

THE DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE,

1965

By JOAN SINAR

THE year 1965 was an important year for the office. The piles of incoming dirty documents were sufficiently reduced to allow the general office to be emptied, decorated and re-arranged. During this upheaval progress was made in the long-term reorganization of the strongroom with the help of men lent by the County Works Department. A series of junior clerks posted on a temporary basis sent out the accumulated lists, brought the indexes up-to-date and listed two large collections of sale catalogues. A schoolboy volunteer continued this work for a fortnight in summer, and started the re-listing of the railway plans. Miss J. Stanley started work as Assistant Archivist in August and has made in-roads on the backlog of large deposits awaiting listing. The Brooke-Taylor deposits of land tax assessments, Matlock gasworks records, and mid and late 19th-century Liberal Party papers are now listed, together with their lead-mining papers held here on temporary deposit. Listing is keeping roughly abreast of current small deposits, and the backlog of these is also diminishing. The inclosure awards, both privately deposited and officially held, have been examined, repacked and relisted in one major list which not only covers our own holdings but gives the location of official copies held elsewhere. A start has been made on the listing of records registered or deposited with the Court of Quarter Sessions.

There were fifty-one deposits and further deposits, none very large but of widely varied interest. Family and estate records were comparatively few. The most important in this class were the additional papers deposited by Mr. G. Turbutt of Ogs'on. These consisted chiefly of papers relating to local public office in the 19th century, some estate papers of the same date, and a group of Revell papers rescued by a member of the Turbutt family when the Revells left Carnfield. These relate chiefly to the South Normanton district and run from medieval deeds to 18th-century papers dealing with South Normanton commons. They include an Elizabethan letter dealing amongst other things with the provision of colliers' cottages, which must be one of the earlier references to colliery-tied housing.

Apart from small groups of deeds such as one relating to properties in Church Gresley and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, 1810-1900, the family deposits like that of the Turbutt family have reflected an antiquarian interest either in the depositor or some predecessor and have been family papers mixed with

collected records. Mr. S. Turner has deposited family and collected deeds for N. Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, 17th-19th century, particularly strong in Peak District material, with a plan of Mr. How's land bordering the Derwent in Bamford, 1813. Mr. R. Thornhill deposited late 18th- and early 19th-century land-tax assessments for the High Peak and a few deeds, whilst Mr. J. Pashley deposited further N. Derbyshire deeds and lent papers relating to the Chesterfield to Stockwith canal.

The Wirksworth area is the predominant interest in Mr. H. Harrison's mixed deposit of deeds and wills, 1579-1879, broadsheets, newspaper cuttings and related material collected or written by himself and Mrs. Meade Waldo on Wirksworth mining, Blue John, riflery in Matlock and district, and local personalities.

Mr. S. Ogden's deposit of family papers is varied in the extreme. It includes the literary and legal common-place book of Robert Barber in English and Latin, late 17th century; the literary and financial memorandum book of Robert Watts, 1728-1743, which includes undated notes on weekly relief for the poor of Brailsford parish; two memorandum books of J. Hayne (? of Wirksworth) on parish and private business, 1779-1784; a manuscript copy made in 1850 of a price list of Benjamin Parker of Horsley Woodhouse (? framemaker), supposed to have been printed about 1836; a hosiery maker's memorandum book with costs and prices, 1867-1870; W. D. Lowe's record of the sinking of two shafts at Denby New Winning Ryefield Pit with details of the type and depth of strata with relevant comment, together with notes on a borehole at Morley, 1878, and the prospectus of Belper Kilburne Collieries, 1897; a plan of the township of Belper, mid 19th century; a broken run of *The Derby and Chesterfield Reporter*, 1854-1870; and a small collection of sale catalogues and other items.

Further sale catalogues have been transferred from the County Library, whilst small collections of Derbyshire picture postcards and late 19th-century photographs for Alfreton and Two Dales have come from several sources. A file of J. R. Colville's notes on Lullington was found in the strongroom together with a collection of autograph letters running from the late 16th to the mid 19th century. An 18th-century topographical notebook giving 16th- and 17th-century detail was transferred from the Lancashire Record Office.

There was a largely abortive attempt to concentrate energy on business records in 1965. By coincidence this was accompanied by a number of small deposits of business papers. A collection of deeds, sale catalogues and an inventory of ironworks at Alderwasley and Morley, 1811-1861, was acquired from an out-county source. A group of deposits from several sources relates to the Butterley Company in the late 19th and 20th century. In part they result from the detailed survey of the company's own records which is in hand. Another result of this survey was an introduction which led in 1966 to the deposit of an important run of wine merchants' records.

Craftsmen's and shopkeepers' records were represented by the letter-book and other papers of Messrs. Jerrom, the sanitary engineers, 1891-1897; a leadminer's candle account-book, 1856-1858; and a Belper pork butcher's

suppliers' vouchers, 1905-1935. Accompanying these vouchers were a nailer's (?) account, 1894-1897, Belper ephemera relating to church, shopping and gambling, 1906-1933, and a file of farmer's bills for Wildersey, 1944.

Joiner's accounts 1737-1743 and cope accounts 1779-1806 were included in a further deposit of records from Ashover church which also contained parish and charity accounts for the 19th century. Ashford Parish Council deposited their papers 1920-1938, and South Normanton Parish Council their inclosure awards of 1801 and 1809, and tithe-rent charge apportionment of 1843.

Dronfield Urban District Council deposited their old School Board minutes and accounts, 19th-20th centuries. The records of a number of schools at Bradbourne, Church Gresley, Edlaston, Foston and Scropton, Glossop, Long Eaton, Lullington, Shirley and Shuttlewood, and Brockley, were transferred by County Education Divisional Executive Officers and others. Perhaps the most important of the school records however are the plans submitted with applications for building grants in the late 19th century. These have been presented through the Public Record Office by the Department of Education and Science. They are as yet unlisted but deal in the main with small elementary schools.

Records of a semi-public nature are the accounts, 1870-1949, of a group of lodges of the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds Friendly Society in the Ripley area. This deposit was arranged through the District Auditor and provides yet another example of records deposited or surveyed through the intervention of an interested third party. This office owes much to the kindness of men and women who keep their eyes and ears open for news of books and papers relating to Derbyshire's past life, and either write themselves or urge the owners to get into touch with me.

Two sets of modern records have been deposited. One consists of the record book and other papers, 1957-1964, of the Derby Group, now reconstituted as the Trent Valley Branch, of the British Interplanetary Society. The other is the campaign papers of Mr. Raymond Gregory, the anti-Common Market candidate in the West Derbyshire by-election of 1962. It is particularly pleasing to have a deposit mirroring the mid 20th-century vogue for special purpose candidates in view of the good mid 19th-century Conservative and late 19th-century Liberal campaign papers held in other deposits. Unfortunately there are as yet no campaign or administrative papers deposited for any of the 20th-century political parties. These would be most welcome as a deposit to hold for the historian of the future, and could be held if necessary for a time unexamined under seal.

There are, of course, many gaps both in our holdings, and in the lists being built up of documents retained by their owners. There is very little information available about Derbyshire's first industry, farming, and almost nothing about the early farming co-operatives in this county which were pioneer movements of importance. There was a little response to an appeal put out for the office by the Ministry of Agriculture two years ago, but only six sets of small farmers' records have come to light as yet. One related to

Staffordshire and has been deposited there. There must be many more lying in cupboards and attics, some unfortunately in danger of destruction. Engineering and manufacturing records are even rarer. Engineering drawings are usually destroyed although they are vital evidence in any study of engineering works. There are national appeals afoot covering both farming and engineering records based on special *ad hoc* southern repositories. This office would always be happy to hear of such material in Derbyshire. It can either be taken on deposit, or listed on the spot for owners who prefer to look after their own papers.

Survey work was badly hampered this year by cold weather and by my illness in high summer when I usually concentrate on work in attics, cellars and outhouses. Spring survey work on several small private collections resulted in deposits. Quarndon School records, and Ashford, Barlborough and Littleover parish records were surveyed. Advice on storage was given to a fourth parish. There was further work on Alfreton Petty Sessions records, resulting in a further deposit, and Glossop Petty Sessions records were listed at the start of a survey of Glossop Borough records. A survey of part of the records of the Rural Community Council was completed, and a detailed survey of Dronfield Urban District Council records almost completed. Several visits were paid to the Gell records at Hopton. A detailed survey of Butterley Company records is in hand.

There were a number of short talks and small exhibitions for groups with general interests. Fifteen major talks and exhibitions were given to bodies with more specific interests. Some of these talks were on the office constructed for the audience with a large general exhibition, but almost a half with their accompanying exhibitions were specially tailored for unusual interests. The major talks were given to three schools, four groups of training-college students, two W.E.A. classes working on their own areas, a parent-teachers' association, the Derbyshire Archaeological Society Local History Section, the Derby branch of the Historical Association, the Peak Park guides, and a Local Studies (geographical) course at Lea Green. In addition, an exhibition was lent to Alfreton, material gathered for a sixth-form conference, and help given with the selection and arrangement of exhibits for the Derbyshire Federation of Women's Institutes celebratory exhibition at Derby.

The lecturers in the Colleges of Education in the county are making increasing use of the Record Office in the training of their history students, and W.E.A. and extramural classes are following suit. There is a steadily increasing use of records by people pursuing very different ends, some academic, some legal, some practical, and some purely plausible. There have been over 300 postal enquiries mainly concerning the nature and whereabouts of source material, but occasionally asking advice on technical points of preservation. Owners and custodians have been most generous not simply in depositing, but also in lending material specially for some enquiries.