance of the expedition? Matkin was, in fact, surprisingly well informed about most aspects of the expedition. In the first weeks of the voyage, he described the oceanographic activities in some detail, along with the more humorous and mundane events of the Christmas season.

H.M. Ship 'Challenger'
Off Cape Finisterre Dec 29, 1872

Dear Mother,

We left Portsmouth on the Saturday morning & did not call at Plymouth - so that the Post Card I had written - with the future addresses of the ship I was not able to send. We went out through the Needles from Portsmouth & saluted the Queen at Osborne House as we passed, we had a head wind down the Channel & we have had one ever since - with very rough weather - until today - we have a wind nearly fair - & the ship is a little steadier so that I am able to write. We have had a week of awful knocking about & half of us were sea sick for the first 2 or 3 days. The coal will only just last into Lisbon, where we expect to arrive on the 14th January or exactly a week longer than we should have been had we had decent weather. I forgot to tell you in Miss Wildman's letter that we were paid one pound the day before we came away & that it was all gone before night.

I am in the Chief Petty Officer's Mess, there are 6 with me, & 2 Blue Jackets Boys to look after the Mess & keep it clean &c. We six each put 15/- into the mess to fit it out with knives & forks, cups & saucers, dishes &c which the service does not supply as well as 2 sacks of Potatoes & the materials for a Xmas dinner. So that after I had bought some collars & other little things my Advance looked very small indeed, & Father's 10/- that he lent me will have to wait until we get to New York when another advance will be paid us, & I hope to return it.

We had a miserable Xmas as far as the weather was concerned for the ship was pitching & rolling awfully & we had to hang on to our crockery ware like grim death; several of the messes lost all their crockery but we only lost a few cups - & a pot of Jam & a bottle of Pickles that broke & got mixed together. Our mess fared as well as any on Xmas day - for we had Ham for Breakfast & a good meat Pie & Plum Pudding for dinner; we made our pudding on Xmas eve; everyone did something towards it.

We had a short service in the morning, the Captain officiates for we are not allowed a Chaplain, only Ships carrying 295 men & upwards are allowed a chaplain & we have only 242 on board. In the evening the Captain gave every one of the Ships company one third of a pint of Sherry & very good wine it was. If the 3 or 4 ensuing Xmas's which we are to spend in the 'Challenger' are no worse, we shan't hurt.

I thought of home about one o'clock that day & how Charlie & Willie were spreading the Plum Pudding across their chests (as the sailors say), in a seamanlike manner.

The Officers had a grand dinner about 6 o'clock & a Turkey very mysteriously disappeared just as it was ready to go on the table & it has never been heard of since. Again last night a Roast Goose, and 2 loaves of Bread were taken off the cooks table before the cook could turn round. Some fragments of a
goose & some salt were found this morning up in the main top rigging where the goose had been taken & devoured. The Officers made a kick about it but can't find out who takes them. I should have liked to have helped pick a bit for myself I have never been so hungry as the last few days for we are now on regular man o' war diet & it's bringing some of us down a good deal. I will tell you what the routine for meals is now: at 6am Breakfast of Cocoa & hard Biscuit, at 10.30 the Steward & I mix the Lime juice 1/2 gill in 1 gill of water for each man, at 11.30 dinner; one day it is salt pork & pea soup - the next salt Beef & Plum duff, the next salt Pork again & the 4th - Preserved Potatoes & Australian Beef in Tins, at 12 o'clock we mix the Grog 1/2 gill of rum to 1 gill of water to each man & at 5pm, supper & tea together, Biscuit & Tea, with what is left from dinner.

If any one can get fat on that in 4 years they must eat more than their allowance.

We shall get Fresh Meat & Vegetables at Lisbon & most of the Ports we call at & we can buy soft bread if we have any money.

We are now off Cape Finisterre & just about the spot where the 'Captain' went down, the weather is quite warm already; to morrow we are to commence dredging or we might get into Lisbon by to morrow evening. On Friday last we passed a ship bottom upwards but it was too rough to lower a boat & she had been several days in the water for the keel was washed right away, yesterday evening we passed the masts & remains of another wreck.

December 30th Off Vigo.

Sighted the coast of Spain this morning but are still 150 miles from Lisbon. At 10 o'clock this morning the first cast of the dredge was made & bottom obtained at 1500 fathoms but in hauling up the dredge & 100 fathoms of line was lost over board. The dredge was again cast but came up bottom upwards but on another attempt being made they succeeded in bringing up mud and several species of Fish from a bottom of 1125 fathoms or nearly 1 1/2 miles; on the mud being analysed numerous insects were found in it - the fish are preserved in bottles. The Dredge is of Iron & not unlike a pig trough with a net over it & weights with the weights attached several hundred weight. The strain on the line is very great as it reaches the bottom & to ease it, several - Gutta Percha Ropes are spliced to it which will stretch when strained. The Dredging line is about the thickness of a man's two fingers. When dredging the Ship is hove to, & the Dredge is let down from the main yard & hauled up by a small steam engine & the line coiled away on the upper deck to dry; 1200 fathoms of line will take one hour in reaching the bottom & 3 hours in hauling up.

We shall arrive at Lisbon on the 1st January '73 & it will take 2 days to coal - we are to arrive at Gibralter on the 8th the distance from Lisbon is 400 miles, most of the men will get a letter at Lisbon & Gibralter, but I suppose Madeira will be my distance from Lisbon is 400 miles, most of the men will get a letter at Lisbon & Gibralter, but I suppose Madeira will be my first place for a letter unless you have written on spec. Did I tell you we had a Brass Band on board composed mainly of seamen & marines who volunteered. The Officers bought the Instruments & provided a Bandmaster to teach them, there were 15 volunteers & 9 wanted to play the big drum, they practice every day in the fore peak of the vessel & the noise is something fearful & causes the Watch below to swear a good deal. The Bandmaster expects to fetch tolerable music in the course of the MS 'Melbourne'.

January 1st 1873 - Close to where the battle of Trafalgar was fought: This morning passed any amount of oranges floating on the water: some fruit schooner wrecked about here lately. Cast the Dredge again to day bottom at 1800 fathoms, nothing came up in the Dredge - shewing the bottom to be rock. In hauling up a second time the Lead & 300 fathoms more Line was lost over board. Very little distance made today & we are still 100 miles from Lisbon but shall get in to morrow if they have no more dredging. A good many of the men complaining of the water which is condensed from the sea at night & drank the next day & is scarcely cool. I felt ill myself the other day but have improved by qualifying the water with a little Rum or Lime juice.

Jany 2nd "Off Lisbon"

All day again we were dredging & obtained the deepest bottom ever yet ascertained viz 2550 fathoms or nearly 3 miles, but in hauling up, the dredge & 1700 fathms of line was lost over board so that no criterion could be formed of the nature of the bottom.

The oceanographic theme peaks in Matkin's letters some three months into the voyage with his transcription of an address to the crew by Wyville Thomson, naturalist and chief of the scientific staff. Challenger carried a substantial team of scientists for the time: four naturalists, a chemist and an artist. Matkin referred to the scientists most often as 'the Scientists'; to others they were known as 'the philosophers'.

After Lisbon and Gibralter, Challenger executed a series of Atlantic transits, putting in at Madeira, Santa Cruz, St Thomas, Bermuda, Halifax, the Azores, the Canaries and Cape Verde in order. Touching at St Paul's Rocks, she then crossed the equator to the coast of Brazil and Tristan da Cunha, before docking at Cape Town. As Christmas 1873 approached, the ship set off across the southern Indian Ocean, stopping at Prince Edward's Island, Crozet Island, Kerguelen and Heard Islands, and crossing the Antarctic Circle - the first steamer ever to do so. The frequent encounters with icebergs were alternately sublime and hazardous.

March of 1874 found Challenger in Australia - the South Pacific at last. After several months in Melbourne and Sydney, the expedition set off on the most exotic legs of the voyage: to New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji, New Hebrides, then through the Torres Straits to Amboina, Ternate, Zamboanga, Manila and Hong Kong.

As the voyage progressed, oceanographic operations became more and more routine and Matkin referred to them less and less frequently. Meanwhile, his accounts of places visited became increasingly elaborate. That his attitudes upon encountering foreign peoples were Anglocentric will not be surprising; what is perhaps remarkable is that he manifested less chauvinism, less imperialism, than we might expect of a sailor in Queen Victoria's navy. He nearly always made an effort to present a balanced picture, to find both good and bad things to say, of a place and its people. Colonials he often judged more harshly than the local people.

Among the most interesting letters from the Pacific is the following account of Hong Kong Harbour, penned on the second anniversary of the expe-
dition, as Matkin approached his third Christmas aboard Challenger.

H.M. Ship 'Challenger', at Hong Kong, Dec. 19th 1874

Dear Mother,

Your letter of Oct. 15th reached me Dec. 10th, & was the only one by that mail, but I received a 'Graphic' from Walter Thornton. I wrote to Willie last week. I see the letters of Professor Thompson in 'Good Words' are finished; they are not as interesting as his Lecture, I think.

Since we arrived here on the 18th we have taken in all our coal, all provisions to last us to Yokohama April 15th, & they have nearly finished refitting. We are not going in dock, & shall be ready for sea the 1st week in January, tho we do not know when we are going to leave.

This island of Hong Kong belongs to the Ladrone, or Thieves' islands; it is barren & mountainous & only 29 square miles in extent. Hong Kong means in English 'Fragrant Streams', & it is just in the Tropics & is about 15 miles from the 'Pinyin' or 'River of Pearls', generally called the Canton River. The city of Canton is 85 miles from Hong Kong, & there is a Portuguese settlement called Macao 40 miles up the river before you reach Canton. Macao has belonged to the Portuguese for the last 200 years. The island is separated from the mainland of China by the strait called Ly-cesmon Pass which is about a mile wide in its narrowest part. It is shaped like a half moon the two ends of it approaching the opposite peninsula of Kowloon & forming one of the most magnificent harbours in the world. In the hollow of the harbour stands the capital town of Victoria at the foot of a range of hills terminating in Victoria Peak, which is 1975 feet above the level of the sea. The town has at least 200,000 inhabitants, besides an immense floating & migratory population numbering many thousands.

From the harbour of Hong Kong nothing of the sea can be seen; it is surrounded by mountains both on the island and main land; these mountains have a very wild, sterile appearance, but make a beautiful picture. Looking at the splendid land-locked harbour you would wonder how the recent terrible typhoon could cause the damage it did to shipping, over 1000 lives were lost in this little harbour; this you would not wonder at if you saw the myriads of Chinese junks & sampans in which the floating population live & die. Lives count for nothing in this country, it was the 'Dollars' absorbed by the typhoon that made it such a terrible calamity here. The sea rose many feet into the lower parts of the town, & the water was nearly up to the 2nd story in the houses facing the bay, ships were driven from their anchors & thrown almost into the town. Two steamers are now lying one on top of the other close to the wharf, with their masts only above water. The Captain of one of them, a Spaniard, with his wife, were drowned & their bodies washed up into the 2nd street from the bay.

The typhoon extended as far as Macao up the river, & no one knows how many Chinese lives were lost up there. There was not a single man-of-war damaged, although there were several lying here; they were moored most securely. Hong Kong was ceded to the British in 1842 & the opposite peninsula of Kowloon in 1851. Of course it was not taken for its richness or fertility, for nothing grows on it, but as a military & naval station for the protection of our commerce, & as the centre of an immense export trade its value cannot be over-rated. The amount of shipping that comes into Hong Kong on their way to Japan & the Seaports of China in the course of a year is something enormous. Hong Kong was the base of operations during the long Chinese war of 1840, & the battle of the fleet here 1851, & from its position at the mouth of the great Canton River its possession by us is of the last importance. We have a Dock yard & Victualling Yard here to accommodate our enormous Fleet on the China Station, & its fine harbour is the admiration & envy of all other European naval powers. At present there are at least 300 vessels here of all nations & flags, & myriads of Chinese coasting junks &c. There are 10 British men of war lying here, 2 American, 2 Portuguese, 1 Russian, 1 Siamese, & 3 Chinese. Every vessel & junk carries a light at night, & the bay looks like a town. Victoria is well lighted with gas, & has a very brilliant appearance at night, for the streets rise one above another for 800 feet.

There is a Governor here, a General, a Commodore in charge of the Dock yard, & the Admiral in command of the Fleet. There are not many European merchants, or people of any sort except soldiers; the white civilian population is under 1000. They are either merchants, hotel keepers, chemists. Doctors &c; all the minor trades & all mechanical trades are monopolised by the Chinese, for no European could compete with them in prices &c. Seen from the water Hong Kong looks something between Lisbon, Wellington & Levuka as it stands at the base of a range of hills. The climate is generally healthy & dry, we have had no rain since we have been here; we had two cold days & nights, all the rest of the time it has been as warm as an average English summer.

There are 3 old wooden ships here, 2 of them Line of Battleships, & one 3 decker. The three decker 'Princess Charlotte' was Flag Ship of Admiral Codrington at the battle of Navarino, & is the only 3 decker that ever crossed the Equator. We generally go on board there to Church on a Sunday; she is a rocky old ship used to carry 1000 men & 110 guns. One of the Line of Battleships the 'Victor Emmanuel' was hospital ship at the Ashantee War & is just out from England, & brought out all our new hands. There are 8 large Gunboats for going up the river, & chasing the numerous Chinese Pirates; and there are 2 wooden corvettes, one at Shanghai, & one at Yokohama for the summer. The Flag Ship 'Iron Duke' Admiral Shadwell, is a sister ship to the Invincible & Audacious, she has been out here 4 years & is the largest & heaviest ship that ever came thro' the Suez Canal. She was towed thro' the canal by a smaller man of war & grounded on the mud 17 times.

The town is called Kowloon, & is the city of Canton.

The Audacious is now on the way out from England to relieve her.

Soon after we anchored here scores of small Chinese junks & sampans swarmed round the ship, containing tailors, shoe-makers, washer women, artists, dealers in curiosities, provision boats &c - one of the latter was nominated to supply the ship's company all the time we remain here. These boats are called in the Navy bum-boats, & supply the men with all sorts of provisions from the shore. The Chinese bum boats had bread, all sorts of fruit, foreign butter & cheese, fried fish & prawns, & boiled & fried eggs - the eggs are very large being all Turkey & Ducks, the price is 6d a doz. Very sweet Mandarin oranges, and bananas are the principal fruit.

The oranges are 3 a penny, other fruits are dearer for it is the winter season just now. All these provisions & those sold on shore come from the main land of China, & are brought in the coating junks.

Every meal hour these boats come alongside, so also do the other boats containing washerwomen, tailors &c. I should think there were 500 people round our ship when we came in & the other ships were similarly surrounded. These sampans, as well as the largest junks are built in the shape of a Chinese slipper. The reason for this is reported by tradition to be as follows - About 3000 years ago the people of China began to build their vessels after all sorts of patterns & shapes, so the reigning Emperor was consulted concerning these new fashioned notions & asked to furnish a model for all future generations of naval architecture, so he threw down his slipper for a design & it has been adhered to to this day, even their steam war junks are built in this fashion, & looking at their vessels from the stern you see an exact likeness to a Chinese slipper. The smallest boats are decked over & there is a sort of bamboo hood built over the stern of the boat, after the style of a gypsy's carriage.

Between the deck & the bottom of the boat is the sleeping apartment where they sleep like bees in a hive. The smaller boats generally carry one man, two women & any amount of children. The large boats carry several families. They live chiefly on rice & fish, but nothing comes amiss to them. At meal hours they come alongside & send all the children on board with bags to pick up the scraps & broken victuals.

About 10 boats attend the ship day & night to take any one on shore who wishes to go, the fare is 10 cents at night, & 5
in the day time.

The money here is in Dollar bank notes & American silver Dollars - value £3 each, & 100 cents go to a dollar. There is also Chinese & Japanese copper money. The floating population of China on the sea & the inland rivers & numerous canals is estimated at over 15 million, & the total population 400 millions, nearly half the whole population of the world. Before coming here I always considered this a gross exaggeration, but can quite believe it now.

Canton has a million & a half of people within its walls. Pekin has more, & there are dozens of cities in China with over a million inhabitants. Still their immense number counts for nothing, for they can scarcely be called a united people. There are distinct languages & religions amongst them, & not the slightest fellowship or national feeling whatever.

If the people here were to hear that Canton had been destroyed by an earthquake or by fire they would send no relief or assistance to the sufferers, & evince no concern whatever, unless it touched their own pockets. Human life in this country is considered of no account. During the recent typhoon scores of people were drowned in sight of their countrymen without the slightest notice being taken of it.

The Chinese have a very numerous Army & Navy, & their Gov't is more despotic than that of Russia, but to say that our Empire is in danger from all these is moonshine. The Chinese & Japanese copper money. The floating population of China is in danger from them, is all moonshine. Our Navy, & their Navy is more despotic than that of Russia, but to say that our Empire is in danger from all these is moonshine.

The Chinese do not recognise such a division of time as a week, & have no sabbath whatever: they appear to be even busier on a Sunday if anything. They are idolaters & each household & junk has its own peculiar deity. They are well able to take care of themselves, but as an offensive Power they count for nothing: they have no ambition, no curiosity, & very few of them know that there is such a country as India. I mention this because I read an article the other day in one of the leading magazines, wherein the design of the Chinese & also the Japanese, on India, in the future, was distinctly foretold.

They carry their babies on their backs in a sort of gipsy's clumsy looking shoes. Their dress is generally blue, & costs only 6/-, and a pair of English style boots or shoes from 3 to 6 shillings, made of kid or cat skin, & they will wear a long time if not wetted. There are scores of Artists come on board every time our money is paid; they do oil paintings from photographs very tolerably for 5 shillings; also ships, landscapes &c. &c. I have had myself & Father done in oil for 17 shillings, & framed. They are about 18 inches long (Bust only) & done very creditably, & they are worth a better frame. There are one or two little mistakes if you stand close to them, but I don't stand close to them when I look at them, & I had them done for myself & children.

The Chinese invariably ask twice as much for an article as they expect to get, & are wonderful fellows at driving a bargain. Their English is very peculiar, they say 'Can do' & 'No can do' for Yes & No, & instead of saying 'this is good' they say 'this number are nicy', & they always pronounce the letter R as a L; for American they say Meliccan. They are very skilful in carving ivory or Jewelry, & can imitate anything to a nicety. If you go to a Tailor & order a suit of clothes, he will scan your figure for a minute & say 'Can do', & without measuring you at all, fit you to a T. They do it very quick too for they are so eager to get the money. Washing is 1d per dozen, & they will take it ashore one day & bring it on board again the next. Any rubbish, ashes, &c, thrown overboard is eagerly collected by the sampans, & nothing in the shape of food is thrown away as refuse. This first day our money was paid, the ship was swarmed with traders of all sorts, & a good deal of money was spent. For an article worth a Dollar they will ask 2-1/2 & say 'No have got t tongues', then if you offer them a Dollar & show them the money they will sing out 'Can do'. Its just the same in their Bazaaras on shore; if you only show them the money they will sell you something. I have spent a lot of money here in Curiosities, Oil Paintings, Clothes &c. &c. I have bought a large Camphor Wood Chest to keep my clothes in, for 3 Dollars (that is 12/9d) and it would fetch over £2 in England. The wood smells beautiful & no moth or insect will go near it. You could spend a fortune here, in a day, in silks, fans, ivory goods &c. & when you visit one of their large Canton Bazaaras you can't come away with money in your pocket. I did intend going to Canton but I have spent so much money that I can't afford it. Let our officers & men be up there next for it is the Race week. I must get a description of that wonderful city from some of them. You can get a box of good Tooth powder here for a penny, & the box would cost as much as that in England, for it is made of wood like a small slate pencil box.

Our Photographer that was engaged at Cape Town left the ship here, making the 3rd we have had; however we have got another. The Carpenter of the ship has deserted, & also one of the new boys; but we have taken in over 60 new hands from England to fill up vacancies. We have invalided 2 or 3 here, &
& several have exchanged into other ships. I don’t think we shall have 60 of our original 240 hands left, when we pay off. We have 40 boys from Plymouth, just out from England, & they can eat Bananas & oranges.

But the greatest alteration of the lot happened a few days ago when Captain Nares received a telegram from England to say that he was appointed to the command of the new Arctic Expedition that leaves England next April, and was to proceed home at once. Lieutenant Aldrich (our 3rd Lieut.) was also to accompany him. The Captain would have preferred remaining in this ship until the cruise was finished & then going up the Arctic, but he could not refuse it. Professor Thompson was in a great way about it, & talked of throwing up the whole affair & coming home, but the captain persuaded him not: however he will go home before we get back. The officers gave a grand farewell dinner made the Captain & Dr. Kent. The Captain made a short speech & said how sorry he was to go & how he should often be thinking of his old ship mates & that he hoped to be back from the Arctic almost as soon as we get back. They will be away one winter & 2 summers & return about Sept’r 76. The recent Australian expedition is I think, the cause of the present hurry in getting away. Captain Nares said he owed his command to the zeal of his officers & men, & to their great success: & he thought the new voyage was an offshoot of the ‘Challenger’ expedition. You will read all about it in the Papers.

I don’t think Captain Nares is quite strong enough for such a voyage, he suffered from ‘Rheumatism’ on the Antarctic trip, & he is rather a timid man I think - not enterprise enough for such a command. He was up in the ‘Arctic’ 16 years ago, in the ‘Resolute’; & another ship, in search of Sir John Franklin: he was a Lieut. at that time. The ‘Resolute’ was frozen in so hard that they had to abandon her & make their way in sledges over the ice until they reached a settlement. Four years after the ‘Resolute’ was picked up in the Atlantic by an American Whale ship, having floated with the ice nearly 2000 miles south of where she was frozen in. She was taken to New York & put in a thorough state of repair by the American Government, & presented to the Queen at Portsmouth.

On the 10th Dec the Capt & 1st Lieut. left for England in the mail boat, & will be home long before you get this. The Captain travels from Alexandria overland. He took with him his Steward & his coxswain, one of the finest & most popular seaman we had in the ship. The Captain was rowed on board the mail boat by 8 of the junior officers; all hands mustered in the rigging & gave him 3 good cheers, & the Band played ‘Auld Lang Syne’. We are all sorry to lose him for he was a very kind & good man.

A new Captain has been appointed & will be here in 2 days from Shanghai where he is in command of the ‘Moderat’. His name is Thompson, & he bears a bad name for tyranny on this station. He plays the fiddle & preaches his own sermons, I believe, but will tell you more about him by & bye. His coming will probably make our commission longer. We have a new Lieutenant named Carpenter from the ‘Iron Duke’. The ‘Challenger’ expedition was distinctly visible here, but there was no party on board. Captain Nares received a Telegram from England to say that he was appointed to the command of the new Arctic Expedition that leaves England next April, and was to proceed home at once. Lieutenant Aldrich (our 3rd Lieut.) was also to accompany him. The Captain would have preferred remaining in this ship until the cruise was finished & then going up the Arctic, but he could not refuse it. Professor Thompson was in a great way about it, & talked of throwing up the whole affair & coming home, but the captain persuaded him not: however he will go home before we get back. The officers gave a grand farewell dinner made the Captain & Dr. Kent. The Captain made a short speech & said how sorry he was to go & how he should often be thinking of his old ship mates & that he hoped to be back from the Arctic almost as soon as we get back. They will be away one winter & 2 summers & return about Sept’r 76. The recent Australian expedition is I think, the cause of the present hurry in getting away. Captain Nares said he owed his command to the zeal of his officers & men, & to their great success: & he thought the new voyage was an offshoot of the ‘Challenger’ expedition. You will read all about it in the Papers.

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I have been on shore here several times, but the first time was the greatest novelty. The town of Victoria extends from east to west for 4 miles, but from north to south it is of no great extent on account of the steep hills that rise above it. The houses are mostly of stone & 3 stories high with open balconies; & they are wonderfully thick & over crowded with inhabitants. Fires are very frequent here. The population is estimated at 110,000, but I should think 300,000 would be nearer the mark. There are no cabs or omnibuses, so the traffic is not confined to the road sides. Instead of cabs there are hundreds of sedan chairs carried on bamboo poles by 4 Chinamen. You can hire them for a dollar a day, or for 5s an hour. Very few white people ever walk here, & soldiers & sailors invariably use these chairs; it is a very common occurrence to see 20 or 30 sedan chairs coming along the street, each containing a sailor with a cigar in his mouth, & one foot out of each of the small windows. When they reach a public house they sing out ‘Short-en sail’ & ‘Heave to’, & out they all get, keeping the chair wait-
ters, one from J.T.S. & one from Fred dated Nov. 4th. Fred says he never received my letter from Tongatabu, so it must have been lost. He did not say whether you had received the Cape York letter, you should have done so early in Nov. Fred's was a very amusing letter. & he writes very well. I shall write to him in a fortnight's time, tell him. I shall write to Will again as soon as I hear from him. J.T.S. tells me that Father was better again. I think we shall receive one more mail here before we leave for the South.

I have just received an Illustrated Paper from T.T. of Oct. 318. The Prussian Frigate 'Arcona' that was at Melbo and Sydney with us, has just arrived. The mail leaves tomorrow & we leave here Jan 8th. I hear. We are just going to make our X'mas pudding.

Remember me to all friends.

Goodbye - J.M.

Judging from the statistics and the rather formal language frequently appearing in his description of foreign ports, it is clear that Matkin was drawing on the ship's log and on printed sources as well as personal experiences and shipboard gossip. Books and newspapers were no doubt available in the ship's library, which during a portion of the voyage was in the charge of Matkin's immediate superior, the ship's steward. In addition, a special collection of scientific and travel books was taken aboard explicitly for the expedition, although these were probably reserved for the use of the scientific staff and may not have been readily available to Matkin. In any case, the amount of time he devoted to letter-writing, under conditions that can hardly have been conducive to it, is surely testimony to a strong sense of family devotion. These feelings were most evident in the correspondence following his father's death in 1874. The mails kept this news from Matkin for nearly four months.

From Hong Kong Challenger returned southward through the Philippine Islands to the north coast of New Guinea and the Admiralty Islands, thence north to Japan where she remained for two months. Crossing the North Pacific, the ship paused in Hawaii, then headed south again to Valparaiso via Tahiti and Juan Fernandez. She passed through the Straits of Magellan as the crew celebrated its final Christmas. The last leg of the voyage brought them to the Falklands, Monte Video, Ascension and, finally, Spithead. The mails kept this news from Matkin for nearly four months.

The Challenger letters provide us with intimate documentation of most aspects of Joseph Matkin's life during the voyage. Thereafter, his movements resume the obscurity of an undistinguished middle class life. He left the Royal Navy upon completion of the expedition and returned to Oakham. He then moved to London (Portman Square) and - precisely as he had predicted in a letter written during the voyage - became a civil servant, a 'Clerk, Lower Division' at the Local Government Board in Whitehall (an agency formed in 1871 to administer public health and poor relief throughout the country). Both his record-keeping duties and his family correspondence during the expedition must have fitted him well for the letter-writing and copying responsibilities of a clerical position in the British civil service.

It may be that he left the ship with a letter of recommendation for just such a position from one of the ship's officers.

In 1880 Matkin married Mary 'Polly' Swift (1858-1939) of Oakham (Figure 6), a woman of some means whose father, Thomas Swift, was registrar of births for the town. They remained in London for the next 14 years, living first in Pimlico and then, for a longer period, in Croydon. Five sons were born: Charles, Joseph William, Frederick George, Robert Swift, and Francis Richmond (Figure 7).

In 1894, when only 41 years of age, Matkin inexplicably retired from government employment and took his family back to Oakham, where the sixth and final son, Joseph Hugh, was born. The family resided at 37 Penn Street, and from then until 1914, Matkin was listed in the Oakham city directory as merely 'retired civil servant.' In 1914, he moved back to London, but this time alone as he was by then separated from his wife, who went to live with the eldest son Charles in Bedford. Matkin was a resident of Holborn (6 Old Compton Street) at the time of his death in 1927, which resulted from a fall in the
street. According to family tradition, he died of complications after being struck by a motorcycle.

What is most surprising in this life of one Ruttlander is not the obscurity of his later years, but rather the detailed portrait of the voyage years rendered so immediate by his amazing letters. Equally remarkable is the fortunate series of events that has preserved them. In the present Age of Information, when so much of our communication is transmitted - and ultimately lost - by evanescent electronic channels, while so little is written down unless it is to be published, we must give homage to those two nearly extinct species, the letter-writer and the letter-preservation. They open the doors to many of history’s rooms which would otherwise remain forever sealed.

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1 Further details of Matkin’s life, and a complete edition of the Challenger letters, will be found in Philip F. Rehbock, ed., At Sea With the Scientists: the Challenger Letters of Joseph Matkin (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, in press).
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1974 was the year in which Rutland finally ceased to be a county and became instead a District Council within the County of Leicestershire. It was a year too which almost marked the end of the cinema period in this area. The cinemas were confined to the two towns of Oakham and Uppingham, apart from the RAF cinemas in Cottesmore and North Luffenham, which are briefly mentioned in my final paragraph.

Until 1925 the town did not have a purpose-built cinema, but film shows were given in various halls, especially the Victoria Hall. However in the *Stamford Mercury*, dated 29th May, 1925, it was reported that 'Before Henry C. Noel and Major H.E. Whaley in the Magistrates Court at the Castle on Monday Captain Guy Dawson was granted a cinema licence for a cinema to be opened in Oakham on Saturday.' Thus a new era began. The *Picture House* was a corrugated iron building, still in existence, and opened on Saturday, 30th May, 1925. There was no special opening ceremony, but older people in the town have an idea that it was showing 'White Rose of England', and all the patrons on the first night were given a white rose. Shows were held in these early days twice nightly, with a matinee on Saturdays, and the prices ranged from 6d to 1/6d. The building had 250 seats, but the front rows consisted merely of wooden forms. It was equipped with a stage 16 feet in drop and 16 feet in width, served by two dressing rooms. In late 1930 Edibel sound was installed, but according to those who remember, the quality was inferior, whilst an eyewitness recalls that 'the rattle of hail on the tin roof drowned all else'. By 1931, because of the depression, the cinema was open for but three nights a week on a twice nightly basis. Most prices remained the same, though the best seats were dearer at 1/9d. Captain Dawson must have given up by 1934, for the cinema was sold by auction in the Victoria Hall on Friday, 4th May, 1934 to Mr Frederick B. Salt (commonly remembered as 'Bob' Salt) for the sum of £410. Mr Salt ran the cinema himself for a time, and applied for the licence, but on 5th July, 1935 the renewal was refused. No grounds for the refusal were apparent, but by then the *Regal* cinema had opened just one hundred yards away. The last show given was 'Alexander Hamilton', starring George Arliss. By this time the improved Imperial sound system had been installed. The *Kinematograph Year Book* continued to list the *Picture House* in 1936, 1937 and 1938, but by then it was no longer functioning. It later became the Oakham Saleroom, and still remains as such.

A licence was granted to Kenneth John Norfolk of Northampton on Monday, 7th May, 1934, and the *Regal* opened on Thursday, 10th May, 1934 at 6 o'clock. The first film shown was 'Aunt Sally', starring Cicely Courtnidge, whilst the supporting film

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Fig. 2. *The Regal Cinema, William Dalby Street* (Courtesy of Miss M. Brooks)
was *Scram* with Laurel and Hardy. Messrs K.J. and A.B. Norfolk were listed as the proprietors, but F.B. Salt was also involved. There was seating for 480, about 100 of whom were accommodated in lounge-type chairs in the small balcony. The sound installation was by Morrison. For a year after the opening shows were given at 7.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays each week, whilst on Thursdays and Saturdays performances were continuous from 6pm. Prices ranged from 6d to 1/6d. By 1936 showing times had been altered, and films were continuous on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Prices also increased to 6d and 2/-.

In March, 1938, F.B. Salt moved to a different directorship within the cinema industry, and handed over the *Regal* to Thomas E.H. Black. Where the Norfolk family had gone to is not clear. The War years caused a temporary suspension of all entertainment, but after a week or so the *Regal* resumed the normal shows.

By 1943 the *Regent* cinema on the main road had been open for three years. It also gave shows on Sundays, and was quite crowded on some sabbath evenings. Thus, to ease the situation, the management at the *Regal* approached the magistrates for a Sunday licence, which was readily granted. This became effective from October, and helped to alleviate the difficulty of entertaining Service personnel as well as the residents of Oakham. After the end of hostilities and after the *Regal* and the *Regent* had run concurrently for seven years, the two cinemas of Oakham were sold, and came under the control of Midland Empire Theatres, later known as Eskay Ltd., run by H. Elton of Nottingham. In January, 1948, at a party for the cinema staffs at Oakham, the manager of both cinemas did not realise he was soon to lose some of the staff he was toasting, for on July 10th, 1948, the *Regal* closed. The final film shown on the last two days was ‘Holiday in Mexico’ with Walter Pidgeon and Jane Powell, supported by ‘Bikini Atom Island’. No obituary notice appeared in the *Stamford Mercury*. The building stood derelict for many years until it was demolished in the 1970’s to make way for fresh houses and the construction of William Dalby Walk.

The building of the *Regent* began in late 1939. The designer was Frank Craven, and it was built by the same named Leicester firm for T.E.H. Black (see *Regal*). It was a magnificent theatre for the County Town, but it was built at one of the most difficult times in our history. However, despite the war it was completed and opened on Friday, 27th September, 1940. The opening film, ‘The Real Glory’, starred Gary Cooper, David Niven and Andrea Leeds. The proscenium had tabeaux curtains (house tabs) as well as festoon screen tabs, illuminated by Holo­phane stage lighting. A great deal of the installation...
work had been carried out by the Regal staff, who assisted Mr Gillibrand, the chief engineer. The latest fire fighting equipment was installed, and projection equipment too with an R.C.A. Photophone sound system. The Regent ran together with the Regal until both were purchased by the H. Elton circuit. A change of name came for the Regent from 8th October, 1943, when the cinema became the County, the magistrates having raised no objections to this. The advertising carried the heading ‘County Cinema - late Regent’ for some while afterwards. Cinemascope was fitted, the first film under this system being ‘The Student Prince’, starring Ann Blyth and Edmund Purdom, from 30th September, 1955.

It was during this period, prior to the opening of the Barraclough Hall in 1953, that Oakham School on several occasions held their Speech Day in the cinema. Later in the 1950's Star Associated Holdings became interested, and eventually took over the bulk of the H. Elton Cinemas. It was run by them on similar lines as before. It was now the only cinema in Oakham. By 1985 however, after the demise of Star Circuits, there were several changes of ownership, first to L. Jaffa’s Orange Group Management, along with the Central in Stamford, then to the Sherwood Group, which instituted films and Bingo on alternate nights, and finally, in 1988, to G. O’Leary (again with the Central in Stamford).

The County was later sold for redevelopment. The cost of running the business for a few regular patrons in the evenings only had become no longer viable. Along with the commodious car park it was closed on July 9th, 1988. To many it was a great loss, and not even a 4000 signature petition, organised by the fourteen-year old daughter of a member of staff, could save it. The owner was accused of a deliberate run down, and there were many letters in the press condemning the redevelopment, but none saved the building, the very last cinema in Rutland. There are now shops, offices and houses on the site. As at nearby Stamford, a demand has since been voiced, hoping someone will build a small cinema for the young people to use.

Not a great deal can be traced of the actual date when films first began to be shown at the Social hall in Uppingham, though it seems it was quite as early as in Oakham. The date also when the lessee began to call the premises the Cosy Cinema is rather vague, but from 1930 at least it was known by this name. The cinema advertised regularly in the Stamford Mercury, until with the opening of the Rutland Cinema due on Monday 18th, 1937, the Cosy closed on the preceding Saturday, and reverted to its former use as a social hall. The last film shown was ‘Strike Me Pink’, starring Eddie Cantor.

The Rutland Cinema was officially opened by J.F. Wolfenden (later Sir John Wolfenden), the Headmaster of Uppingham School on 18th January, 1937. The ceremony took place at 8 o’clock in the evening, and was followed by the screening of ‘Little Lord Fauntleroy’ with Freddie Bartholomew as the star. The building was erected on the site of the old
were four changes weekly, changes being made on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. But all this was soon to change: Mrs Flood introduced Coffee Mornings in the foyer, and in the summer months she opened up for the sale of ices etc. By 1964 Bingo had arrived at the Rutland Club on Thursday and Sunday evenings, but films were still shown on the other nights. A year or so later the cinema was being closed on Wednesday nights in order to give the staff some time off. On May 20th, 1972, ‘The Tales of Beatrix Potter’ was the last film to be shown. A press announcement blamed the lack of support for the closure, an thanked all its loyal patrons. The owner made a complaint to the local M.P. about the restrictive practices of the Trade (Barring), which prevented the showing of a film if the nearest local town had not shown it. But films never returned to the Rutland; instead Bingo was played on four nights per week under the supervision of Mrs Flood. But even Bingo began to lose its charm in the 1970’s and the Bingo sessions ended. The building was put up for sale, and the Rutland became Ayston House, a business premises with a rebuilt red brick frontage, but the interior still bears witness to its former cinema origins.

As with many small towns not a great deal happens when compared with the activities of larger places, and yet the new cinema soon became part of the life of Uppingham. At times Uppingham School used the buildings, and films were shown throughout the troubled years of the 1940’s and into the 1950’s, but by 1952 the advent of television, a greater number of private cars and easier bus services into Leicester caused the Rutland Cinema to begin to feel the pinch, even if only lightly at first. Enough loyal patrons, however, remained to enable the management to refurbish the cinema and to fit a new screen for showing Cinemascope productions. On Monday, February 20th, 1956 a Vistavision film, ‘Strategic Air Command’, starring James Stewart and June Allyson, opened this new wide screen for a two day show. Cinemascope proper was soon to follow on March 24th with a two day showing of ‘Seven Brides for Seven Brothers’, starring Howard Keel and Jane Powell.

When a new owner, R.S. Hamblin, took over in the early 1960’s, Mrs Flood became manageress. There

hard tennis courts on Ayston Road. A steel frame encased in brick, it had a stage large enough for shows, and the proscenium opening was closed ‘by a handsome pair of oriental tabs’. There was seating for 325 patrons on the ground floor, and a further 84 in the balcony. Performances were at 7.45pm each Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, whilst on other evenings the show was continuous from 6.15pm. B.J. Wilson was the proprietor, whilst Mrs G. Flood (later to become the manageress) was involved from quite early days.

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Nine Men's Morris –
a Greetham Cobbler's Pastime

In the collections of the Rutland County Museum there is an old wooden workbench which once belonged to John Garfoot (1826-1909), shoemaker, of Greetham, Rutland (Fig. 1).

The bench (accession number LEIRM H54.1972) consists of a platform of oak, 36" (900mm) long, with a tapered splayed leg at each corner. It stands only 12" (300mm) high. At one end there is a large compartment for tools, and five small low ones for tacks, nails and so on. One of the small compartments held a caulking substance, and several hobnails are still embedded in it. Around the back of the large compartment there is nailed a narrow strip of leather, now incomplete, for holding awls and irons. At one stage in its life, the bench was fitted with a small drawer underneath, but this is now missing.

Beside the tool compartment, the upper surface of the main plank is slightly dished, probably because this end was used for cutting leather. It is scored by repeated cuts of the cobbler's knife. The condition of the wood is generally very sound although there has been a small amount of woodworm damage here and there.

The bench is of special interest because on the upper surface of the main compartment there is scratched a nine men's morris board. This consists of three concentric squares with a cross line linking them at the halfway point of each side, and a small compass-drawn circle within the centre square. The lay-out of the game is slightly confused by other compass-drawn circles which make a flower pattern, but it is nevertheless plain to see, especially in raking light (Fig. 2).

Nine men's morris is well known as being one of the most ancient games of alignment, and is closely allied to noughts and crosses (Murray 1952). Similar boards occur at late prehistoric and early historic sites in various places throughout the western world, one of the earliest being on the roofing slabs of a temple at Kurna, near Thebes, dating from the 14th century BC and probably drawn by its builders. They are also illustrated in a number of medieval documents.

In Britain, nine men's morris boards have quite often survived in churches, particularly those of monastic origin, and may be found on cloister seats, walls and tombstones. One of the nearest to Rutland can be seen on the wall of Hargrave church,
Northamptonshire. Another was recently found on a tombstone at Holy Trinity church, Little Woolstone, Milton Keynes.

The object of the game is to align three men on the three marked points of a line (the two ends and the centre), thus making a 'mill', while preventing one's opponent from so doing. The men are played one at a time by alternate players. Every time a mill is made, one of the opponent's men may be removed, but he may not be taken from a mill. When each player has placed all nine of his men, then they can be moved one step at a time to a neighbouring empty point, with the continuing aim of making further mills.

The winner is the player who succeeds in removing all his opponent's men (or, according to Bell (1979), reduces them to two in number), or renders them unable to move. Captured men are put in the inner circle, known as the bushel or pound.

The rules of the game may vary from place to place, and many such details were collected by Lady Gomme (1894), but the principle remains the same. Perhaps in the 14th century, diagonal lines to the corners were first added, and this form of the game came to be played with 12 men. It is this version which made its way to North America.

The men would be made of any conventional material - stones, pieces of pottery, bone or leather counters, or wooden pegs. Sometimes they would be purpose made. Perhaps one player would have stones while his opponent had wooden men, especially when the game was played - as it frequently was - on a board scratched in the ground with hollows scooped out for the marked points: not a game for a rotten summer, when 'the nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud/And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,/For lack of tread, are undistinguishable' (Shakespeare, Midsummer Night's Dream, II.i.97-100).

The game is generally known in the romance languages as merelles or some variant of it, and evidently morris is a dialect perversion of this word, which in Latin meant a counter or token. A complete line was usually called a mill, and indeed the game was often called shepherd's mill. In eastern England and the east Midlands, it was known as merryall, merryholes or some similar name, and in his sonnet The Shepherd Boy in the Rural Muse (1835) John Clare shows that he knew the game: of the boy he says 'Oft may we track his haunts where he hath been/To spend the leisure which his toils bestow/By 'nine peg morris' nicked upon the green'.

Although many instances of the game are recorded in antiquity, and it is still played today, not so many are known as portable objects. This occurrence is all the more interesting because of its association with a particular man, which by inference gives it an approximate date.

It appears from the Greetham parish registers (Leicestershire Record Office DE 2574/2) that John Garfoot was the youngest of six children of John and Elizabeth Garfoot. Their family seems to have been as follows:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Mary</td>
<td>baptised 21st April 1811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 William</td>
<td>baptised 8th August 1813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Elizabeth (1)</td>
<td>baptised 29th October 1815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Elizabeth (2)</td>
<td>baptised 14th December 1817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Anne</td>
<td>born 14th November 1821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 John</td>
<td>born 30th April 1826</td>
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It may be noted that the surname of both Anne and John is registered as Garforth, not Garfoot. Both were baptised by the Rev Henry de Poe Baker (curate of South Luffenham, May 1812, and of Norton, November 1812, and vicar of Greetham from 4th September 1821 until his resignation in 1844 - Longden 1938). Several other Garfoot families are also to be found in the registers and are similarly spelt Garforth by Baker - as if the spelling was a quirk of his: but Mrs Audrey Buxton informs me (pers comm) that this alternative spelling does occur earlier in the register. Baker also recorded dates of birth as well as of baptism.

A search of local trade directories reveals something of the family's history and standing in the village. John Garfoot senior was parish clerk in 1846 (White), an office which he seems to have held for many years, at least until 1880 (Wright). Nevertheless, he was evidently of modest means for although the earlier directories give him no trade, he was described in 1880 as a cottager, and had been a labourer when his children were born. John Garfoot, then called junior, first appears in the directories available to me as a boot and shoe maker in 1855 (Kelly). He was then in competition with three other men following this trade in Greetham alone, James Dring, Charles Sharpe and John Spriggs - a reminder, if any were needed, of the nature of village economics.

In 1875 (Barker), when he was nearly 50, John took over the post office from Ann Hibbitt, and had charge of it until 1897 (Matkin). By 1888 (Kelly) he had taken on the job of parish clerk from his father, but at about the same time he seems to have given up the boot and shoe trade as a stated occupation.
There was perhaps an overlap of responsibilities, for in 1880 (Wright) he is also described as Steward of the Wesleyan chapel. A new John Garfoot junior appears in 1888 as a baker.

In Matkin's annual, Oakham Almanacks, John and John junior are entered as office and baker respectively until 1897. In 1898 no occupation is shown for John, and in 1899 he is absent. However John junior continues to have that epithet until 1909. When our old man of the village died at the age of 83. In Matkin's Almanack for 1910, John Garfoot, baker, is no longer 'junior'.

When Mrs Munton bought the house where he had lived and worked, she found the bench and gave it to the Rutland County Museum in 1972. Here it was seen on display five years later by John Garfoot's grandson, Edgar H Garfoot, who remembered sitting on the end of it while his grandfather worked. Had young and old played nine men's morris too?

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The Arms of the Rutland Rural District Council.
Byron:–
the Oakham Connection

Ask anyone where Byron is buried and the answer will almost certainly be either in Greece near Lake Missolonghi or at Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire. Both answers would be wrong, for he lies in the family vaults beneath the chancel of the church of St Mary Magdalene in the village of Hucknall Torkard, a small mining community just north of Nottingham and only a few miles from Newstead.

Even fewer people would know that his body rested for one night in Rutland on the journey from London to Nottinghamshire, and it does not seem to have been mentioned in any of the Rutland county histories, but the Stamford Mercury, 16th July, 1824, records the following: 'The remains of Lord Byron, which were removed from Great George Street, Westminster, on Monday morning, passed through Uppingham on Wednesday, and lay in state at the Crown Inn (sic) at Oakham that evening on the road to the family cemetery, Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire. The body was in a hearse drawn by six horses and followed by three mourning coaches and six: the whole preceded by eight horsemen. At nine o'clock yesterday morning the cavalcade passed through Melton Mowbray: it was to reach Nottingham last night and this day the body is to be entombed.'

Actually, the cortège did not reach Nottingham until five o'clock on the Friday morning (July 16th), when the hearse drew up at the Blackmoor’s Head Inn in Pelham Street. Until ten o'clock the same morning people were allowed to file past the body. After that the procession was again formed and proceeded NOT to the family seat at Newstead Abbey, but to the church of Hucknall Torkard, where just before four o’clock, the coffin and the urn, containing the dead poet’s heart and brain, were lowered into the family vault.

Byron died at Lake Missolonghi on April 19th, 1824, fighting to free Greece from the Turks. His body was brought back to England on HMS Florida, and reached Stangate’s Creek on 1st July. For two days July 9th and 10th, it lay in state at 20, Great George Street, Westminster, and then began the long procession to the north. The body rested for the first night at the White Hart, Welwyn: for the second night at Higham Ferrers (probably at the Green Dragon, though none of my researches have positively verified this), and for the third night at the Crown Inn, Oakham.

Those who wish to enquire further into the matter should consult a small book on the subject entitled Byron and where he is buried, written by the late Canon Thomas Gerrard Barber, at one time Vicar of Hucknall and a cousin of mine, published in June, 1939, by Henry Morley & Sons, Hucknall.

Canon Barber excavated the vaults of the Byron family, the work commencing on 15th June, 1938. There is also a reference to the night that the body rested in Oakham in the Stamford Mercury of 11th April, 1952, in a feature called ‘Gossip Grave and Gay’.

Fig. 1. George Gordon Noel Byron (by courtesy of City of Nottingham Museums – Newstead Abbey)
Once again a variety of records relating to Rutland were received into the Record Office. Members will be familiar already with the value of the Leicestershire Yeomanry films and also of the important Royce collection, which the Society has kindly deposited in the Office.

The Yeomanry films are achieving a wide exposure. In addition to last year’s showings, they were seen again at the Oakham Midsummer Carnival in June, and in December at a joint meeting of the Society and the Friends of the Rutland County Museum.

An exhibition of records relating to the villages of Preston and Ridlington was prepared for the Rutland Record Society Day in October. Later, with the addition of a display of Oakham records, the exhibition transferred to Rutland County Museum with the theme ‘Town and Country’.

The continuing work on the Exton MSS is described elsewhere. Members may like to know that work is now nearing completion on the listing of another major collection, the records of Carlton Hayes Hospital (formerly the Leicestershire and Rutland County Lunatic Asylum). As its name suggests, this institution served both counties and the records, covering the years 1836-1889, include references to a significant number of inmates from Rutland.

The Record Office has seen a number of staff changes during the year. Gwenith Jones, who had been an Assistant Keeper of Archives for eight years, left for a post in the Cheshire Record Office. Among much other work she was responsible for the publication of the Guide to the Quarter Sessions Records and The Descent of Dissent (a guide to the Office’s non-conformist records). Jess Baillie and Keith Ovenden joined the staff as Assistant Keepers, and a further addition was Pat Grundy, an experienced family history researcher who is operating the Record Office’s fee-based research service.

The most momentous change took place in October when Kate Thompson left to become County Archivist of Hertfordshire. Kate had worked in the Record Office and its predecessor office for over 20 years, 11 of them as County Archivist, and, as members will well know, has left an indelible mark on the Service. Finally at the end of 1990, Heather Broughton moved from the post of Keeper of Archives to become Acting Assistant Director (Projects) within the wider Museums Service. Carl Harrison was appointed as the new County Archivist in March.

With all these changes, plus the projected move to new premises at Wigston in 1992, and the amalgamation with the Leicestershire (Local Studies) Collection, a period of great change has commenced. Eighteen months of planning and hard work lie ahead, but the end result should be a greatly enhanced service for all our users.

Carl Harrison
County Archivist

Exton MSS

The sorting and listing of the Exton MSS continued steadily throughout the year and despite the additional deposit of another 25 boxes of papers, progress was such that by the end of 1990 the halfway milestone had been well passed.

Again many interesting items have come to light. Some fine series of deeds were found, notably for Whitwell (1411-1620) and for Exton (c.1125-1820). These included the partition of the Manor of Exton in 1359 between the sisters Joan Grene and Agnes de Wesenham and a splendid illuminated licence of alienation in mortmain of Richard II (1382) making provision for charity priests in Exton. Other Rutland parishes well represented in title deeds included Ridlington, Langham, Braunston and Cottesmore.

Estate papers, however, formed the bulk of material dealt with in the past year, and related both to Exton and to Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire, where the family also had an estate. The Exton estate vouchers included receipts for pictures purchased by Baptist, 4th Earl of Gainsborough (1733-47) and there were also foxhound vouchers for Thomas Noel of Walcot and Exton (1755-57) and for Exton Park (1761-89). Tom Noel’s vouchers also included several items relating to Rutland elections (1725-53). Among the estate vouchers of Sir Gerard Noel Noel, MP, were bills for repairs to Catmose House, Oakham and the building of the Riding School there in 1794-5. These were of especial interest as the building now houses the Rutland County Museum. On a related tack to the Riding School, muster rolls for the Rutland Volunteers (1794) and the Rutland Fencible Cavalry (1795 and 1798) were also found. Many estate maps and plans were also listed, notably that of Exton Park by John Wing (1709) and the Manor of Ridlington by Edmund Dipper (1759).
Family wills and probate material dealt with included two fine, detailed inventories for Sir Andrew Noel of Dalby, Leics. (1563), and his son Sir Andrew Noel of Brooke (1607). Among the nineteenth century family correspondence listed during the year were a number of interesting letters relating to Rutland elections in the period 1841 to 1847.

As can be seen, the Exton MSS continue to provide much illuminating material for the history of Rutland. The collection has certainly justified its reputation as one of the Record Office's most exciting and important acquisitions.

Jenny Clark
Assistant Keeper (Exton MSS)

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RUTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM

Since the last report, further progress has been made in building up the collection of reference photographs of Rutland, with photocopies of relevant pictures from the Henton Collection and other material. The photograph folders are always available for inspection on request, and in many cases prints can be supplied from negatives in the Service's possession.

The Friends of the Museum have purchased No 2 Catmos Street, immediately adjoining the museum and part of the riding school complex, for £18,000. It is intended to convert the premises for museum use, including displays, in time to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the construction of the Riding School in 1794-95.

Amongst the papers which have recently come to light amongst the Exton MSS are several bills and accounts referring to the building of the Riding School, and it is hoped to produce a note on these in a future issue.

Recent acquisitions by the museum include the following:

H14.1990 Old Moore's Almanacks with Rutland pages (though incomplete) for 1834 and 1837
H26.1990 Oakham Minstrel Troupe programme 1897
H46.1990 Sale Catalogue: Outlying Portions of the Burley Estates (various parishes) 1948
H53.1990 Engraving of Oakham Castle for England Display'd
H55.1990 Collection of prize-winning certificates for sewing, Rutland Triennial Festival and Burghley Arts and Crafts Exhibition, c.1920-30, with some of the original garments, made by Miss V and Miss K Veasey (or Veazey)
H2.1991 Postcards of M A Nichols & Son's hardware shop and dray, Uppingham
H3.1991 Coloured print commemorating Lord Lonsdale's Race against Time, 1891
H4.1991 Pocket photograph album containing family photographs, cover depicting the interior of Oakham Castle.

The last item is specially interesting, for although the family connection is unknown, the cover photograph shows court fittings in place at the east end of the Great Hall of the Castle and is the only view known to the writer to show them. It also shows the rectangular Tudor-style window in use, and therefore dates from before alterations were made which re-opened the high window on the East wall and revealed the blocked doorways which are now visible. The exact date of the photograph is not known, but it was also before the installation of gas lighting (other views show gas flares in place). The subsequent alterations obviously entailed moving some of the large horseshoes. Although some of them can be identified, this has not produced conclusive evidence. However, the most likely date for the photograph is about 1855.

Finally, sorting of the Society's Royce papers has enabled a number of Ordnance Survey 25" maps to be added to the museum's collection, so that coverage of Rutland at least with 2nd edition maps is nearly complete.

We are pleased to note that members and others have continued to use the museum's reference facilities, including the Rutland parish register microfiches. Study space can be reserved by telephoning the museum on Oakham 723654.

T.H.McK. Clough
Keeper, Rutland County Museum

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RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society's programme for 1990 included a visit in the spring to the farm and mill at Sacrewell and a coach trip in June to Calke Abbey and the church built during the period of the Commonwealth at Staunton Harold in north Leicestershire. The Autumn reception, which was well attended, centred round a lively description by the Keeper of the Harborough Museum of the incorporation into his museum of Faulkener's bootmaker's shop.

The AGM was held in February, the chief item on the agenda being closer association with the Rutland Record Society; the Committee was given a mandate to pursue this objective, and it is hoped that a Rutland Local History and Record Society, perpetuating the strengths and serving the members of both the former societies will be created during the course of the present year.

J. Crossley
Honorary Secretary
RUTLAND FIELD RESEARCH GROUP FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

Excavation Work
Members of the Group have continued to excavate at the Medieval site at Whitwell Old Hall site. A corner feature in the central area of the building reported earlier was investigated and removal of the 'quad­rant' wall revealed another unexpected floor area. This consists of very large flat stones up to 1.5m x 0.75m in size interspersed with 'on edge' limestone flooring. The new feature could be interpreted as narrow passageways between working areas. One such path appears to run through the adjacent N-S interior wall which remains with up to 5 courses of limestone. The northern end of the wall appears to contact a circular stone lined post-hole. The larger stones in the base suggest an upright post or cruck support. Although some 15 sq m. of paved area has been cleared the only artefacts present were pieces of pig-iron - presumably from the adjacent burning hearth.

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Other activities
The Chairman and Vice-Chairman continue to serve on the Leicestershire Archaeological Advisory Committee. Group members continue to support CBA Group 14. Housing and golf course development is planned for the Hardwick (DMV) area and at Streton, and members will attempt to monitor any building activities when they commence.

Social activities continue to be popular and the summer picnic commenced with a tour of Lyddington Bede House and its environs followed by an excellent supper in the grounds of Gower Lodge, Uppingham.

The Annual General Meeting was held at the RCM in October 1990 and approved an increase of membership subscription to meet rising costs. The meeting was followed by a talk on '600 Years of digging towns' by Mr Alan McWhirr.

Group membership has been variable but the Group's financial position is very sound. Considerable work remains to be done in the county and more able bodied members would be welcome.

A.W. Adams
Chairman, Rutland Field Research Group

Oakham field-walking survey
Following the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit's excavation of a Neolithic pit circle and Late Neolithic inhumation near the Burley Road, NE of Oakham, in 1986, the Group's field-walking strategy was concentrated on surveying the adjacent fields for further evidence of settlement and land use since prehistoric times (Trans Leicestershire Archaeol Hist Soc 61 (1987) 87-90; Rutland Record 7 (1987) 253; id., 11 (1991) 43).

A programme of winter survey work from 1986 onwards has revealed a substantial flint scatter of over a thousand worked flints from an area between the Neolithic pit circle by the Burley Road and Dog Kennel Spinney (SK 871096).

Roman pottery - 160 sherds dating from the late 1st to the 4th century AD plus a few fragments of Romano-British tile and tesserae from near Dog Kennel Spinney - suggests a possible Romano-British settlement site.

A pottery scatter dating from the early medieval period through to the 19th century was found over the whole area. This provides some archaeological evidence for dating the Oakham midland field system of ridge and furrow. Most of the system is now ploughed out although a remnant can still be seen in Dog Kennel Spinney (pers.comm. E L Jones to Leicestershire Museums Field Survey Unit of 6.5.1987).

The Group's records and finds are now housed with the Leicestershire Archaeological Unit (accession nos A11.1991 & A12.1991). It is hoped that further field-work will add to this information as the extent of the flint scatter and Roman pottery scatter has not yet been delineated.

The Group wishes to thank the Burley Estate for permitting members on its land. I would also like to thank the growing band of volunteers who have joined in this survey.

Elaine L Jones, Field Survey Project Officer
Rutland Field Research Group

LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Excavations along an oil pipeline through Rutland
Between April and August 1990, Fina plc laid an oil pipeline through Rutland as part of their long-distance line from Humberside to Hertfordshire. The location of the line took into account the known archaeological sites in the area and a pre-construction survey was undertaken in certain areas, consisting of a geophysical survey and hand-dug trial trenches (Trans Leicestershire Archaeol Hist Soc 64 (1990) 102). This confirmed archaeological sites at three locations (2, 4 and 5 below) where excavation would be required during the laying of the pipeline. In addition Fina plc, through the Trust for Wessex Archaeology, funded a watching brief which took place during the topsoil stripping. This revealed two previously unknown sites (1 and 3) and various artefacts (6). During the pipe construction phase the sites were excavated by Leicestershire Archaeological Unit directed by Josephine Sharman (Sites 1-3, 5) and David Mackie (Site 4). The watching brief was undertaken by K. Gdeniac for the Trust for Wessex Archaeology. Finds and records are deposited
with Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service under the separate accession numbers indicated.

1. Tickencote, SK 985093

Anglo-Saxon and some Roman pottery were discovered SW of Tickencote c.150m north of the River Gwash. Excavation of an area of 270 sq m revealed two sunken floored buildings, two hearths, two pits, and a linear ditch on a NE-SW alignment cutting the clay and limestone substrata. Over 3 kg of 5th-6th century pottery was recovered from the features, the large quantity perhaps suggesting domestic activity. This is one of the few early Saxon sites examined in Leicestershire and contributes to our knowledge of Saxon evidence from this area of Rutland including the cemeteries at Empingham. A flint scatter was also present in this area (A44.1990).

2. Ketton, SK 992061

Excavation of a small irregular ring ditch was undertaken following geophysical survey and trial excavation (Trans Leicestershire Archaeol Hist Soc 64 (1990) 102). No finds were recovered although a hearth feature was revealed to the N. This may be evidence of a very small denuded barrow (A.1.1990). Other ring ditches are known to the E (J Pickering & R F Hartley, Past Worlds in a Landscape, Leicestershire Museums 1985, 74).

3. Ketton, SK 991056

Romano-British occupation was revealed during the watching brief 1.5 miles (2.4 km) E of Ketton near Steadfold Lane. Evidence of industrial activity, ditches and pits was examined although no structures were identified. Material from the site suggested occupation from the 2nd-4th centuries. Of note was a complete lower stone from a quern or millstone. Its large size (0.55 m) suggests that this may have been powered. The Roman activity may be connected to the sites revealed during limestone quarrying at Ketton Cement works c.1 mile (1.6 km) to the W (A66.1990).

4. Ketton, SK 975029

Aerial reconnaissance by James Pickering revealed the cropmark of a triple ditch on a NW-SE alignment 0.9 miles (1.5 km) N of Tixover. Following geophysical survey and trial excavation further excavation was undertaken in August 1990. This revealed three parallel ditches. Two of these, to the SW, were very similar, c.25m wide by 0.9m deep, and clearly visible cutting the limestone subsoil. The third ditch, to the NE, was different in character, being much less distinct and smaller (0.95m wide by 0.55m deep) with steep sides and a flat bottom. No finds were recovered from this ditch although some Iron Age pottery and two copper alloy brooches were recovered from the two ditches to the SW. This is the first dating evidence recovered from a triple ditch complex in Leicestershire and suggests that here they were becoming disused by the 1st century BC. It is uncertain whether all three ditches were open at the same time; the two ditches to the SW may have replaced the single ditch to the NE (A2.1990).

5. Tixover, SK 966014

A section of double ditch on the NE-SW alignment was revealed by aerial photography 1 mile (1.6 km) NW of Tixover cutting a limestone subsoil. Following geophysical survey and trial excavation the features were excavated and consisted of two wide shallow ditches 3.5m x 0.3m deep and 3.0m x 0.65m deep respectively. No finds were located in these features (A3.1990).

6. Other finds from the Watching Brief

A single ditch on a NE-SW alignment was revealed 0.3 miles (0.5 km) SW of Geeston (SK 979033). Some possible Iron Age pottery and animal bone was present in the fill of this ditch which coincided with the assumed alignment of a Roman road. No evidence of a second ditch or road metalling was present, but 60m NE a second ditch (SK 981033) containing similar material on a NW-SE alignment was located. Artefacts were recovered from twenty other localities along the pipeline. Of note is a roughout for a neolithic flint axe from Tixover (SK 979032).

Josephine Sharman
David Mackie
Rutland Record Society: Publications

Rutland Record 1 (1980) £1.00 post free
The Emergence of Rutland; Medieval Hunting Grounds of Rutland; Rutland Field Names; Illiteracy in 19th century Rutland.

Rutland Record 2 (1981) £1.00 post free
Archdeacon Robert Johnson; Thomas Barker of Lyndon Hall and his weather observations; Rutland Agricultural Society; Rutland Farms in 1871.

Rutland Record 3 (1982/3) out of print
Cropmarks in the Rutland Landscape; Rutland’s Place in the History of Cricket; Ironstone in Rutland; Oakham School 140 years ago.

Rutland Record 4 (1984) £1.50
The Sharman of Greetham; Churches of Rutland; Belton-in-Rutland; Portrait of a Village; 19th century Greetham; Thomas Crapper and Manholes.

Rutland Record 5 (1985) £1.50
Westminster Abbey’s Rutland Churches and Oakham Manor; History of Ruddle’s Brewery; The French Revolution and Rutland.

Rutland Record 6 (1986) £1.50
Transitional Architecture in Rutland; Family of Rutland Stonemasons; The Restoration of Exton Church.

Rutland Record 7 (1987) £1.50
Major Place-Names of Rutland; The Making of the Rutland Domesday; Lords and Peasants in Medieval Rutland; Shakespeare in Rutland; A Medical Trade Token of Oakham.

Rutland Record 8 (1987) £3.00 (members £2.00)
A reference book containing over 170 biographies of personalities connected with Rutland. Illustrated and including source lists.

Rutland Record 9 (1988) £3.00 (members £2.00)
Historic Hedgerows; The Ryhall Hoard; Humphrey Repton and the Burley Landscape; Some Early Drawings of Rutland Churches; Catholicism in Rutland; In Search of Ram Jam; Rutland’s Ironstone Quarries in 1930; The Southwell Family of Uppingham.

Rutland Record 10 (1990) £3.00 (members £2.00)
Tenth Anniversary Issue devoted to the history of Burley on the Hill.

Rutland Record 11 (1991) £3.00 (members £2.00)
Rutland, Russia and Shakespeare; Industrial Archaeology in Rutland; Lord Lonsdale in the Arctic.

Rutland Record Series

1 Tudor Rutland: The County Community under Henry VIII. reduced to £2.00

2 The Weather Journals of a Rutland Squire edited by John Kington. £15.00 (members £12.00)
Thomas Barker of Lyndon Hall, brother-in-law of Gilbert White, kept weather, farming and countryside records for over sixty years in the 18th century. Scholarly introduction, commentaries, maps, illustrations, glossary, index.

Occasional Publications Series

4 Domesday Book in Rutland: the dramatis personae by Prince Yuri Galitzine (1986) £1.95 (members £1.50)

5 The Oakham Survey 1305 edited by Allen Chinnery (1989) £4.50 (members £3.50)
A medieval survey in great detail of an English market town revealing population, occupations, topography, customs and personal as well as placename evidence.

6 The Rutland Hearth Tax 1665 edited and introduced by Jill Bourne & Amanda Goode (1991) £4.50 (members £3.50)

Post and Packing: Rutland Record, Domesday Book in Rutland, Oakham Survey, Rutland Hearth Tax - 1 copy 60p; 2 copies 80p; 3 copies £1.20; 4 copies £2.00. Tudor Rutland and Weather Journals £2.00 each. Orders to Rutland County Museum, Catmos Street, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HW. Tel. (0572) 723654. Please contact the Museum for details of special offers available.
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