

THE DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE, 1967

By JOAN SINAR

1967 has been a busy year of varied interest, and a degree of activity which would not have been possible without the enthusiastic and painstaking support of Mr. C. J. Williams. This support has exceeded what one could fairly expect from a young assistant archivist.

I have been fortunate, too, in the help received from other members of the Record Office staff dealing with the post-1889 records of the County Council. These are now being reviewed and certain series reclassified in a manner more appropriate to the wider role of post-war local government. Material no longer needed for administrative purposes, and which is not of value for research, is being destroyed, and surviving files brought into a new system of regular review. Modern records management, though not of immediate importance to the usual run of research workers, including local historians, is of increasing importance in the work of the archivist, and of vital importance to the research worker of the future. Modern administration produces so much paper that, unless it is carefully classified and vigorously checked for administrative value from the beginning, the bulk becomes impossible to store or sort and is finally in desperation destroyed. With strict and detailed records management it is possible to set aside the policy and other key files for permanent retention. A growing number of institutions and businesses are coming to realize this, and to appoint their own archivists or seek advice from consultants or such bodies as the Business Archives Council.

The dominating interests of the year have been in fact work on the early stages of a more sophisticated policy of records management, the preparation and staging of the exhibition commemorating the Pentrich rising of 1817, and the reception and sorting of the Brooke-Taylor deposit. This last has occupied the last quarter of the year and will continue well into 1968.

The exhibition commemorating the Pentrich rising was like all major exhibitions a co-operative effort. Others were responsible for publicity, housing, and stewarding, and did much of the searching for exhibits. Great generosity was shown by owners and custodians of papers and objects, both in volunteering information about material of possible interest and later in lending selected items. Some searching fell on the office, as well as the final selection of items, the preparation of the

catalogue, the mounting of the exhibition, and dealing with school parties. The exhibition and other items in the Pentrich Festival programme were given good publicity by the press and the B.B.C., and attracted much public support. A mock-up of the exhibition using Xerox copies of original documents and rare books has been prepared to go on tour. It has already been loaned to the libraries of the Universities of Nottingham, Sheffield and Warwick and was shown to the annual conference of the National Institute of Adult Education held at Nottingham. An article on the nature and value of exhibitions was written for this conference.

There were a number of other exhibitions in the course of the year. There are now four large standing exhibitions, three being variants on a general theme "Aspects of Derbyshire Life", and one an exhibition of 16th- and 17th-century material. These exhibitions are designed to show something of the resources of the Record Office and accompany the more solid talks to students of colleges of education, members of historical societies and adult education classes. They were used five times in 1967. Special exhibitions were prepared to accompany serious talks on sources for industrial archaeology, the work of a field club, and (as an exception to a general rule) on Dethick, Lea and Holloway. Exhibitions were also prepared to accompany talks on the role of the country house, and on the records of medieval English society designed for school groups. A number of talks on the work of the office generally were given to various bodies, some of which were illustrated by selected documents or Xerox copies. One refreshing change was provided by a women's group who asked for a talk on the care of manuscripts. An exhibition of local material was given at the Brimington Gala Festival as an expanded, extended repeat performance of a one-day stand the previous year. Xerox copy documents were prepared for a small Rotary exhibition which could not offer security for original manuscripts. A number of manuscript and printed maps, plans, books and other items of cartographical interest were loaned for a major exhibition on British cartography with special reference to the north midlands, staged by the Loughborough School of Librarianship.

In addition to talks and exhibitions designed to introduce people with varying interests to the resources of the office an article on "The Archivist and Tutor" was written for *The Bulletin for Local History Tutors, East Midland Area*. In addition a good deal of work has been done with a group of students from Matlock College of Education exploring manuscript sources as part of a project on Ashover. Other working groups have visited the office including students from Chorley College of Education and students specializing in archives and cartography from Loughborough School of Librarianship. Schools are beginning to ask for similar facilities and a few parties have visited us. Cramped quarters and the lack of both a searchroom and substitute committee-room accommodation make group visits very difficult. Some requests have had to be refused, particularly during the last quarter of the year when all the office accom-

modation has been swamped by incoming records awaiting sorting and cleaning before they can be stored in the strongroom. Staffing, too, makes it difficult to deal with requests for group visits by schoolchildren, particularly by groups intending to work individually. The latter need a good deal of help which with only two archivists the office has not time to give. The position is known to the committee but little remedial action is possible at present.

The time spent on exhibitions, talks and group visits, supplemented though it is by time drawn from out of office hours, still constitutes a high proportion of the official working day. I sometimes query the validity of so high a proportion but console myself that it helps to show people what record offices are trying to do and brings to their notice an often unsuspected range of interest in manuscript sources. I hope that it may show to business men and private persons the very real potential interest to scholars of letters, diaries, accounts, trade and sale catalogues, maps and plans, which they and their friends hold, and may have previously mistakenly considered to be of little account or of very limited and private interest only.

Increasing numbers of owners and custodians are realizing the possible interest of their papers and either turning to the Record Office for help and advice in caring for them privately, or placing them here on deposit. There have been 74 new deposits or gifts and 13 additions to previous deposits. The most important of these is the deposit by Messrs. Brooke-Taylor of Bakewell of those papers of former but not of current clients which are more than 50 years old. Certain material will not be open to searchers for some time because of the general bar on access to deposited papers less than 100 years old. The papers run from the 17th to the early 20th century; those other than deeds are mainly 19th and early 20th century. The firm's earlier deposit of leadmining records has been doubled. These consist of barmasters' records from the early 18th century, and records of private firms from the beginning of the 19th century. These private records are fragmentary apart from the records of the Alport Mining Company which are practically complete. A detailed list of the leadmining records is in hand. The North Derbyshire Liberal Registration Association Treasurer's papers, 1879-1881, are a useful addition to the earlier deposit of the Association's papers, and are supplemented by collections of Conservative and Liberal posters and handbills for 1832-1837, and 1868, together with Liberal Unionist papers for 1906.

As well as O.S. maps relating to other counties which the firm allowed the office to pass on to appropriate repositories, there are over 100 large maps and plans relating to Derbyshire. These include manuscript estate and mining plans as well as a collection of 19th- and early 20th-century O.S. maps. A few mining plans have been retained by the firm, but the office has been permitted to photograph these. The maps and plans are being rough listed as they come in. A useful run of sale catalogues from the 1850s onwards supplements other holdings of such records.

Deeds and papers in the remainder of the deposit are still being sorted. They relate in varying degrees of detail to quarrying, coalmining, farming, corn and textile mills, local gas companies, building companies, hotels, hydros, public houses, a livery stable, Ashford black marble works, Matlock Building Society, Bakewell Town Hall Company, Stancliffe Estates Company, a handful of charities and friendly societies, and the buying and selling of land. Official records include the papers of Over Haddon Burial Board, Ashford to Buxton Turnpike Trust, and the minute books of three sets of inclosure commissioners for Whitfield in the parish of Glossop, Youlgreave, and Chelmorton and Flagg. The volume for Chelmorton and Flagg contains partial accounts. Runs of early 20th-century papers relating to the Boy Scouts, the Territorial Army, the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance Brigade, and other organizations reflect the interests and devoted work of a former member of the firm, Colonel H. Brooke-Taylor.

Business deposits generally have increased in number, and include several small runs of deeds and related papers from other solicitors, affecting properties scattered throughout the county and dating from the 17th to the 20th century. Trading and manufacturing companies have co-operated generously. In addition to the gas company records deposited by Brooke-Taylor the East Midland Gas Board has deposited minute books for eight local companies: Bakewell 1858-1899, Baslow 1865-1933, Eckington and Mosborough 1923-1940, Hathersage 1929-1949, Killamarsh 1914-1940, Matlock 1899-1924, Tideswell 1922-1949, and Wirksworth 1828-1939.

Messrs. Sharpe Brothers and Co. Ltd. of Swadlincote, sanitary potters, who are closing their works at the end of 1967 have deposited a run of catalogues beginning at the turn of the century; an order book, daybooks and an experiment notebook 1947-1956; works plan mid 20th century; directors' minute book 1894-1915; service agreement register 1860-1888; and two late 19th-century photographs.

Charles Wright and Son, Ltd. of Wirksworth, wine merchants, made a further deposit of recent records rounding off an important group of wholesale and retail wine and spirit records. The deeds, directors' minutes, inventories and other papers of the Gresley Brewery, Burton-on-Trent, 1890-1898, are the first group of records of a modern brewery to come into the office.

A useful group of papers relating to the Butterley Forge and the schools financed by the Butterley Company in the late 19th and 20th centuries has been deposited but not yet listed. There is colliery material in the Rodes deposit from Barlborough. Individual mining, quarrying and related items are a coalmining lease for Staveley 1641; a copy plan of workings in the top hard coal, South Normanton, 1900; a copy notebook on leadmining in the Alport area *c.* 1836; and a catalogue of Beresford Marble Works, Belper, 1899. Welcome additions to rather poor textile sources are the deeds of Cressbrook Mill, Tideswell, 18th-19th century, and the mill summary account book 1814-1816; together with the small

bundle of Cawood papers relating to Amber Mill, Ashover, 19th century.

On transport there has been a further deposit of records of the Chesterfield and Hernstone Lane Head Turnpike Trust, 19th century. An interesting group of papers are the Cromford Canal navigation permit books, 1814-1878. These were rescued from a ruined lock-keeper's cottage and reached us in several different ways, partly through direct action on information received and partly through deposit by several persons and groups of persons. Although the run is not complete, enough survives to permit close analysis of the volume and type of traffic for 35 years. This is due to the zeal and generosity of a handful of adults and an unknown number of schoolboys who took most of the papers to their schools. Some permit books are known to be in private hands. It would be helpful if their present owners would let me know who they are and the dates of what they hold, so that the papers can be traced if some researcher wishes to work on the canal. Analysis of the books, which would at one time have been formidable, would now make quite a reasonable project with the help of a computer or other mechanical aid.

There have been a good number of groups of deeds, family and estate papers deposited by private people as opposed to solicitors. They concern properties scattered through the county and range in date mainly from the 16th to the 20th century. The exception is provided by the largest group, the papers of the Rodes family deposited by the headmaster of Barlborough Hall School. These relate mainly to the family's Derbyshire estates centred on Barlborough, to their Nottingham estates centred on Gateford, and to Yorkshire properties including Hatfield. The deeds of the Barlborough group run from the late 13th century, those of the Gateford group from the late 12th century, and those for the scattered Yorkshire properties from the early 13th century. Other records include legal papers from the 17th century; estate maps, plans, surveys and accounts from the mid 18th century; correspondence and estate vouchers, mid 19th-early 20th century, including papers relating to the 1868 general election, and Derbyshire colliery papers mid and late 19th century. The Barlborough run of estate plans and surveys is the best I have yet seen for a small estate. There are sheriffs' quitrolls for Nottinghamshire for 1560, 1617 and 1671, and for Derbyshire for 1594, items from Barlborough civil parish accounts, late 18th century, and 19th century accounts for Barlborough Clothing Club. The estate papers contain items relating to schools in the area. There is a broken run of Elmton and Creswell manor court rolls 1651-1743. A fairly self-contained group are the manor court rolls for Digby, Lincolnshire, 1663-1665, and Digby estate receipt and expenditure accounts 1673-1691. There is also a run of catalogues of sales of shorthorn cattle in the 1870s, and a good assortment of catalogues dealing with farming machinery and other equipment, iron buildings and fencing, heating and hydraulic engineering, and horticultural and agricultural products, seeds, shrubs, trees, etc. from the 1870s to 1890s. Such catalogues are important source material for the new farming of the late 19th century.

The Colvile papers deposited by the family consist chiefly of the deeds of the Bonell and Colvile families' estates in Duffield and elsewhere in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Cambridgeshire, 17th to 19th centuries. They include also a box of papers relating to Major-General Colvile's military service, mainly consisting of his accounts of stations to which he was posted in Africa and the Near East in the late 19th century; pedigree notes and papers on the history of the Colvile and related families; miscellaneous letters, bills, accounts, diaries and photographs, 19th century; printed political pamphlets by Mr. Asgill, 18th century; and Walsoken Colvyle (Norfolk) manor court book 1611-1623.

The Kirk papers are an interesting group consisting of a handful of deeds for properties in the Chapel and Glossop area in the 17th and 18th centuries, and properties, including collieries, around Wrexham and Ruabon in North Wales, in the late 18th and 19th centuries, together with rent receipts and vouchers; and the Penyfron Lead Mine Disbursement Account September 1807—1 March 1808. The other papers relate to Derbyshire and fall into three separate classes all dating from the 17th or early 18th centuries. There are legal and administrative papers connected with friends or relatives for whom the Kirk family acted as executors or trustees; papers relating to public office at township, parish or higher level; and small files relating to about twenty unconnected families, apparently the remains of legal practice papers. There are very useful surveys, rentals, rates and highway notes for an area for which very little was known to survive, together with a handful of probate inventories. The family apparently rose from the ranks of small craftsmen in the early 17th century, through stewardship of the Shalcross estate and legal practice, to a position of local standing by the late 17th century, a position in which they led groups of commoners seeking enclosure by private agreement and in which they were frequently called on to act as arbiters in private disputes. By the late 18th century they were well enough informed and endowed to gamble on the development of mining interests in Denbighshire and Flintshire, and on the expansion of Wrexham as a shopping centre.

Apart from the groups of deeds and family papers of more usual local interest, there have been a number of interesting small private gifts and deposits: a holograph volume of poems and advice on the conduct of a courtship by Leonard Wheatcroft of Ashover, late 17th century, on which a member of the School of English Studies at Nottingham University is now working; a volume of notes on Ashover church and school by Titus Wheatcroft, schoolmaster, 1722; a shoe-maker's account book 1827-1830; an estate and household account book for the Bate and Newton families of Foston, late 17th-early 18th centuries, with Newton recipes, late 18th century; a rental of the Vernon estate 1734; a gamekeeper's book for Bramley Moor 1823-1825; election addresses 1841, 1898, and 1920; an inventory and bills of the Marriott family of Somercotes, 19th century; printed ephemera, programmes, etc., for Youlgreave and district, 20th

century; papers relating to Staveley town and parish, and to the Barlow family, 17th-20th centuries; and a number of single issues of newspapers, 18th-20th centuries.

A useful run of plans relating to Anglican church property has come from the Church Commissioners; and small groups of sale catalogues from several sources. Sale catalogues, singly or in runs, are of great value to searchers in many fields, and are in increasing demand. Copy plans given to the office include those for South Normanton, 1699; the Carter Hall estate, Eckington, 1754; Duffield 1787; and one for Quarndon, possibly prepared for a rating assessment, 1839.

Plans also occur in official deposits from parish councils. Winster has deposited the Winster, and the Winster and Elton inclosure awards and plans; and Tibshelf its tithe rent charge apportionment and map. Eckington deposited its vestry minute book, 1823-1878; parish council minute book, 1894-1900; inclosure award and copy plan; and a superb duplicate run of rate assessment plans for Eckington, Renishaw, Mosborough, Ridgeway and Troway 1854-1855. The accompanying assessment which came in some time ago in a deposit from Chesterfield Rural District Council gives details of owners, name and size of plots, and measurements of buildings in a manner worthy of the plans. Pinxton has deposited a run of parish meeting and council records 1893-1936.

School records include logbooks for Idridgehay School, 1866-1923; Pleasley Hill British School, 1863-1954; Earl Sterndale C. of E. School, 1900-1936; Over Haddon C. of E. School, 1905-1967; Wormhill Parochial School, 1892-1966. Governors' minutes have been received for Glossop Grammar School, 1928-1958; Hadfield Castle Secondary School, 1948-1965; and Glossop West End School, 1946-1965.

The reorganization of the older records in the strongroom has continued, but work on the guide has not been possible. Small collections have been listed as they come in, larger collections sorted. No listing of larger collections has been possible. Work continued on the Revell papers which cover two separate medium-sized deposits and two collections in private hands. Little survey work was possible in early summer because of Pentrich and in autumn because of Brooke-Taylor. Two new parish surveys have been made, and a third completed. Several small collections in private hands have been surveyed. Surveys of the Rodes papers and Pinxton parish records led to deposits. The Butterley survey continues, and a survey of Lord Lothian's papers at Melbourne has been begun.

The increasing use of the office by searchers puts a strain on our accommodation and it is advisable to make an appointment to see papers. Appointments should always be made for preliminary visits to discuss sources.